

## ADDITIONAL NOTES:

A text without a context is a pretext.

- A pretext is a reason given in justification of a course of action that is not the real reason at all.
- For example: When the devil tempts Jesus, Satan quotes Ps. 91 saying the angels will protect Jesus if he throws himself down. To prove the scriptures true is the reason for Satan's quoting of scripture. His reason is to get Jesus to sin.
- This is called proof-texting. When we come to the bible with a preconceived notion of what we believe and we search the bible until we find a verse that justifies what we already believe. It is a proof-text when it is taken out of context and the actual text doesn't say anything about the topic we are using it to defend. Thus a pretext is different than a text.
- We need to see the context of the text so that we have the God-given meaning of the text instead of a man-given meaning.
- Ps. 139:13-14 seem to have become the go to verses when speaking against abortion. But is that what these verse is about according to the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Pet.1:21)? To understand the context of verses 13 and 14 we must look at the whole psalm. What themes is God teaching through this psalm? What is God really saying?
- Below is the entire psalm along with Martin Luther and Francis Pieper's comments about it. These will help us get the entire context of the psalm so we can better understand what God is saying in verses 13 and 14.

Psalm 139

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

[1] O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

[2] You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.

[3] You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

[4] Even before a word is on my tongue,  
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

[5] You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

[6] Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is high; I cannot attain it.

[7] Where shall I go from your Spirit?  
Or where shall I flee from your presence?

[8] If I ascend to heaven, you are there!  
    If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

[9] If I take the wings of the morning  
    and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

[10] even there your hand shall lead me,  
    and your right hand shall hold me.

[11] If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
    and the light about me be night,"

[12] even the darkness is not dark to you;  
    the night is bright as the day,  
    for darkness is as light with you.

[13] For you formed my inward parts;  
    you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

**[14] I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
    my soul knows it very well.**

[15] My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
    intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

[16] Your eyes saw my unformed substance;  
in your book were written, every one of them,  
    the days that were formed for me,  
    when as yet there was none of them.

[17] How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
    How vast is the sum of them!

[18] If I would count them, they are more than the sand.  
    I awake, and I am still with you.

[19] Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!  
    O men of blood, depart from me!

[20] They speak against you with malicious intent;  
    your enemies take your name in vain.

[21] Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?  
    And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?

[22] I hate them with complete hatred;  
    I count them my enemies.

[23] Search me, O God, and know my heart!  
    Try me and know my thoughts!

[24] And see if there be any grievous way in me,  
    and lead me in the way everlasting! (ESV)

**Anatomy of a Psalm of Praise – Bullock, C. Hassell, Encountering the book of Psalms, 121.**

Creation

Creation by the Word of command  
Creation by deed  
Creation by understanding  
The beauty and language of creation  
Universality of God's presence and reign  
God's work in Israel's history

#### Summary

Ps. 139 -

Verses 1-6 speak of God's surpassing knowledge and how insignificant our knowledge is compared to Gods.

7-16 speak of God's reign, specifically his omnipresence, even in my inward parts. Nothing is hidden from God.

17-22 ask God for salvation from David's enemies

23-24 speak of David's faith in God

#### Psalm 139:14

**I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
my soul knows it very well. (ESV)**

**Twiadwin** – (nurauth) fearfully, ones being fearful

**miiyialeupn** – (nphlaim) ones being marvelous

TWOT 1395– while some try to relate this term to nepel – untimely birth, miscarriage, a more likely reconstruction is the proposal of a root napal, akin to other weak verbs, be wonderful, strong, mighty and even separate, distinguish, discriminate. Gen 6:4, and Num. 13:33 only (not same word missing a). LXX translated wrong as giants.

