

“Search Me Lord”

Taken from Psalm 139:19-24
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Our Father God, we come before You and thank You, Lord, for this night. For another opportunity to gather with the saints. Lord, to hear objectively Your word, to receive what the Holy Spirit has for each one of us, Lord, not what the man preaches, but what the Spirit teaches. We pray, Father God, that You would meet us where we are, Lord, that You would just be that portion tonight that we need, Lord. You know where each one of us are, where we were, and where we're going. You know what we don't know, and You know what we need. So, Lord, prepare in our hearts whatever it is, Lord God, that You need to reveal to us so that we might receive all that You have for us. We ask, as always, that Your Holy Spirit would be our teacher, our guide, and the revealer of truth. We know that when He's teaching and we're receiving it in the Spirit, Lord, it has eternal value. Everything else, Lord, falls by the wayside. There's no foundation and there's no superstructure. So Lord, we pray, Father, that You would build upon our faith tonight, that You would open our hearts and our minds to receive all that You have for us and we won't fail to give You the honor and the glory. And it's in Christ's name that we pray. Amen.

You can open your Bibles to Psalm 139, if you will. This is our fourth message on Psalm 139. I had no idea that we were going this far into the Psalms, but here we are. Yeah... it's been awesome, I've been enjoying it myself. We're going to look at the last. The Psalm focuses on the character of God, the Lord is omniscient, which is all-knowing. He knows everything. There's nothing that He does not know. He's omnipresent. It means He's everywhere. He's not in everything. He's simply everywhere. He's everywhere that we can be. David said, if I make my bed in Sheol, there You are. If I'm in the highest of heavens, there You are. If I'm as far as the east or west, if I travel by the speed of sound, You're with me. He's omnipotent, He's all powerful. There's nothing that God cannot do. There's no mountain that He cannot move. God is the Almighty and He has all the power. There was one commentary that said He's omni-righteous. I like that. He was the only one that mentioned that. I'm not even sure who it was, but he said He's omni-righteous. That means He is just. He has all righteousness. In other words, we might think

we're right or righteous. We might think that, this is the way it should be or this is the right way. Yet the Lord, may have something different. He is all righteous.

So whatever God says, that's what it is. There's nothing in between. So, we can't argue with Him! We've said often, you may have a reason, you may have a reason to complain, you may have a reason to do a certain thing, but you don't have a right because our rights are with Him. It's all about Him. It's all about Jesus. It's all about trusting Him. David, in this awesome psalm, he just like pours his heart out, but to see the Lord. He wants to see the Lord, and he sees the Lord in all that He is. In His all-knowingness, in His all-power, in His all. He's present everywhere. For some Christians, they read that, and that makes them uncomfortable. That makes them squirmish. They think, oh, God can read my mind? God knows? God knows your thoughts before you think them! He doesn't just read it as it's happening. He knows what's coming down the pike, and you don't. He knows what you're going to think next week at this exact time. What are you going to be thinking about, the pastor, right? You want me to say it now! But He's going to know. He knows everything in our minds, so it goes beyond what we think. When we say He's all-knowing... He's **all**-knowing. He's ever present, He's always present. He's all powerful, He has all the power.

When you think about all that power that lives in each one of us, that's the Holy Spirit's power. That's resurrection power! That's the power that Paul mentions in Philippians 3:10, that he would know Him by His suffering and by the power of His resurrection. That's like when we close our eyes and our heart stops here, that's when we really start to live. That's when life begins. That's when eternal life begins. That's a glorious day! God had that, and David received this from the Holy Spirit to see the Lord in these ways. And now he sees His righteousness. If there's anyone, I'll bet David, I can't say I'll bet... I wonder if David actually thought to himself, "if I had known the Lord this way back then"... Have we all not said that? Oh, if I knew then what I know now it would have been a lot different. But if we trust in the sovereignty of God, we realize we were where we were for a reason. There's always a learning that we have in our lives, that God is always preparing us for the next thing.

We don't know what the next thing is. We don't know what's around the corner. We don't know if this is the last message, if we get raptured on the way home, or before Sunday, or what have you, or some cataclysmic event that happens. God

already knows. I have comfort in that. I think David found extreme comfort in this psalm as he was receiving it from the Holy Spirit. He began by saying, “oh Lord, You have searched me and know me,” and yet he comes to the end when he says “search me oh God and know my heart, know my heart.” The word search, it means to examine with pain and care. That's deep. That's the Lord that's doing the searching there. With pain and with care He knows our actions, our location, our thoughts, our words, our ways, our motives. Hebrews 4:13 says, “and there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” He knows what's best for us. Romans 8:28, “He causes all things to work together for the good for those who love Him.” He decides what good is. You know, good may be calamity. Good may be affliction. Good may be persecution. Good may be famine. We look at those things and we say, “oh Lord, this isn't good. This is not good.” And God says, “this is good. This is good.”

