



# Created by the Master Designer

By Jan Brunette

## Opening Prayer

*God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful (Psalm 139:14). Amen.*

## Introduction

Because oil painting is not a natural talent of mine, I needed an instructor. Week after week I was determined to follow her leading, even though it often didn't make sense. As we placed grayish hues and dark colors in broad strokes on the canvas, I thought that it sometimes looked ugly and undesirable.

Upon that background, we began layering other colors and even some shapes. I never knew where she was taking me in my learning process, but I used her guidelines nonetheless. Eventually the foreground began to cover the darkened surfaces and objects came into view. Each step made more sense. The best was yet to come, for the most beautiful touches of the brush were the finished details. These small strokes brought strength and definition to the painting.

I had one more step to learn. Standing too close to my painting, it appeared disjointed and unclear. In order to see the true beauty in my own work of art, I needed to step back, allowing the whole picture to be seen.

I am reminded that this is also true in our personal lives. We don't want others to know what's really going on inside of us — those darker hues and colors that are painted within. We sometimes even want to keep God at a distance, hoping He won't examine the inner being too closely.

Our thoughts, attitudes, imperfections, and desires are already laid bare before the Maker of the universe, the Master Planner of our lives. There isn't a concern, a future desire, a yearning, or a fallen tear that is missed by His all-seeing eye. Whether sitting in quiet solitude in a small confined space, joining others in hymns of praise in a church service, or struggling for answers in a hospital waiting room, the touch of the Master's hand paints a portrait far too beautiful to imagine. As with a painting, each stroke of our lives is tenderly applied layer-by-layer.

## God's Planned Vision

**Psalm 139:1–18** stands in Scripture as a passage of incredible comfort to a believer, yet these words can also frighten us. In **verses 1–6**, we realize the powerful, all-seeing eye that knows, sees, and hears all that we do and say — full exposure to an Almighty God. As you read these verses, list the portions that create uncomfortable feelings and those that offer comfort and strength. \_\_\_\_\_

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Compare these verses to the following verses of affirmation:  
**Ephesians 2:10** and **2 Corinthians 5:17–21**. \_\_\_\_\_  
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### God’s Ever-Present Care and Concern

The impact of the next verses can cut deeply as we try to understand His tender loving care of us. We realize that hiding from Him is impossible. Yet the assurance of divine caregiving and guidance is ever present. No matter how bleak the darker areas of our lives or the depths of despair we may reach, He will bring light to our spirits, revealing the good that He will bring about. Record the first impressions of your relationship with the Master Painter as you review each of the **verses 7–12**. Note your inability to “escape” from Him and the comfort you derive from knowing that He shields and protects you in each and every step of your life.

Contrast those verses with **1 John 1:7–9** and **Philippians 3:12–14**. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Read **Zephaniah 3:17** to discover how the Lord feels about you. \_\_\_\_\_  
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### God’s Foreknowledge of Us

God’s foreknowledge of us is amazing as we see our portraits coming into full definition in **verses 13–16**. He is not disappointed with our size, our age, our race, and our perceived flaws for He Himself formed us to be unique in our service to Him. Describe how this makes you feel about the Lover of your soul, who understands you more than you understand yourself. \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Acts 17:24–28** confirms the words in **verse 16**. Record the similarities and the impact it has on your view of who you are and where you live. \_\_\_\_\_  
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### Our Ultimate Response

**Verses 17–18** capture the ultimate response of the divine portrait — to give honor and praise to the Master Painter. While we may not understand the direction of our painted lives, we can trust that He won’t allow one stroke to go without a purpose in His kingdom. Each tender touch of His brush serves to enable us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to love Him more. His earnest desire is that our thoughts of Him become precious and our moments with Him fill us with awe and wonder. Our praise of Him is a priority as we wait for our Savior’s return, rejoicing in Him and Him alone. Read **Philippians 3:20–21** to view a word picture of your finished portrait.

### As Time Allows

In your own free time or as a group, read **Psalms 145** as you honor and praise your Master Designer and Painter.

### Closing

As I think of my life in this way, I stand in awe of the Father who created me exactly as I am and knows the treasure I am to Him and to others. I am reminded of the Savior, Jesus Christ, whose gifts of forgiveness, life, salvation, and others are mine already today by virtue of my Baptism and through the use of the Means of Grace. Through the death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, I will fully receive all of these gifts in heaven while I enjoy them already here. In gratitude I praise and honor the Holy Spirit who nudges, guides, and directs my steps each day toward an eternity with the Lord, desiring to create in me the image of Christ.

Reflecting Christ’s love in every aspect of my life through the gifts He shares with me, even when the brush strokes are not what they should be because of my sinful nature — and He freely and unconditionally forgives me through faith in my crucified and risen Savior — the painting of my life will reveal the Father’s glory so that others may see, honor, and worship Him. Oh, what a beautiful portrait it is for He has made it and it is good!

### Closing Prayer

*Thank You, Father, that I am fearfully and wonderfully made to be Your special, precious child. Grant me the strength and courage to live my life in service to You, one step, one day at a time. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.*

Suggested Hymns: “Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed” (LSB #560; LW #356; TLH #390), “Just as I Am, Without One Plea” (LSB #570; LW #359; TLH #388), “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” (LSB #575; LW #368; TLH #370)

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