#### Luther:

*5. As you do not know the way of the wind or how the bones grow in the womb, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.*

Solomon heaps up his exhortation in order to stir up our sleepiness and laziness. “Just as you do not know,” he says, “what is the way of the wind and how the bones grow, etc., so you do not know the work of God which He does everywhere or in everything.” You do not know what God intends to do to you or to someone else, whether tomorrow you will die or live or get sick or what other evil may befall you. If we had knowledge of God's prolonging or shortening our lives, we would be very badly off in every way. Now we do not know about our lives even one hour ahead, and yet even so we do not stop doing evil. Christ uses this comparison in John 3:8:

“You hear the sound of the wind, and yet you do not see whence it comes or whither it goes.” So also you do not know where you will go or where you are traveling. Therefore just as you do feel the wind that is present, so also you should make use of the things that are present. *Or how the bones grow, etc.* So it is, he says, that animals and human beings come into being in their mothers’ wombs without your knowing about it. As Psalm 139:15<sup>2</sup> says: “My frame was not hidden from Thee, when I was being made in secret.” This is what the entire Psalm 139, “O Lord, Thou hast searched me,” says. Even if the womb were open, we still would not see how these things happen. For the trees grow in plain sight of all of us, and yet we do not see how leaves, branches, and fruit grow, nor can we assign any reason to it. Thus also we ourselves grow in the sight of other people. Since, therefore, we do not understand these things which are present and which are going on before our very eyes, how are we to do so with future things? Therefore the summary of this is: The works of God are not known to us, and things that are in the future are not sure.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, indeed, he himself must be present in every single creature in its innermost and outermost being, on all sides, through and through, below and above, before and behind, so that nothing can be more truly present and within all creatures than God himself with his power. For it is he who makes the skin and it is he who makes the bones; it is he who makes the hair on the skin, and it is he who makes the marrow in the bones; it is he who makes every bit of the hair, it is he who makes every bit of the marrow. Indeed, he must make everything, both the parts and the whole. Surely, then, his hand which makes all this must be present; that cannot be lacking.

At this point the passage of Isaiah 66[:2] derived from Genesis 1, undeniably applies: “Has not my hand made all these things?” Psalm 139[:7–10]: “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in hell, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning dawn (and these are certainly great wings, as great as half the world) and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall hold me.”

Why should I say a great deal? The Scriptures ascribe all miracles and works of God to his right hand, e.g. Acts 4 [5:31], Christ is exalted by the right hand of God; Psalm 118[:15f.], “The right hand of God does wonders, the right hand of the Lord exalts me.” In Acts 17[:27 f.] Paul says, “God is not far from each one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being.” And Romans 11[:36], “From him and through him and to him are all things.” And Jeremiah 23[:23 f.], “Am I not<sup>98</sup> a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Do I not fill heaven and earth?” Isaiah 66[:1], “Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool.” He does not say, “A part of heaven is my throne, a part or spot of the earth is my footstool,” but, “Whatever and wherever heaven is, there is my throne, whether heaven is beneath, above, or beside the earth. And whatever and wherever earth is, whether at the bottom of the sea, in the grave of the dead, or at the middle of the earth, there is my footstool.” Come and tell me now, where are his head, arm, breast, body, if with his

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<sup>2</sup>The original has “Ps. 38.”

<sup>1</sup>Luther, Martin; Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 15 : Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Last Words of David, 2 Samuel 23:1-7*. Saint Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1972 (Luther's Works 15), S. 15:173

<sup>98</sup>Jeremiah's text does not contain the negative here.

feet he fills the earth and with his legs he fills heaven? He reaches out ever so far over and beyond the world, above heaven and earth.<sup>2</sup>

