

Wonderfully Made

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- [0 : 00] This Psalm 139 is one of the most loved of all Psalms. We all know it, I'm sure, very well. Although, I have to say, when you prepare for something like this, you find infinitely more than you thought was there before. It's always like that, isn't it? David writes about the extraordinary way in which God knows everything about him. He can't fathom how this can be. It's too much for him to understand. There's nothing about his thoughts or actions that is out of God's sight. He cannot hide from God. And while this might seem like some sort of prying into our lives or some surveillance of his life that might even, to some people, seem uncomfortable or even hostile, David says in verse 17, How precious also are your thoughts to thee, O God. In fact, he welcomes this complete knowledge that God has about him. So let's look together this afternoon.
- [1 : 15] I keep meaning to say this morning, but it's afternoon now. And see what it means for each of us. What does it mean for you and I that God knows more intimately about us than we know ourselves? Do we welcome this or do we fear it? Can we, like David, find such knowledge precious? Having gone through this psalm, I found about eight different points. It's not a three-point sermon, I'm afraid. But I'm going to be very brief. You'll be glad to know with each of these points. There's so much in this, though, isn't there? The first thing is very obvious. The Lord searches and knows everything about us. See verses 1 to 4. The Lord knows everything. He knows those things that we don't mind him knowing about. Such as maybe our hopes, our aspirations, the way we might love our family, parts of us that might seem presentable and even godly.
- [2 : 46] We don't mind him knowing all that. He knows our strengths. He knows our achievements. But he also knows the other side of us, doesn't he? He knows our selfishness. He knows our pride. He knows our idleness, our greed. He knows our lustfulness for pleasure of every type. He knows our weaknesses in all those forms. He knows our sins in all of us. Now David, in Psalm 17, says something similar. In verse 3, he says, You have tested my heart. You have visited me in the night. You have tried me. And in the letter to Romans, chapter 8, Paul also refers to God searching our hearts. When we don't know how to pray. Verse 27. Now he who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is. Because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

[3 : 49] And in Psalm 44, 20 and 21, we also see confirmation of God searching our hearts. We read, If we had forgotten the name of our God or stretched out our hands to a foreign God, would not God search this out?

For he knows the secrets of the heart. There's that very interesting time when Jesus was calling his disciples. And we read in John chapter 1 about the calling of Nathanael.

Now Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus. And when Jesus saw Nathanael, he said, Behold, an Israelite indeed in whom is no deceit. Nathanael said to him, How do you know me?

Jesus answered him, Before Philip called you, While you were still under the fig tree, I saw you. Now Nathanael understood deep down that Jesus knew everything about him.

Everything. That he had special and intimate knowledge of him. And that this was something supernatural and wonderful. And in verse 49, He don't even remember, He only just met Jesus.

[5 : 05] He by the power of the Spirit, of course, He said, Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel. He knew that he was completely known.

And yet he was called by Jesus. Despite all his faults. Jesus knows our hearts and minds, Just as he knew Nathanael. In 1 Corinthians, We also have a glimpse of this absolute knowledge That God has for each of us.

In verse 12, Paul writes about the time When we see Jesus face to face. This wonderful passage. Now I know in part, That then I shall know, Just as also I am known.

Other translations put this as, Even as I am fully known. Paul knew that he was fully known. That one day we'll be, We'll know when we meet Jesus face to face, In a way that we don't know anything now.

We are fully known. So that's the first point. He knows everything about us. The second, He hedges us in. And what does that mean? In verse 5, You hedged me behind and before, And laid your hand on me.

[6 : 22] There's a sense here, Of being completely surrounded by God. He's behind and he's before. We're completely unable to escape from this.

We may fool ourselves that he doesn't see us, Or care about us. But the Bible is quite clear. He's so close, That he literally hedges us in.

Now many of us, And I speak to myself here, Spend our lives, Trying to ignore this. We foolishly pretend, That God is not there much of the time.

As Christians, We're not much better, To be honest. How often do we practice, And know the presence of God? How often do we acknowledge, The active presence of God, In us and around us?