The Lord will do what the Lord needs to do to keep us seeking Him. To keep us searching and keep us on fire for Him. The Lord will do what needs to be done. I'm grateful for that! Listen, how well it is for us to know the God who knows us. When I think of the Lord, when I think of God, my imagination can go pretty crazy. That's why I despise... I don't think the Lord likes it when He's called “the man upstairs”. He is not the man upstairs. He's not your co-pilot. Listen, if He's your co-pilot, He isn't Your savior. If He's not driving, you ain't going. That's as simple as that. You're going nowhere if He's not driving!

There's a song that Danielle sings about putting God in a box. How He's being lowered, and we put Him in a box and then we take Him out of the box every now and then. When I first got saved, that was the God that I wanted. I wanted God to come alongside me; I didn't want Him to take control. I wanted Him to come alongside, to be my Savior. I wanted to know that I had some insurance here and that I wasn't going to hell. I wanted Him to come alongside and we can walk through this life together. But the more I read the Word and then I began studying the Word and the more I looked into the Word... the more God was convicting me and showing me, it's got nothing to do with me. It's got everything to do with Him. It's His plan and it's His way. Listen, out of a hundred things that God was going to do with my life, this would have been ninety-nine. I don't know what one hundred was... but this would have been ninety-nine. I'm being conservative, but this would have been at the bottom of the list. God said, “oh, no, I'm going to put that as a priority! I'm going to open the doors. I'm going to

equip him. I'm going to give him words to say, I'm going to blow his socks off in a way that he's never going to imagine because he's going to be placed in a position where he has to rely on Me always." I'm grateful for that. I'm grateful for that because God knows my makeup.

My weakness was reading. I hated reading. I read one book, *The Biography of the Doors*, because I was a Doors fan in high school. That was it. That was the extent. It was a little paperback, that was all I got! That was the only book I ever read from cover to cover. I'm like, no, I don't want to read! And God said, oh, that's a great thing... imagine that. Now I read all the time. You look and see what God does.

I don't know what God has for each one of us, but I know God has something for each one of us. If we think that it has to be something elaborate, something beyond... it doesn't. It could be the simple things. Listen, a stay-at-home mom. Raising your kids, taking care of your children, homeschooling... no thank you! I would have ran, I would have been like Jonah! I'm jumping on a boat; I'm going in the other direction. Not going to do it! But God knows the needs that we have and He provides for them. He always does. He always, always does. It's not just that He knows everything. He knows me. He is everywhere with me. He created me.

David made this psalm so personal and yet, it's my psalm. It's one of my favorite psalms. It's your psalm. It's amazing what the Lord has been revealing through this. Proverbs 18:24 says, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. I thought of how twins, if they're identical twins, how they think alike. You know, or like if you've been married a long time, you find yourself saying the same thing at the same time.

When we were kids, we used to say, "owe me a Coke". Like someone's trying to kill us if we're going to drink that many Cokes, that's just not good for you! But remember how we'd say that? "Owe me a Coke." You say the same thing at the same time. "Owe me a Coke." Did anybody ever pay with the Coke, though? I know I never did. But you realize that you have almost the same mind and you think alike. But what about the Lord, the intimacy with Jesus? Do we not start to think like He thinks? Do we not start to see things the way He sees things? Are we not in a position where all of a sudden now we don't get excited like we used to?

If you drive in the city of Fall River, you can get excited real easy. I mean, we get cut off all the time. True story. I had my other Toyota Corolla. I used to call it my invisible car because people would just cut right in front of me. And I'm like, yeah, well, he didn't see me.. so it was an invisible car! I'm driving up President Ave, I get to the top and this guy from People Incorporated cuts right in front of me, and I hit his tire. It didn't damage his car and it didn't do much to my car. We pull over and the first words he says? "I didn't see you!" And I'm like, "no kidding! My car's invisible! How could you?" We're transparent. You see right through it. So I was right, I wasn't lying. I don't even know why I said that... how I got there. I reeled myself right back in.

Let me say this about "there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." In the New King James, it says there is a lover who sticks closer than a brother. He's the lover of my soul. He's the lifter of my head. He's my shelter, my high tower, my stronghold. He's my All in all. He's everything. You know, if you've got Jesus, there's no other need. That's the greatest need. It's not just about forgiveness of sin, (although I'm grateful for that, I'm hallelujah grateful for that!) but it's so much more. He didn't just save me and leave me.