For good measure I shall also prove this with an example and story from Scripture. It is our belief, of course, as the Scriptures teach us, that our Lord Jesus Christ is in essence and by nature true God, and “in him the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily,” as St. Paul says in Colossians 2[:9]. Thus, apart from Christ there is simply no God or Godhead at all, as he himself also says in John 16 [14:9f.], “Philip, he who has seen me has seen the Father. Do you not believe that the Father is in me and I am in him?” All right, Christ walks on earth, and the entire Godhead is in him in person and in essence on earth. Now tell me: How can it be true at one and the same time that God is entirely present, personally and essentially,<sup>102</sup> in Christ on earth in his mother’s womb, yes, in the crib, in the temple, in the wilderness, in cities, in houses, in the garden, in the field, on the cross, in the grave, etc., yet nonetheless also in heaven in the Father’s bosom?<sup>103</sup> If this is true and undeniably consistent with the faith that the Godhead itself is essentially and personally present in Christ on earth in so many places, and yet at the same time in heaven with the Father, it follows that he is everywhere at the same time, and essentially and personally fills heaven and earth and everything with his own nature and majesty, in accordance with the Scriptures, Jeremiah 22 [23:23 f.], “I fill heaven and earth, and am a God near at hand,” and Psalm 139[:7], “Whither shall I flee from thy presence?”<sup>3</sup>

He received this answer to his argument: First, before God’s countenance places or localities are like time because place and time are conceptions of the same kind, namely, of continuous magnitude and possess a nature of the same kind. For this reason it is written: “If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art there” [Psalm 139:8]. Just as before God a thousand years are only a moment, yes, even less, as Peter writes, II Peter 3 [:8], “a thousand years are as one day,” so a thousand places before God must also be as only one place, yes, less than one place. Since Christ has ascended to another world with his heavenly Father, outside of this world in which places have their meaning, even though in particular he is in heaven and on earth, he is consequently not in two places but only in one place because heaven and earth are only one place before God, and it is only in our finite view that they are separated so far from one another. According to man’s perspective here on earth, Basel and Marburg are about two hundred miles apart; but in the sight of God, who looks at things from a true and absolute perspective, the two places are closer to one another than are man’s hand and flesh.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Luther, Martin; Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 37 : Word and Sacrament III*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1961 (Luther's Works 37), S. 37:III-59

<sup>102</sup> *Personlich gegewertig, wesentlich. Personlich* means “in person” in the ancient Christological sense; it does not have the modern connotation of “personality.” Cf. *Augsburg Confession*, I, 4.

<sup>103</sup> Zwingli: “Hilary did not have the idea that in the Lord’s bread is eaten the body of Christ which hung upon the cross, or wailed in the manger, as our friends say.” *Commentary*. LWZ 3, 245, cf. 252 and *Clear Instruction*. LCC 24, 189.

<sup>3</sup>Luther, Martin; Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 37 : Word and Sacrament III*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1961 (Luther's Works 37), S. 37:III-62

<sup>4</sup>Luther, Martin; Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 38 : Word and Sacrament IV*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1971 (Luther's Works 38), S. 38:V-77

But if our own wisdom and judgment blind us to the providence of God in our lives, just because by some chance many things developed in accordance with our own plans, let us once again search into our lives and say with Psalm 139 [:15–16], “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in secret (that is, you fashioned and beheld my bones in my mother’s womb, when as yet I was not, and my mother did not know what was forming in her), and my substance was fashioned in the lowest parts of the earth (that is, even the form and figure of my body in the secret chambers of the womb were not hidden from you, for you were fashioning it).” What else does the psalmist intend with such words except to show us by this marvelous illustration how God has always cared for us without any help from us! Who can boast of having had a part in his formation in the womb? Who gave to our mothers the concern to suckle, fondle, and love us, and to perform all the duties of motherhood before we were even conscious of our life? Would we know or remember any of these things unless, having observed the same things done to others, we now believe that they were done to us also? As far as our knowledge of them is concerned, they were performed for us when we were still in a sleep, no, rather dead, or really not yet born.<sup>5</sup>

The consideration of this image is easy since it is made in contrast to the evils of the past. We shall, however, help him who makes such a comparison. Here St. Augustine is an excellent master in his *Confessions*, in which he recites so beautifully the benefits of God toward him from his mother’s womb.<sup>32</sup> The same is done in Psalm 139 [:1–3], “Lord, you have searched me,” in which the psalmist, marveling among other things at the goodness of God, says, “You have understood my thoughts from afar, you have known my path and my lying down.” It is as though he said, “I see now that whatever I have ever thought or done, whatever I shall attain or possess, will not be the result of my labors, but because long ago it was ordered by your solicitude for me, since you have foreknown all my ways. In my tongue there is no speech. Where, then, is it? In your power!”<sup>6</sup>

