

When the Real Me Prays

Without even realizing it,
I spend much of my life finessing how others perceive me:
 what I say, and what I don't;
 the way I carry myself;
 the way I dress;
 the way I suppress or spin the thoughts and feelings that boil up inside.

I try to present a more acceptable image of myself to others...
and even to myself.

Truly, I try to be honest with people,
 and sincere
 and real,
but I am not completely open with them.
They get an edited version of me.

That's probably not entirely bad,
and it probably won't change.

But Lord, without realizing it,
I was treating You the same way.
The edited me was talking to You when I prayed.
Mine was sanitized, arms-length prayer.
Some things never got shared.
I wasn't admitting You all the way inside me.

Then I looked once again at a familiar scripture,
and this time its truth grabbed me:

*O Lord, You have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.
You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.
Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O Lord, You know it all.
You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand on me.
(Psalm 139:1-5, NASB)*

This time the truth became emotional reality.
You know me,
 thoroughly,
 constantly,

completely,
deeply.
I was pretending to hide what had never been hidden
and never can be hidden.
I am laid bare before You.
You know my unedited self, and
that is the self You want to
talk to You and
trust You.
You know the raw me, and
You love me.

What's more, I find this life-changing reality,
not a threat,
but a tremendous comfort.
What a joy it is for the real me to completely relax and
talk simply and openly with You.

Father, the edited self continues to try to reassert himself in our conversations.
Old habits die hard.
Keep him away, Lord.
This is our time.
Keep me honest and artless before You,
laid open,
hiding nothing.

You know all the murmurings of my heart.
You understand my true motives better than I ever can.
So from that place, my Father, I ask You,

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;
And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way.
(Psalm 139:23-24, NASB)*

Hymn: [The Father's Face](#)

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