You know, you think of Mephibosheth and he was crippled. The nurse took him and they were on the run and she dropped him. Mephibosheth, what happened?! Picks him up, and he was crippled his whole life. And David looked for someone in Jonathan's family, and because Mephibosheth reminded David of Jonathan, who was Saul's son, whom he loved dearly. And he said, you will sit at my table from this day forth. You will eat from the choice of the meats and the vegetables from my table from this day forth. And you know what that's the picture of? Us... Us! God says, you're going to come. You're going to sit at My table because I'm looking at you and I see My Son. We remind him of Jesus because we're His kids. And He says, come, sit at the table. He's the provider. He's the all in all.

John 2:24 and 25 says, "but Jesus on His part was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men. And because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, this is why, for He himself knew what was in man." He knows. So when David said, search me... David knows that God knows. It's about a relationship between a man or a woman and their God. That's what this psalm is all about. It's about relationship. It's knowing where He is and where we are. He's the creator. He formed me in my mother's womb. He wrote all my days in a book before there was

one. He knew my coming and my going. He knew everything about me and yet He still loves me.

There are things in my life that I look at and I go, I don't love that about me. I'm sure there are things that we can look at in other people's lives, certainly our children's lives, because we're critical of that... We want them to be perfect. And we say, you know, I wish that was different, I wish this was different. Do you think God says that? I don't think so. I don't think so. Because God can turn things around in a millisecond. He can do that.

I'm going to read the four verses and then we'll circle back. Psalm 139, verse 19. He says, "Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God. Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed". David was a man of bloodshed. Interesting. Verse 20. "For they speak against You." "Against You," and actually in the margin it says "*of* You". They speak of You wickedly. And Your enemies take Your name in vain. It means they lift themselves up against you. Verse 21, "Do I not hate those who hate You, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with the utmost hatred. They have become my enemies." I'm going to stop there.

David now sees how powerful God is and, how omniscient God is and how all-knowing God is, and he takes vengeance in his heart against those that are coming against the Lord. Can we honestly say, I hate those who hate You? Now, that's not personal... I don't like abortion. I hate abortion. I could say the abortionist I hate, but I don't know him. But I hate what he's done. I hate what they've done with the gifts that God has given them. God has given us a heart. He's given us lips. He's given us a mind. He's given us breath, to praise Him, to praise Him! We say His name in the first breath that we breathe. We're saying His name and from that time forth, we're proclaiming His name. But how many are cursing Him?

I had a neighbor, Mr. Moreira, and he was awesome, but he would say GD like it was nothing. I'd be cringing, but he said it out of ignorance. It wasn't a curse word to him. It wasn't bad in his mind. It sure was in mine. I hated hearing it, but I absolutely didn't hate him. I loved him.

You know, when blatant sin is a popular form of entertainment, do we choose? Do we see it? Do we call it out? Are we willing to walk away from it? The God who sees evil will slay all evil. We think people.... I think people get away with

stuff now. It's like, oh, how did God allow that to happen? That one went free and we know they're guilty. God knows. God knows what He's doing. He don't call me up.... "Yeah, Donat, I need some counsel on this one here. I'm not sure how to handle this one". No, He doesn't do that! He never will do that because He's God. He's God!

Men who delight in cruelty and war are not fit companions for those who walk with God. You know, who we hang around with says a lot. I remember some parents would say, "I put my kid in public school because they're a light and they're going to shine that light". No, the darkness is going to squash their light at some point. It's a difficult place, and everything's against you, and it's difficult for children especially to hold that up. If you homeschool, they become a greater light at the end of it all. That's what I believe. These men oppose God. Crimes committed before the face of the judge are not likely to go unpunished. God sees it all and David knew it.

The idea that we can love God without hating evil is absurd. He said you must love one and hate the other. That's what Jesus said. If we love God, then there are things that we're going to dislike. Absolutely. And since God is everywhere, He knows our feelings towards the profane and the ungodly. If we cannot deceive God, escape God, or ignore God, I say why not obey God? Why not just walk in that light that He's given us?

Listen, to hate them meant to reject them. Malachi 1:3, when the Lord said, "Esau I hated, Jacob I loved", He's saying that He rejected Esau. He preferred Jacob. So when we say hate, it's the same way. To disavow any association with them. Psalm 97:10 says, "hate evil, you who love the Lord". Amos 5:15, "hate evil, love good, and establish justice in the gate". Romans 12:9, "let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good". God wants the best for us. We don't need to mingle with the evil of the world. We don't need to. David loathed those that hate the Lord. He hates them with perfect hatred. What is that? "Perfect hatred". It means without any mental reservations. It's without harboring the guilt of it. Without that taking over your heart or your soul. I mean, hate has a way of changing people. Perfect hatred doesn't change you. It's just seeing things, calling it out. Maybe it's in your own heart, and that's that. That's that because the Lord knows. The Lord knows. He hates not the persons of men, but their sins. Not what God made them, but what they made themselves.