### **Francis Pieper. Christian Dogmatics:**

Though the **omniscience** of God extends over all things without exception, it is not the efficient cause of the things which it knows. In the light of Scripture, when God views a thing abstractly (*notionaliter*), He always views it as already existing. Thus we read in Ps. 139:1–4: “O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways, for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.” When God through His messenger announces to the Laodicean congregation that He knows its works, that it is neither cold nor hot (Rev. 3:15), this divine knowledge does not effect the sad conditions at Laodicea, but views them as already existing. In describing God’s omniscience the Formula of Concord says very correctly: “The foreknowledge of God

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<sup>5</sup>Luther, Martin: Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 42 : Devotional Writings I*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1969 (Luther's Works 42), S. 42:III-153

<sup>32</sup> *Confessions*, i, 6.

<sup>6</sup>Luther, Martin: Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.); Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.); Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 42 : Devotional Writings I*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1969 (Luther's Works 42), S. 42:III-152

(*praescientia*) foresees and foreknows also that which is evil; however, not in such a manner as though it were God's gracious will that it should happen .... However, the beginning and cause of evil is not God's foreknowledge (for God does not create and effect [or work] evil, neither does He help or promote it): but the wicked, perverse will of the devil and of men [is the cause of evil]." (*Trigl.* 1065, 6–7.) And the Epitome: "For the foreknowledge of God is nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen." (*Trigl.* 833, 3.)<sup>7</sup>

Scripture teaches, secondly, that there is no division or limitation of the divine attributes, works, or worship among the three Persons, but that the three Persons share in them without any distinction of rank. 1) Scripture nowhere indicates that the divine attributes are distributed among the three Persons, as though the divine omnipotence, omniscience, or omnipresence could be divided into three parts and one part assigned to the Father, another to the Son, and the third to the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, Scripture ascribes these attributes without any division or limitation not only to the Father, but just as absolutely to the Son (John 10:28, omnipotence; John 21:17, omniscience; Matt. 28:20, omnipresence) and to the Holy Ghost (Ps. 33:6, omnipotence; 1 Cor. 2:10, omniscience; and Ps. 139:7, omnipresence)<sup>8</sup>

The doctrine of God's omnipresence is a practical doctrine. 1) It is revealed for our warning, for there is no place where God does not see us (Jer. 23:24). No change of address can remove us beyond the reach of His omnipresence (Ps. 139:7 ff.). Gerhard: "Quite often such things are done under the cover of darkness from which we would recoil in the presence of any upright man. But God is present everywhere, He to whom nothing is hidden and whom no one can deceive. How, then, does it happen that His presence does not fill us with fear and caution lest we transgress?" 2) God's omnipresence is consoling. No place or space separates us from His loving protection. We need fear no evil even in the dark valley (Ps. 23:4). Christ is with His disciples unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20). Gerhard: "Even though we are cast into the squalor and darkness of a dungeon for Christ's sake, we can say: The Lord, who is my Light and Salvation, is with me. 'Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee' (Is. 43:1–2)." (*Loci, locus* "De Nat. Dei," § 189.)<sup>9</sup>

Modern kenoticism holds that the deity of the Logos emptied itself. The kenoticists fear that an unreduced deity would exert so strong a pressure on the humanity as to make "a genuinely human development of Christ" impossible. In order to relieve this pressure and give the human nature a chance to develop freely, the semi-kenoticists (Thomasius, Delitzsch, Luthardt, and others) make the Son of God relinquish the operative, or relative, attributes—omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, while the pankenoticists, the extreme kenoticists (Gess, von Hofmann, Frank), relieving the pressure still more, make the Son of God change His divine Person into a human person.<sup>13</sup> This view contradicts, in the first place, all historical reality; and