That's a challenge to you and I, Today. There's a very well known, Perhaps not known here so well, An ancient Irish prayer, Of St. Patrick, Who brought Christianity, To my country, Oral.

[7 : 29] And one of the verses, Reminds us of this, Reminded me, When I was looking at this, Of this hedging, Behind and before. And the verse is this, Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth, Of friend and stranger.

That's just one of the verses of that prayer. The key, I think though, To how we react, To this complete knowledge of God for us, Is in verse 17.

Which you'll come to soon. It is precious, To David, These thoughts that God has about him, Knowing all things, And hedging in them.

And this hedging, Before and behind, Is one of the, Most wonderful things, That we can know as a Christian. We are protected, From all angles, By the Almighty.

It's a great, Great thought that. He is in us, And he surrounds us with his presence. This is a wonderful thing. A joy, To those who love the Lord.

[8 : 55] And if he was not protecting us in this way, We would soon, Fall into every type of danger, Would we not? The third thing I've found, Of this, That we see here, Is this knowledge, Is too wonderful, For David.

Read verse 6, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, It's high, I cannot attain it. What this says to me, Is that we must, Like David, Admit that God is not limited, In any way, As we are.

We simply cannot get our heads, Around such knowledge, That he has, Of each one of us, Not just me, But everybody. How could we, As mere creatures, Understand the mind of God, Who formed the universe, From nothing?

We're reminded of that wonderful passage, In Isaiah 55, 8, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways, Mine ways, Says the Lord, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are mine ways higher than your ways, And my thoughts, Than your thoughts.

We do limit God, Don't we? We try to bring him down to our size, But he's altogether, Beyond our comprehension, As to his knowledge, And his power.

[10 : 17] So let's be, Today, In absolute awe, Of this God, Who knows, All things, Constantly, And directs his thoughts, Towards us, Individually.

The next thing, Is, That David, Wonderfully describes, How pointless it is, To hide from God. Look at verse 7, To 12.

It's pointless, To find light from God, Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I send it to heaven, You are there. If I make my bed in hell, Behold, You are there.

If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there, Your hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall fall on me, Even the night shall be light about me.

Indeed, The darkness shall not hide from you, The night shines as the day. The darkness and the light, Are both alike to you. Do we not do this all the time?

[11 : 19] We shut off our minds, From the truth, That God is everywhere, And sees everything. There's no dark corner, That we can hide in. We may pretend, That he's not looking, But we fool ourselves.

It's a tactic, Is it not of the devil, To lie to us, And say, Don't worry, God will not notice, He's not interested. That's a lie, Isn't it?

I love the words of verse 12, Indeed, The darkness shall not hide from you, But the night shines as the day. The darkness and the light, Are both alike to you.

What we know physically as darkness, At night, When no one can see us, Is not dark to God. He doesn't have human eyes, That depend on receiving light waves, To see.

He sees without the physical light, That we depend on. We might, Perhaps, Attempt to flee from God, To another country, Far away from Scalping, Maybe to Lafali, For instance.

[12 : 26] But even if you go, To the North Pole, He's there. He can't get away, From God. He's everywhere. Do you think God is only in Scalping?

I'm sure he don't. When I came to Christ, I was in a remote part of East Africa, Many years ago. He was there. We might flee, Into the depths of depravity, Literally hell, It says here.

For make my bed in hell, Behold you are there. For some people, I think, Do they not rebel, Against Christianity, And, Against God, And they, They decide to indulge themselves, In every, Everything, Every type of, Pleasure and worldliness.

Thinking, That God is not there also. But he is there. He's right there also. Can't get away from God. And so there's no place, Or condition, That we find, That is away from the God, Who knows us intimately, And will not let us go.

The next, The fifth, You'll be glad, I'm getting through them quite quickly. The fifth point, David then marvels, At the fact, That God knew him, Even in the womb, And was creating him there.

[13 : 49] This is what I was alluding to, With the children's talk. Verses 13 to 16, These are wonderful words, For you formed my inward parts, You covered me in my mother's womb, I will praise you, For I have fearfully, And wonderfully made.