There's so many people that don't believe in God today. Years ago when we did the door-to-door ministry and we went knocking on doors and we witnessed to everybody in the streets and we gave them little pamphlets and we asked, "do you know Jesus? Do you know Jesus?" I can honestly say... there was one person that I remember, maybe more, but I remember one that literally had no knowledge of God. That was 20 something years ago. Today, the kids today, they don't have any knowledge. You know, the parents make the foolish statement of, "I'll wait till they get older and make their own decision". No, train them up now. Train them up. Get some religion in their lives. Teach them something.

I grew up in Catholicism. I'm not proud of that, but my great grandparents were Catholic. My grandparents, right down the line. And what else am I going to do? When I went and registered to vote, I said, "Dad, what do I write?" He says, "you're a Democrat." I said, "oh, okay, I'm a Democrat." I didn't ask questions. I didn't know the difference. All I know is that gave me the right to vote. So, I was a Democrat... Don't tell anybody that, though, okay? You're going to leave here and be like, hey, Pastor, you're a Democrat! Ever seen the video of the little kid crying? It's a little video. And the kid's crying, crying. And the mother says, what's the matter? And she goes, Dad, called me a Democrat. It's hilarious! All right... I'm not a Democrat. I'm a Republican. I'm not proud of that either, by the way.

This psalm, every psalm that David wrote, every psalm that's written, other than the imprecatory Psalms that are really casting stones upon their enemies, literally. It's relationship. It's all about relationship. It's what the Lord is doing. And that's why David can say this in verses 23 and 24. He says, "search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there be any hurtful, any hurtful way in me and lead me in the everlasting way."

Have you ever asked the Lord to search you? Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 13:5, examine yourself and know whether you are in the faith. Examine yourself. Search your heart. Scripture says we're to search our own hearts. But what about when we ask the Lord, and I pray this prayer almost every day, "Lord, search me, know my heart". And I'll tell you why. Because I may not make the right decision all the time, but my heart... I want to be right. I may not say the right thing. Lord knows my mouth works quicker than my brain sometimes... sometimes. My brain's slowing down, so my mouth is almost even now. But there's times when we say things and we can't take it back. You can't put water back in the faucet. Once it's out, it's out. I want God to look at my heart.

It's the same thing in relationships. You hear something and it's like, I don't know. But what's the heart? That's not the heart. I said it to my brother who showed up at my door after 28, 29 years... look at my heart. You want to judge me? Judge me for my heart. Have I been perfect? No, nobody is. But David goes before the Lord wide open because the Lord is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. The Lord is the one who knows him. Just like God knows our prayers before we ask in Matthew 6:8, He knows what we're going to say, He still likes us to say it. Oh, my wife, yeah, she knows I love her. She knows I love her. No, I like to hear "I love you" sometimes. I know she loves me, but I like to hear it.

You think the Lord likes to hear it? You think God likes it when His children talk to Him? You think He's sick of it when we're praying the same prayer all the time? "Oh, Lord, deliver me. Oh, God, help me. Oh, Lord." He never gets tired of that. He wants us to do that.

Listen, it means to dig deep. In other words, it's really as though it's a confession. Search me, Lord. Look at everything in my heart, show me where I'm wrong. Show me where my fault is. I'll tell you; it'll change your life. It'll transform your life. He will have God himself search him and search him thoroughly till every point of his being is known and read and understood. What a mercy that there is One who can know us to perfection and He's intimately at home with us. He made His home in us. We know the eye that looks is a loving eye. "Search me, O God", is the voice of a confident love, which is sure of the love that examines the sinner. Pour out your hearts before Him, O you people. God is a refuge for us. Not that God may know, but that the man may know.

Do you desire to know your hidden evils or your sin? I do. The closer we get to the Lord, the more the light shines on us, the more we see that sin. You know, we think, "well, I don't steal anymore". "Well, I don't swear as much as I used to, you know." "Well, I'm not drinking anymore." "Well, I'm not doing this anymore." And yet we're still doing these other things. When you go and you say, search me, O Lord, and know my heart, and God shows you those things, you'll be like, "yeah, I guess I missed that one, Lord". Because the closer we get to the Lord, God's going to show us. Listen, that's a good thing. That's good, embrace that. Conviction... I'm glad God gives us conviction. Without it, you're running with the devil all day long.

