Introduction

Life is incredibly complex. It seems as if scientists are learning new things every day. But one thing that will never be able to be analyzed is the human soul. There are no measurements that can be made on an everlasting spirit, only our bodies that our composed of material. For, material things can only measure material. Because our soul is unseen, many people question its reality.

But some who want to deny God do so not because it is not plausible, but because they don’t want to be held accountable to God. So, they deny the existence of a soul completely. They hold that we are simply matter in motion, a cacophony of atoms and molecules that simply happen to exist in this incredibly orderly, complex, amazing way.

In saying this, not only do they deny that human life is intrinsically valuable, but they open the door to destroying life if they either think that it hasn’t truly begun at conception or if it is just of so “low quality” at this point.

But when does life begin? Psalm 139 makes it clear...conception. But you must ultimately believe in God to believe this. So, many in the non-believing world will live like their father the Devil, and apart from God’s grace upon the rest of humanity (which keeps them and us from being as bad as we can be), will kill and murder other humans for our own
advantage, despite our own wonderful makeup and the incredible testimony of children being born each and every minute of the day.

The Text (Psalm 139:13-18)

For you created my kidneys (innermost part or most secret part); you weaved (shaped) me in my mother's womb. I praise you Sublime One, for I am wonderfully, fearfully (made); wonderful (are) your works; my soul knows it exceedingly well. My bones were not hidden from you. When I was created in secrecy, I was intricately woven in the lower parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my embryo (unformed substance). And in your book they all were recorded - days formed when not one of them (was). And to me, how difficult are your thoughts, O God; how numerous their sum. They have become too many to number, as the sand, and I awaken, still with you.

Exposition

*God has carefully, intricately, and personally made me who I am (A Maker a-making)*

David sees himself as having been made by God. He looks at his own body, how it is masterfully woven together and sees that it didn’t happen by accident. Also, as a man of war who killed many men and animals, he would have seen the inside of a body. And so, he would have seen tendons, organs, and bones.

And so, he knows that our bodies are delicate, and our inner parts, literally kidneys, thought of as the seat of our affections and emotions, are woven together in intricate ways. Thus, he doesn’t deny we are
made by God, but rather embraces this reality and sees himself as knit together over 9 months while he was in his mother’s womb.

And what is, what should be the right reaction to seeing the intricacies of our body and knowing that it must have been designed?

*God has wonderfully and fearfully made us and planted this understanding in us (Thankfulness)*

Certainly, one right reaction is belief in a marvelous Creator who designed all of this and even cared for us before we were born. But more than this...we should be filled with gratitude and thankfulness.

When we cut our hand and don’t bleed out because of coagulation, or clotting we should be amazed. Why? What happens? Now, I am not particularly good at science or biology, but basically when we are cut, our blood begins a process where it changes from a liquid to a gel, which we call a blood clot. It potentially results in the stopping of blood loss from that damaged part of our body, followed by the beginning of repair. Chance? No. Not possible. Design, marvelous design.

So, as David, a man of war, was surely injured and cut, saw these sorts of things, how could he not marvel and thank God? How could we not? We should, as David, thank or praise God for the complexity that God wove us together with. Only a master designer, master builder, could design such a creature as we are. And who was the One who did this, who created us? Jesus. John 1:1-5 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without
him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” Jesus did all this. Jesus is my creator.

And so, David continues and praises Yahweh for his workmanship. As we would look at a Rembrandt and marvel at how much detail and how life-like it looks, so we should marvel at not only ourselves, as David says we are wonderfully and fearfully made, but others as well. And then when we consider the make-up of the rest of this amazing world, we see that it is wonderful. All Yahweh’s works are wonderful.

When we stop and think about all that is around us and all we interact with, especially in this modern age, we should be marveling every day, and we should know very well that God is amazing. Also, we should worship and praise God for it. This is something that should be deep down in our soul. We should know it and know it well. Jesus made us wonderfully and fearfully, or perhaps better said, really awesome. Jesus is a wonderful and awesome creator who makes wonderful and awesome things.

When we are in the womb, prior to recent years, as we were being formed, knit, or woven together in our mother’s womb, no one saw us. We were in complete seclusion. All that was seen is the increasing size of the womb, and so all that was known is that some amazing design work was going on in there.
But now, with modern technology, we can see, using ultrasound, how a child forms in the womb. This is marvelous. Though we can see the steps of growth along the way, however, we still know that God is working and weaving together a masterpiece in that warm, but dark womb. Though we can peer in, we can’t really see the baby with our own eyes. God alone can see the child.

God watches the child as he knits it together. God alone has access to the child. God sees the child before it is born while we truly can’t. God alone is in control and God alone knows us truly and fully from our first day at conception, to our final breath. He intricately weaves us together in “the lower parts of the earth”, or maybe idiomatically, “the dark places.” Yahweh is weaving us together like a beautiful, intricate tapestry that only he can see. Jesus is our creator and he made each one of us into a beautify tapestry.