<sup>7</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:450

<sup>8</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:386

<sup>9</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:445

<sup>13</sup>Cp. p. 103 ff.: "The Christological Theories of Modern Theology."

facts indeed are stubborn things. Jesus does not permit any kenoticist to take away from Him His eternal, divine Ego. When the Jews wanted to reduce His Person to less than fifty years, Jesus tells them: “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). The kenoticists desire a Christ minus His omnipotence. But Jesus tells the Jews who accused Him of transgressing the Law by working on the Sabbath: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” sc., with almighty power (John 5:17). And did the Logos become man minus His omnipresence? One who sustains the world must be omnipresent. Where God works, there He also is (Ps. 139:7–8; Acts 17:27–28). Omniscience, too, is claimed by Jesus in His state of humiliation. He teaches on earth, not “of the earth,” but from divine knowledge (John 1:18; 3:31–32). Nor can any extraordinary depth of human insight explain the things reported in John 1:48 ff.; 2:23 ff.; 4:17 ff.; 11:14; Matt. 21:2; 9:4; Mark 14:13. Those who hold that the Logos gave up His divine attributes or that the divine Ego underwent a change, contradict and deny the very facts reported in Scripture!<sup>10</sup>

God is omnipresent according to His essence, not only according to His operation (*immanentia Dei*). He is essentially, not only dynamically, omnipresent. In the interest of their false Christology some Reformed theologians have denied, and some modern theologians still deny, the essential omnipresence. Wherever God works, He is present. God never works *in absentia*. Luther: “God sends out no bailiffs or angels when He creates and preserves a thing, but all that is the direct work of His divine power. But if He is to create and sustain it, He must Himself be present and must form and sustain His creature, both in its innermost and its outermost parts. Therefore God must be present in every creature in its innermost and its outermost parts, on all sides, through and through, below and above, before and behind. Nothing can be more present and closer to the creature than God Himself with His power.” (St. L. XX:804.) In Jer. 23:24 God says: “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?” The point is’ God sees everyone, because He is present according to His essence and not only according to His power. The Psalmist expresses this same fact: “If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there” (Ps. 139:8).<sup>11</sup>

The sitting of Christ at the right hand of God designates the unending dominion upon which Christ entered by His ascension. The term “right hand of God” is an anthropomorphism, or a figure of speech, by which Scripture speaks of God as having eyes, ears, feet, hands, and the like. As man commonly uses his right hand for most of the things he does, so the attribute by which God does His work, namely, His unlimited power, or His omnipotence, is figuratively called His right hand. To describe God’s omnipotent and omnipresent dominion, Scripture says Ps. 118:15–16: “The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.” Again, Ps. 139:9–10: “If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.” Or, Ps. 89:13: “Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is Thy hand, and high is Thy right hand.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 2:292-293

<sup>11</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:442-443

<sup>12</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 2:329



What Scripture teaches concerning God's knowledge serves for our warning and comfort. It is the prerogative of the Divine Majesty alone to know future events (Is. 41:22–23). All who consult fortunetellers and necromancers (spiritualistic mediums, palm-readers, astrologers) transfer God's glory to men and devils. They, are an abomination to God and a curse to their country and were therefore put to death under the Old Testament theocracy (Deut. 18:9 ff.; Lev. 20:6, 27). It is furthermore the prerogative of God alone to know what is in God. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27). All who teach otherwise and consent not to the wholesome words of Christ (1 Tim. 6:3), but make their own reason or religious experience the source and standard of truth, dismiss the only competent Teacher in the Church and usurp His prerogatives. God warns against these self-appointed teachers: "Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart and not out of the mouth of the Lord" (Jer. 23:16). And, finally, we are all only too prone to forget that the all-wise God knows all our thoughts, words, and deeds and that the darkness cannot hide us from Him, for "the night shineth as the day, and darkness and light are both alike to Him" (Ps. 139:12).<sup>13</sup>