David, to prove his loyalty, he's thus showing that he was not like the wicked mentioned. Since God knows everything, He would also know David's anxious thoughts. God would also know if the psalmist had any offensive ways. It means a way of pain caused by being afflicted for wrongdoings. Again, we could have a reason, but we don't have a right. We don't have a right to right everybody. "Let God be true and every man a liar." Right? Romans 3:4 "Let God be true and every man a liar". God will do it. Let the Lord do it. The searching issue is a divine knowledge of the heart. The trying or testing issues are divine knowledge of the thoughts. And so he said, search me. That's my heart. Try me. That's my thoughts. How many times do we sin in our mind without saying anything? You want to be reminded of that? Lord, search me and know me. Know me, Lord. He knows God knows him. He needs to be known. He needs to know that security, that relationship he has, that trust that he has, that God's going to reveal the things that God needs to reveal so that he's going to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. And that's the key.

Do we want to grow? Listen, if we don't want to grow, we don't have to pray, "search me, oh Lord, and know my heart". We don't have to ask God to do that. We could just go on living life. But how close do we want to get? How sinless do we want to live? I would think the goal is that we wouldn't sin. The blood of Jesus in 1 John 1:7 is cleansing us constantly. Praise the Lord for that, but we're still sinners. He is also a God of love. He could be trusted to search him and to know him at the deepest levels. This is also an admission that God knew David better than David knew himself. David wanted Him to examine him and look for the worry and anxious thoughts. I tell you, God will be faithful to show you things that you have never seen if you pray that prayer. I guarantee it. He wanted God to lead him. To lead him where? In the way of everlasting, that's in God's way. Lord, lead me in Your way. Help me to have Your thoughts. Put a guard at my lips.

The everlasting way is a way of life after death. It's eternal, but it's also here. It's abundant. It's the abundant life, John 10:10. Listen to Psalm 143:10. It says, "Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground". Psalm 5:8 says, "O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes. Make Your way straight before me". It's saying, God, search me, check me, know my thoughts, and lead me the way You want me to go. That's probably why I ended up behind the pulpit (I just thought of it). Because I used to pray this prayer all the time. God is, like "oh, okay, that's a good idea. How about this?" How about not?.... But God knows what He's doing. We desire to go in the way

of everlasting, the way of eternal life, the way that will please the Lord. He's quite sure that the evil which God sees, God will help him to overcome.

I wonder how many times David got caught up in that. David was a fighter. When Jesus said, turn the other cheek, I wonder how David would have responded to that. He was a man of blood. That's why he never built the temple. But David had a heart after God. I think the perfect examples are the two times that he had an opportunity to kill Saul. Saul was out to kill him. It would have been justified for him to kill Saul. He had a reason; he didn't have a right. Instead, I love it... he just cuts a piece of the garment off of Saul's outer coat. He goes, oh, king, by the way I could have killed you, but I didn't! Because David's relationship with the Lord meant more. It meant more than all of that. God has nothing to do with our evil but to fight against it. That's His mission. The ways of wickedness are in us. The way of everlasting we need to be led into. Naturally, we incline to evil because we're sinners and that's what we do. It must be the divine hand and divine Spirit that leads our feet in the paths of righteousness. So when we say, search me, Lord, we're not saying, search me and leave me there. We're saying, search me and try my thoughts. Lead me, though, Lord. Once you do that work, Lord, once you reveal that to me, Lord, lead me to the way of everlasting. I need to be there.

Let me close with this. How awesome and almighty is our God? Watch this. How intimately acquainted with all our ways. He knows it all. You wove me in my mother's womb. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God. How vast is the sum of them. Lead me in the everlasting way. The intimacy of David and the Lord is a picture of our relationship with Jesus. Jesus is everything that David said the Lord is. We should never be afraid of asking the Lord to search us and point things out to us so we can be rightly related with Him. So we can say, search me, Lord. Amen? Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we do thank You for this awesome psalm, Lord. I thank You for the things that You have shown me and revealed to me, Lord. I pray, God, that this would be a prayer that we would all take to heart. Search me, God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts. And if there be any hurtful way in me, lead me in the way of everlasting. Lord, You know us better than we know ourselves, and You continually show us and guide us and strengthen us and provide for us. God, I pray that our focus would be upon You and You alone, that we would continue to trust You and rely on You for all things. And Lord, that we

would bring You glory for Your Name's sake. And we ask this in Christ's name.
Amen.