

CALL OUT

A STUDY OF THE PSALMS

HOW DID HE KNOW?

I recently saw a t-shirt, "I'm a coach... to save time assume I know everything." Very little escapes a coach's attention. Just because they didn't call out your bad play doesn't mean they didn't see it. Do it a second time and watch what happens. Of course, your coach really doesn't know it all. They just want you to think they do.

As theologians study God, they developed words to describe what they see in Scripture. God is what your coach wants you to think he is—omniscient (all-knowing), omnipresent (present everywhere), and God exercises those attributes through his omnipotent (all-powerful). Psalm 139 illustrates each of those omni's clearly although we don't have time to explore the whole passage today.

In Week 1, we opened our study with the Gateway to the Psalms. In Weeks 2-4, we looked at Psalms describing God's nature and his desire to have a relationship with all people. Then, in Weeks 5-9, we've seen how God wants us to look to him as our Comforter, Shepherd, Healer, Helper, and Rescuer.

This Week, we'll see God as the single focus and purpose of our lives. He uniquely formed us for a reason. He counts our days which have been allotted to fulfill that mission. In response, our entire life should reflect his design and intent. He alone gives our lives true purpose. Any small or limiting thoughts that we may have of God are magnificently transcended by this Psalm. Yet for all its height and depth it remains intensely personal.

PSALM 139:13–18, 23–24

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.

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!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"When you're lost, let me be your guide. Play my songs, see who you are through your father's eyes. Darling, you're a masterpiece, Breathing melodies. There's nothing that you have to be. You're a masterpiece."

This song brings me to tears thinking that one day my daughters may see themselves as less than I know them to be. Scan the QR code to be reminded of how our Heavenly Father sees you.



DISCUSSION

What is your earliest childhood memory?

ICEBREAKER

1. What does God do and where? (13)

2. What specific examples does David give? (15-18)

3. What does David ask of God? (23-24)

OBSERVATION

4. How does this passage speak to current hot-button issues such as abortion and gender identity?

INTERPRETATION

5. What "dangers" or discomforts might exist if we ask God to search our hearts and we receive a clear answer?

APPLICATION

This passage provides a great example that Christian truth must be accompanied by grace. If you need help to see compassion in difficult truths, talk to your Coach today.

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STUDY NOTES LIFE ON PURPOSE

Just a few months ago, the United States Supreme Court overturned one of the most egregious decisions ever reached by that highest Court. In 1973, the justices determined that the 14th amendment to the US Constitution included unrestricted rights to abort an unborn child in the womb at any time and for any reason. Since then, roughly 62 million unborn children have been killed. In light of this recent decision, abortion is still legal, but regulated by individual states rather than the federal government.

In the 50 years since, discoveries have shown indisputable evidence for believing life begins at conception. We've learned that the total length of DNA present in an adult human being would stretch the equivalent of 70 round trips from the Earth to the Sun. That strand encodes data for the next 9 months—from conception to birth—and far beyond. Although different terms get used that don't sound quite as human (zygote, blastula, fetus, etc.), all of them equate to one outcome if healthy and left undisturbed—baby. Abortion is not a simple topic. It is hard, emotional, and unenviable for any person put in the circumstance of having to decide. However, do not be fooled, it is killing a baby.

That original decision and its results, do not show the heart, mind, will, or hand of Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Mere numbers cannot convey the incomprehensible grief of the One Who meticulously designed, crafted, and built each and every one of those precious lives. To be clear, abortion not an unforgivable sin. Chances are high that somebody reading this has either had an abortion or has encouraged it because of an accidental pregnancy. Our goal is not to shame you, nor make you think God doesn't love you. On the contrary, our point is that from the moment of conception, each life has a purpose in accomplishing Heaven's work on Earth.

GOD'S PURPOSE CREATED US BY HIS DESIGN

As we open Psalm 139, David conveys God's personal knowledge and touch on every human life, ***"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb."*** From our organs and skeletal structure to all the conditions necessary in the womb for human life, God superintends this whole process. This attention to detail causes a burst of worship, ***"I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."***

The context of Psalm 139 appears to be David facing a false accusation. His defense rests on God's intimate detailed knowledge of every aspect of his life since conception. ***My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 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.***

David concludes this passage by stepping back for a moment to express his awe and gratitude, ***"How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!"*** This phrase certainly isn't intended to imply that the psalmist has actually calculated the precise number. He makes this clear with his hypothetical report, ***"If I would count them, they are more than the sand."*** As if all the womb's darkness were night of sleep, David rises to the outside world declaring, ***"I awake, and I am still with you."*** The dark mystery of the womb has ended, but his life-long journey with the Lord has only begun.

CALL OUT TO GOD AS YOUR PURPOSE

We live in a world where some would have you believe that some people's lives (or part of it) are a mistake. Whether the topic centers on abortion, "deformity," or gender, this passage could not be clearer: Their Creator thoughtfully designed and formed each individual. Therefore, we do not need to change or "correct" what a Holy God has created. He did *not* make a mistake. He made each sacred life with a divine purpose—to serve him every day.

If this is true, where does all the confusion and mistake identity come from? The most basic answer is sin. It's as if the forces of Satan whisper in people's ear, "You are *not* who God says you are." This rejection of God's design and purpose on our lives has led to a catastrophic abandonment of assurance in who we are and what we were made to do. To be nice and non-judgmental, these lies have made their way into the hearts and minds of Christians. In fact, many people struggle with their identity in Christ so much that they do not live with hope and purpose. Their lives look the same as their non-Christian friends.

Although different circumstances may have motivated David's prayer, each of us should pray David's words of repentance to the Lord, ***"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"***