We can describe God's simplicity only in negative terms. It is that attribute according to which God exists entirely uncompounded and without parts. The infinitude of God permits of no parts. But does Scripture not ascribe to God members, e.g., eyes, mouth, hands, feet, and thereby teach that He is compounded of parts? The Scriptures compel us to understand such passages as Ps. 139:16 (eyes), Is. 55:11 (mouth), Ps. 119:73 (hands), Matt. 5:35 (feet), figuratively, anthropopathically, anthropomorphically. This is evident especially from John 4:24, where Christ corrects the Samaritan woman's external and corporeal concept of God by declaring: πνεῦμα ὁ θεός. God is *incorporeus, impartibilis* (Augustana, Art. I). We therefore reject anthropomorphism, which ascribes corporeity and materiality to God,<sup>72</sup> and also the dream of modern theosophists (Oetinger, d. 1782) of a spiritual body (*Geistleib*), which was solidified in and by the creation of the world.<sup>73</sup> But does Scripture not become involved in a contradiction when it ascribes to God both simplicity and a plurality of attributes? True, God is one, indivisible, uncompounded, for, as was shown above, all the divine attributes are God's indivisible being. But this is simply beyond all human comprehension. Therefore God Himself has condescended to us, divided Himself, as it were, into component parts, and because of our finite intellect permits us to conceive of God's attributes, e.g., justice, omnipotence, grace, as following one after another or as existing alongside one another. This is a knowledge of God "in part," as St. Paul says 1 Corinthians 13.<sup>14</sup>

## BOTH LUTHER AND PIEPER USE THIS PSALM TO TEACH GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE AND OMNISCIENCE

<sup>13</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:448-449

<sup>72</sup>Luther: "If the Anthropomorphites [a Syrian sect of the fourth century which ascribed a body to God] really entertained such crass opinions, they were justly condemned .... It seems to me, however, that they only endeavored to present the doctrines in a simple manner to the common people. For in His being, God is unknowable and inexpressible. We are at our wits' end when we try to define God." (St. L. I:487.)

<sup>73</sup>See the quotation in Baier-Walther, II, 18–19. The theosophists have the pantheistic conception of the emanation of the world from the essence of God.

<sup>14</sup>Pieper, Francis: *Christian Dogmatics*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1950, c1951, c1953, S. 1:439

**(Confessions when contrasting creation with orig. sin)** The chief articles of our Christian faith constrain and compel us to maintain such a distinction. In the first place, in the article of creation Scripture testifies not only that God created human nature before the Fall, but also that after the Fall human nature is God's creature and handiwork (Deut. 32:6; Isa. 45:11; 54:5; 64:8; Acts 17:25, 26; Rev. 4:11)<sup>35</sup> Job says: "Thy hands fashioned and made me together round about, and thou dost destroy me? Remember that thou hast made me of clay, and wilt thou turn me to dust again? Didst thou not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese? Thou didst clothe me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews. Thou has granted me life and steadfast love; and thy care has preserved my spirit" (Job 10:8–12)<sup>36</sup> David says: "I will praise thee, for I am wonderfully made.<sup>5</sup> Wonderful are thy works! Thou knowest me right well; my frame was not hidden from thee when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance; in thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:14–16).<sup>15</sup>

At the very outset we must carefully note the difference between God's eternal **foreknowledge**<sup>9</sup> and the eternal election of his children to eternal salvation. For the fact that God sees and knows everything before it happens — what we call God's foreknowledge — extends to all creatures, good or evil. He sees and knows in advance all that is or shall be, all that happens or will happen, both good and evil, since all things, present or future, are manifest and present to God, as it is written, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will" (Matt. 10:29). Again, "Thine eyes beheld my unformed substance, in thy book were written every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as <sup>(tr-1065)</sup> yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:16). And again, "I know your sitting down and your going out and coming in, and your raging against me" (Isa. 37:28).<sup>16</sup>

