



A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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November 23, 2025

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DOES GOD KNOW ME? DO I MATTER?

Standing in line at the grocery store is an opportunity to stop and become reflective. As I have grown older, I find that these times are *almost* welcomed. Becoming somewhat detached in mind, I look around me. There is quite an array of people. Twenty-somethings rushing through the front doors. A young woman trying to ride herd over a couple of rumbunctious boys as they scurry down the aisle apparently headed for the candy section. A professionally dressed young man is walking toward me juggling a package of chicken, some produce and a bottle of sauce, trying his best to keep it all from dropping to the floor. My eye looks over to the produce section where it alights on an older woman selecting peaches; which ones are ready for eating she wonders (or so I assume)? My mind then drifts to something Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. *"Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"* (Matthew 6:26) Which almost immediately triggers another thought, does God know these people by name? Do they matter to Him? Do I really matter to Him?

The obvious answer to the questions above is God is omniscient (see Psalms 139:1ff), all knowing; and yes, all matter to Him as expressed by Peter when he wrote that God does indeed care (see 2Peter 3:9). Nevertheless sometimes thoughts of a maudlin nature creep in, but they should be washed away when one just stops and realizes what is seen throughout the Scriptures. *"For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; won-*

derful are Thy works, and my soul knows it very well." (Psalms 139:13-14)

The supreme manifestation of whether or not "I matter", or for that matter if any one matters to God, was made evident on a hill outside the city wall of ancient Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago. Jesus went to the cross, to become the propitiation for the sins of mankind. All of mankind. One could say from the least of us to the greatest, but God sees no such distinction; we all matter to Him (see Romans 5:6-11; Hebrews 2:9; 1John 2:2) and the gift of His Son more than expresses that fact. We must echo Paul as he wrote to the Corinthians, *"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"* (2Corinthians 9:15)

Meanwhile back in line at the grocery store, I continue to see people milling about, both young and old alike. Life moves forward as Solomon lays out in the book of Ecclesiastes. *"One generation passes away, and another generation comes, but the earth abides forever."* (1:4) Another thought rolls across my mind, do they know how much they matter to God? Probably not. Does it matter to them? Maybe a larger question is what can I do or say to have them open their eyes to see just how much they do indeed matter. Consider what Paul wrote, *"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life."* (1Timothy 1:15-16) If anyone makes the conclusion they don't matter, it flies in the face of God, who sent His Son to let us know we do matter. (wbe)



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