Marvelous are your works, And that my soul knows very well, My frame was not hidden from you, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Yet I saw my substance being yet unfurled, And in your book, They were all written, The days fashioned for me, And as yet there were none of them.

How often do we reflect on this amazing fact? It's worth looking, Imagining back to the time, When your own mother bore you, That you were in her womb.

Where was that? For me it was in Dublin, In Ireland. Doesn't matter where it was. As you were being formed in the womb, God was the one who was doing this, For each of us here.

And I, As a doctor, I can quite definitely say, It is a miracle, What happens in the womb. For each one of us, For each one of us, We are fashioned.

[15 : 11] I love those words, My frame was not hidden from you, When I was made in secret. You and I are its handiwork, He knew you then, You and I are precious to God, We are no accident.

And sometimes we might feel, Well yes, We are very unworthy, We are very sinful, Not really coming up to scratch, And of course that's true.

But we are precious to God, We are no accident, None of us here. There is a sense to here, Of God's plans for your life, And for mine. We read, As in your book, They were all written, The day's fashioned for you, When as yet there were none of them.

So he knew you, He fashioned you back then, In our mother's womb, He already had plans, For your life. I don't think this is what we might call, Determinism, Or the sort of predestination, You and I can do nothing, To alter.

Of course he gives us freedom, To choose how to respond to him. But do you understand, That we are made for a purpose? Do I understand, That he's already mapped out, And are we cooperating, With that purpose, In our lives, Day by day.

[16 : 34] Isaiah, Isaiah 50, 43 verse 7, Backs this up, This purpose, Everyone who is called, By my name, Whom I have created, For my glory, I have formed him, Yes, I have made him.

So we are made, For a purpose, For his glory, Each one of us. Many people, Have a very low sense, Of their own worth. They feel, That they are unimportant, That they are nobodies, That the world, Couldn't really care about them, And God wouldn't, Care about them either.

I think we all know, That that is the case, With lots of people. But let these verses, Correct, That lie, It says, That we were made in secret, We were skillfully wrought, And those wonderful words, I have fearfully, And wonderfully, And wonderfully, Made.

We need to meditate, On these words. It's not to make us proud, But we have, To have the right view, Of ourselves, Of God's creation, Each of us, Of infinite importance, Why else, Would he come, And die on a cross, For us, If that were not the case.

Not one of us, Is more important, In God's eyes, Than anybody else. There's no hierarchy, In this. So, The next point, Is the key, I believe, To how we respond, To all of this knowledge, That God has of us.

[18:11] David's attitude, To all of this, In verse 17, How precious also, Are your thoughts to me, O God, How great, Is the sum of them. You see, For David, This utter knowledge, And involvement of God, In every aspect of his life, Was not just good, It was precious.

It was precious to him, Because he knew God, As a God of love, Who only does the best for him, Despite all his falterings, And all his sins.

And we know that David, Was certainly not perfect. And when you become a Christian, And you turn your life over to Christ, This becomes much clearer. And as Christians, We know, And love the Lord, And we trust, That he has only our best interests in mind.

Romans 8, 28, And we know, That all things work together, For the good of those who love God, To those who are called, According to his purpose. Now we will come across, All sorts of temptations, And difficulties, In the Christian life.

But ultimately, He is, Completely committed to us. Look more at Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 31, What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, Who can be against us?

[19:31] He who did not spare his own son, But delivered him up for us, How shall we not with him, Also freely, Give us all things? I see this often, When I am attending somebody, As a doctor, Who is very ill, Perhaps close to death, This has happened on scalping, With me, But who has, This person, Despite all the pain, And all the illness, A firm belief, That a knowledge, That God has never abandoned them, In that situation, I am sure you have met, Many people like that, Never abandoned them, And is completely fallen, Right through to the end, And past the end, We can only have peace, In this life, If we hold on to the fact, That when we return to him, In repentance, And in faith in Jesus Christ, He is right there,