*God’s sovereignty*

The psalmist goes on to make an extremely bold claim, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Every single day of our lives were recorded in God’s book before we were born! The Hebrew is more accurately rendered, “…in your book they all were recorded - days formed when not one of them.” In other words, God is sovereign and in control. There is not a single molecule in this world that is outside of his power and authority. All our life was planned by God.
Arthur W. Pink wrote, “A ‘god’ whose will is resisted, whose designs are frustrated, whose purpose is checkmated, possesses no title to Deity, and so far from being a fit object of worship, merits nought but contempt.”

At this, our modern minds baulk. We are unwilling to accept this thought. We read this and say, “That’s fatalism! That’s determinism! If that is the case, then God is not good, he is a monster, because then he would have ordained evil!”

I’m not going to spend time debating the sovereignty of God, the original free will of man, the bondage of the will under sin, and man’s responsibility. What I will talk about is what the Bible teaches.

First, the Bible teaches us that God has planned all things, including the death of Christ, from the foundation of the earth (Acts 2:23). If he planned it then it means he is in control. To say that he planned it, but somehow it could have turned out some other way, in other words, that humanity could have made something else happen, is to say that God is not in control. This is simplistic and reductionistic to say the least. How could God ordain the life and death of Christ but not ordain all things?

Second, Yahweh is not responsible for sin or evil (1 John 1:5). Humanity desired and did it and is responsible and accountable for it. The trouble we have is this...if God planned all things and created the angels, and
some of them fell, then he created angels and humanity with the capacity to choose evil. Our finite minds can’t resolve this.

Third, Yahweh doesn’t tempt us to evil, but instead it is us who wants it (James 1:13-15). Angels and humanity are responsible for the evil we choose, for we want it (Romans 1:18-32), but also that God ordained it and isn’t accountable for it (Romans 9:17-18; James 1:13-15).

What we don’t like is the evil and the pain that we experience. We hate to see ourselves suffer, as well as others. But what we also don’t like is the fact that we are not in charge. We don’t like the idea that God is so high above us that we are not in control. So, if we can find some loophole, some reason for God not to bring a charge against us, then we think it frees us from our accountability to him. But this is by no means true. Paul says in Romans 9:19–24, “You will say to me then, ‘Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?’ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, ‘Why have you made me like this?’ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?”

So, if you are willing to submit to this mystery, we might find ourselves happier and more obedient. I have a recommendation...rest in his
sovereignty. But you may ask, “How did he do it? How are these two ideas held together?” My answer, I don’t know. I’m not God, and neither are you, but the question is this...will you have faith and trust your Creator?

Love and presence

Maybe if we did what David did, and quickly moved out of thoughts that are beyond us, to thoughts that are within our ability to comprehend, we would do much better.

David sees this not as a bad thing, about God controlling him, or something like that, but, rather, that God loves him and yet is so far above him. The Hebrew here could literally be rendered, “And to me, how difficult are your thoughts, O God; how numerous their sum.”

In other words, God’s ways are so far above our ways that to think about how God could do all this, could make all this, could hold together his divine sovereignty and our human responsibility, while entering into it himself in Christ for us to be called his children is so incredible. And so, it must become precious to us that God would plan out our days for his glory and our good even before we were born. We are objects of his divine love.

But also, that even though he has done all this and planned all this, he is not just a divine clockmaker who wound up the world and let it go. No, he is present in it, he is with us. He never will leave us or forsake us.
We go to sleep, which feels a little like death, and God is with us, when we wake up, he is there with us. This is our God. We can’t put him in a box. We must submit and rest in the divine mystery of God’s sovereignty and our apparent free will. Can we be ok with this? Well, we must be, we don’t have a choice!

Applying Christ

What is amazing about this entire thought is that God would allow evil and himself bear it and be punished for it in our place. Jesus Christ, who did not himself do any evil, took evil upon himself on the cross. He bore our sin and evil so we could live in joy and freedom with him.

We tend to focus on the negative aspect of this...well, God allowed evil. But what about the fact that God himself came down and allowed himself to be knit together in Mary’s womb. That God would allow himself to be subjected to the cruelties and the evil of this life. That God himself would ultimately bear the weight and punishment of evil.

We must look at this passage and see Jesus being knit together in the womb for our sake. We must see him embracing the pain and suffering that we experience every day. We must see him do all this so that when we wake up God will be with us. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. He is the God who made it all, who forms us, and who makes us wonderfully complex. Yet, he is the God who isn’t afraid to enter our pain, join in it with us, in order to rescue us.
If we can’t marvel and wonder in the fact that the Creator allowed himself to be knit together into this human flesh because of his great love for us, then we have missed the entire point of the gospel. That Jesus would live, die, be buried, rise again, and ascend to heaven where he sends his Spirit to dwell in us is beyond our ability to comprehend. And so, we echo the pray of Paul in Ephesians 3.

“Father, please grant us, according to the riches of your glory, to be strengthened with power through our Spirit in the inner person, that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith, being firmly rooted and established in love, in order that we may be strong enough to grasp together with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, in order that we may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

May you who are able to do beyond all measure more than all that we ask or think, according to the power that is at work in us, to you be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”