

***Psalm 139***

“Can I go anywhere apart from Your Spirit? Is there anywhere I can go to escape Your watchful presence?” As we venture through this season of Lent, I find much peace in the fact that there is nowhere we can go, no temptation that we may face, that will involve us being on the journey alone. Even more than the fact that we are never alone, the reality that God has explored my heart and knows exactly who I am...and still wants to stick by me...never ceases to leave me in awe of His goodness. Just as David declares in this Psalm, “it is the most amazing feeling to know how deeply” God knows me and loves me still. It is truly beyond my comprehension that after all I have put God through, that He not only remains by my side now that I have come back to Him, but that He never ever left my side to begin with. While I was running fast in the other direction as a young adult, God was not only embracing me with His right hand but He had me surrounded “on every side, behind me and before me.” As I made one bad decision after another, His hand was gently on my shoulder, and no matter how evil wanted to pull me in one direction, my Abba Father was oh so gently keeping His hold on me so that His plans, the details of my life that were already printed in His book, would come to be. As the days go by, I can find full assurance in the beautiful truth that my days are numbered but, in the most precious of ways, they are so specifically designed for the good things God has planned. These promises from the Almighty fill me with joy, and during this season of Lent, I find great promise in the fact that God gives us an opportunity each year to truly bring ourselves closer to having the mind of Christ. Just as Jesus prepared in the desert, we get to prepare ourselves to say no to the enemy of our souls. Lent allows us to deny ourselves and grow even closer to becoming the “unique creation” God has destined for us to be. Throughout Lent, we can say to our precious Lord and Savior, test us, watch how we handle the strain, examine us to see if there is anything that is not of You, Lord. Most importantly, though, we get to say, “Take our lives, guide us by the hand, form us into the children of God You envisioned as we were being formed in our mother’s wombs, and lead us in the way everlasting!”

*Dear Heavenly Father, We love You so very much! Our hearts are overflowing with love and adoration for You. Even still, the truth remains that You, Lord, love us more than we could ever even begin to love You. It is this truth that keeps us humbled and in awe of You, our Abba Father. We prepare now to celebrate the sacrifice You made for us and the glorious resurrection that came soon after. Holy Spirit, please take us by the hand and carry us through this season. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the evil one. Lord, we thank You for giving us this opportunity to surrender ourselves to You as we strive towards the goal to win the prize for which You have called us heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phillippians 3:14) Amen.*

**Korrine Carrera**

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