### **Righteous anger verses sinful anger – Chemnitz 5<sup>th</sup> command**

Thus when Jacob became angry at Rachel in Gen. 30:2, he did not sin. Compare Ex. 11:8; 16:20; 32:19; Num. 16:15; 31:14; 2 Kings 13:19; Prov. 29:9; Matt. 18:34. Regarding hatred Ps. 6:5 says, "I have hated the company of evildoers," cf. Ps. 139:21–22; 119:113. Often in the Psalms the idea of "hating without a cause" is added, e.g., 35:19; 69:4. 2 John 10 commands us not to bid heretics godspeed. This pertains to external actions. Christ in Luke 24:25 calls His disciples "fools." Paul in Gal. 3:1 speaks of the "foolish Galatians." Thus these terms can at times be properly and lawfully used.

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<sup>5</sup> WA, 36:682; 44:472, 489, 506, etc.

<sup>15</sup>Tappert, Theodore G.: *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 2000, c1959, S. 514

<sup>9</sup>Although the terms are used in both a narrow and a pregnant sense (represented in the Latin translation respectively by *praescientia* and *praedestinatio*), *Vorsehung* (or *Versehung*) and *vorsehen* (or *versehen*) are consistently rendered "foreknowledge" and "foreknow" in this translation.

<sup>16</sup>Tappert, Theodore G.: *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 2000, c1959, S. 616

But the question is: When is anger sin and what is righteous wrath? The scholastics replied that “a man can have hatred for his brother, but a person cannot without sin hate the nature of his brother.” Chrysostom [Sermons 72–73, MPG 58.668 ff.], says, “We must hate sins but not men.” Gregory’s statement is: “There must be a punishment for sin, but compassion for man’s nature.” This is a correct distinction, but it is a little too obscure. For Phinehas killed the person in Num. 25:8. And David says in Ps. 139:22, “I hate them.” Therefore the better explanation is that of Philipp, that it is a case of being angry for the sake of God’s glory and love of righteousness, and that anger against ungodliness and wickedness is not a sin but a virtue. Luke 14:26, “He who does not hate his father ...” In the case of public officials there must be direct action taken to defend the glory of God and righteousness, for punishing wrongdoing and for protecting the state. Thus in Scripture a particular term is used. Num. 25:11, “... concerned about My zeal.” 2 Kings 10:16, “See my zeal for the Lord.” In John 11:33, “Jesus was deeply moved and groaned in the spirit.” On the other hand, anger is a sin against the Fifth Commandment when we are angry at our neighbor for personal reasons. This comes from either impatience when some personal comfort has been taken from us or when pleasures have been interrupted or when we are aroused over some other personal desire, and not angry primarily for the sake of God’s glory or the love of righteousness or the hatred of sin, or it arises out of the jealousy or envy of our nature, as David complains when he says, “They hate me without a cause,” Ps. 35:19. To this anger is joined the desire for revenge. Thus he who does not “bid Godspeed” so that his neighbor might be brought to tears of repentance is not guilty of sin. For the carrying out of the duties of a ministry or for the sake of correcting a brother, to call a man a fool is not a breaking of the Fifth Commandment.<sup>17</sup>

Likewise, in Gen. 1:27, He established the order that out of the union of man and woman people should be born. But most wonderful to consider are the words with which Scripture describes the working of God’s providence, Job 10:3, 8, 11, 18; Ps. 139:5, 13, 16, 22:10; and Acts 17:25–26. The making by God applies not only to the raw material, the dust of the ground but also to the procreation of men of all time.<sup>18</sup> (*Life, conception, creation, is all in God’s realm, not ours. It is not our choice, it is God’s and if we go against his choice, we sin*).

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<sup>17</sup>Chemnitz, Martin ; Preus, Jacob A. O.: *Loci Theologici*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1989, S. 407

<sup>18</sup>Chemnitz, Martin ; Preus, Jacob A. O.: *Loci Theologici*. electronic ed. St. Louis : Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1989, S. 169