With us, Throughout all things, Now David knew this of God, In the following verses, In the following verses, Verses 19 to 23, He shows his hatred, Or his, I would say his impatience, His frustration, With those, Who abuse God, Who hate God, He shows his impatience, With God, Who allows, The wicked, We see it in our own world, Free reign, But in the end, He leaves it, He leaves their fate, To the Lord, Which is what we have to do, Right at the end, We have two of the most, Wonderful verses in the Bible, Verses 23 and 24, Search me, O God, And know my heart, Try me, And know my anxieties,

And see if there's any, Wicked way in me, And lead me, In the way, Everlasting, The believer, You and I, Who's looking to God, Always want, Purity of heart, And like David, Will invite the Lord, To search, Within his or her heart, We wish, The Lord to know, What's in there, And notice here, And this is often missed, I certainly have missed it, He prays about, His own anxieties, He wishes the Lord, To know, His anxieties, Try me, And know my anxieties, All of us get anxious, Some more than others, David was no exception to this, I've met many Christians, Who have anxiety, Worries, All the time, They're sleepless, Sometimes,

We don't bring these, To God, As David does here, May this be a lesson to us, Not to feel condemned, Because we have anxieties, And worries, We know that Jesus said, Worry never, You could never add, A single hour to your life, By worrying, But not to feel condemned, By this, But to bring them, To God, The God who gives us peace, That to me is, The lesson we have, David was quite open, He wanted God to come in, To his anxieties, And to help them with them, Are you anxious today, And pray this prayer with David, Search me O God, And know my heart, Try me, And know my anxieties, David knows, That the real source of peace, And freedom from anxieties, Is the Lord, The Lord of peace, The prince of peace, Let's invite God, Into our worries, As David does,

Let's not keep him, Away from them, And feel we shouldn't, Bring them to him, And it's not a quick fix, It's not my experience, It's not like they just, Go like that, It's a process, As we come closer to him, And he deals with them, But finally, He gets, He asks the Lord, To see if there's any, Wicked way in him, What a great prayer that is, We can happily go, Ask Christians, Unaware of what is offensive, In our lives, Is it pride, Is it greed, Is it jealousy, Is it lack of forgiveness, Is it idleness, The list, Is it ridiculous, Is it Salesforce, We have to, Ask God, Is it guarantee, Sometimes we are unaware that we have these things.

[24 : 29] How often have you heard or read a word from the Bible which seems to point directly at you, showing up what needs to be purified and corrected? Let's ask God daily to show us the areas of our lives that are not properly submitted to him.

We're reminded of that great psalm of repentance in Psalm 51, where he says, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew the right spirit within me.

And so we've learnt in this psalm that God has complete knowledge about us, that he hedges us in behind and before, that this knowledge is too wonderful, altogether too high for our understanding, that it's pointless trying to hide or escape from God who sees and knows everything, that God knit us together purposely in his womb.

We are fearfully and wonderfully laid with a plan of God for our lives, that like David we can find such knowledge of God precious, because always it is for our good, that David asks God to search deep in his heart for his anxieties and for anything that's impure or offensive.

A great thing for each of us to do. The very last line of this psalm is, lead me in the way everlasting. There is only one way.

[26 : 01] Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life. And unless you and I follow Jesus and admit our sin and our need of him as Lord daily and receive his free forgiveness, then we're not on the way.

But that way is open to every one of us. So where are you today? Do you know that you're on the way? You can have assurance that you're on the way when you follow him.

The way is in front of you. And there are really no obstacles except your own will and my will from being a follower to Jesus on the way. He died for you and he died for me.

And his arms are open today for each person in this church to be on the way with him. Will you pray this prayer of David with me now? I'm just going to pray if you can bear heads and I'm just going to say the words again as a prayer and you can say it perhaps quietly in your own heart as I read you that.

Search me and know my heart. Try me and know my anxieties. And see if there's any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting.

[27 : 24] I don't think■■ there's all any weird psicbesjänni here. I see if it looks like a Johann that was on the way I leave Hof to the traveler for my ■■ and a little bit to the traveler that comes through me that goes on and away■ character I might've had too many way to obey him because if it doesn't happen and I have to help him and work with him and work him one and I have to you can get