



Welcome to Grace Communion International

January 17, 2021

SERMON

KNOW ME; LEAD ME IN THE
WAY EVERLASTING



SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)

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“1 ¶ «TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID.» O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

3 You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.”

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)



**“4 Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.**

**5 You hem me in, behind and before, and
lay your hand upon me.**

**6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I cannot attain it.”**

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)





“7 ¶ Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?

8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,”

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)



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**“10 even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me.**

**11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover
me, and the light about me be night,”**

**12 even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day, for darkness is
as light with you.”**

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)



“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.”

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)





**“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 were 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.”**

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)





**“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!”**

Psalm 139:1-18; 23-24 (ESV)



THIS IS THE WORD OF GOD PRESERVED FOR US.

THANK YOU GOD. YOU KNOW AND LEAD US IN THE PERFECT WAY!

AMEN



King David was completely secure in the fact that he was known by God totally.

During today's sermon, as we expound on these verses, we can ask ourselves and reflect on the knowledge that God knows us completely. We can reflect and ask ourselves is this an encouragement to me? Do I feel secure in God.

One thing that we can say about David is that he knew God as a loving God. At the time, he did not know that God was Trinitarian. The full knowledge of the Trinitarian being of God became known when Jesus came to the earth as one of us to reveal who God is. Through Jesus, we come to know God the Father, we come to know the Holy Spirit and, of course, we come to know Jesus, God incarnate in our flesh. Jesus came to reveal the one true God who is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, 3 distinct perfectly indwelling one another in the unity of love.

I come from a family of eight children. We were poor but we did not lack anything. My father had to go away a lot to earn a living and provide for us back then. He was away for months at a time.

My dad and my mom faced many challenges. However, I never remember feeling

insecure. We always had enough. Back then, most of the people we knew live the same lifestyle. Consequently, we were content with what we had. My father and my mother made us feel physically secure. We never fretted about the food we ate and the clothing we wore.

That was never on our mind because we trusted both my father and my mother to provide and they did. Life is not perfect and we had challenges but living in that security made all the difference in the world although as children, we did not fully realize how blessed we were in that way.

If human parents are able to make us feel secure, how much more our loving Father. This is what David experienced as we read this Psalm.

As adults, when we are married, the person who knows us the most is our spouse as we share everyday life. In a loving relationship, there is security. We feel okay to let one another be known. We can be transparent with one another. However, human relationships are never perfect because we are not perfect in the flesh. We know one another well humanly speaking but we do not know one another perfectly. Only God does.

As human beings, because we are fallen, we have difficulty letting each other be known as we are.

From 1989 to 1996, we lived in Québec in a small city called Terrebonne. We lived in a middle-class environment. However, we never got to know our neighbours very well because we could sense that they had an untrusting attitude or a fear of us.

In our own individual lives, we are not always completely transparent with people even those we know very well. There are certain things that we do not share for various reasons. Maybe if they knew all the struggles that we experience or have experienced, maybe they would reject us or maybe judge us. This is our fear.

It takes a long time to open up to others. It takes a high level of trust to be able to do so.

Sometimes, we may carry this attitude towards God.

One of the things that God shows us about himself in this Psalm is that God is completely trustworthy. He already knows us. He already accepts us.

We have the privilege of being in the new covenant. It has been revealed to us, to his church, what God the Father has done for us in Jesus during his whole life, including

his ministry, his death on the cross, his resurrection and ascension to the heavenly throne as the perfect man representing all of us. To use an analogy, he is our federal head. As the apostle John says in 1:17 - **for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ**. No one has ever seen God; the only God who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

So let us begin to examine some 139.

“1 ¶ «TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID.» O LORD, you have searched me and known me! 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.” (Ps 139:1-2 ESV)

“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.” (Ps 139:6 ESV)



God knows us very intimately.

- He is aware of all of our movements.
- He knows when we sit down and when we wake up.
- He knows what we think. He knows our very thoughts.
- He searches us and he knows all of our ways.
- He knows us so intimately that before a word is on our tongue, he knows what we are going to say.
- He hems us in, behind him and before and he lays his hand upon us. As the apostle Paul says in Acts 17, he is the source of our breath; he is the source of our life; he is the one who gives us everything.

All these verses reflect a very personal relationship. It's a description of how intimately we are in God's relationship. It's a description of God's actions, of his activities in our life.

When David says that this knowledge is too wonderful for him, that it is high and that he cannot attain it, it reflects the same attitude that we are to have toward God.

How could God know so much about each and every one of us is beyond our

comprehension! Yet, this is the truth about God.

It shows how God who created the whole universe is also a very personal God.

Jesus, as he describes himself, is the good Shepherd. He knows all of his sheep individually. His sheep, meaning his people, hear his voice.

Jesus is the complete revelation of who God the Father is, who God is. He is gentle and he cares for each and every one of us. His goal is to lead us into the fullness of his kingdom. In fact, this is his desire for all human beings he has so gracefully created.

A good Shepherd, although aware of the sheep's movement, does not want harm to come to his sheep. Knowing that God knows so much about us should be very reassuring to each and every one of us.

The unconverted mind stands in opposition to this truth. The unconverted mind does not want to know the truth about God's loving care. His unconverted mind wants to flee from God rather than to draw near to him.

As God calls us in his church to himself, he changes our hearts and gives us a new life, a new self that is attracted by God's loving kindness. We are in awe of him. We reverence him, but we no longer have the fear that he is there to condemn us. Quite the contrary.

That is the attitude David had towards God. He was attracted to God. He was awed by the fact that God had such an attitude towards him.

Knowing that God knew him to that extent was a source of security for David.

In faith, we know that God has the same attitude towards us. He wants our good. He wants to give us an abundant life in the fullness of his kingdom.

Are there any areas in our lives where we fear being known by God? If there are such areas, we can just admit them to God, confess them because he already knows all about it. In Jesus Christ, we already stand forgiven. So we can approach God with complete assurance through our high priest Jesus Christ.

“7 ¶ Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?

“10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,”

9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,” (Ps 139 (ESV)

12 even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.” (Ps 139:7-12 ESV)

God Is Present Wherever He
Is/Wherever We Are



There is no place we can go to hide from God. Knowing that God is such a loving God, why would we? God's Spirit is everywhere although invisible to our eyes. God is everywhere present. He has entered our time although he transcends our life.

Jesus clarified the role of the Holy Spirit when he came to the earth . **“16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. 18 ¶ “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”** (Joh 14:16-18 ESV)

In knowing where we are, God's purpose is to lead us and to protect us in his grace and purpose, as we read in verse 10 of this Psalm.

This gives us great assurance doesn't?

In this psalm, David does not confess any sins. It is a psalm that shows the greatness and the love of God for his people. As David wrote this psalm by the inspiration God, it was very personal to him.

We may be able to hide some aspects of ourselves from other people, but we cannot hide any aspects of ourselves from God. God knows the heart of every human being.

The knowledge of the love of God for humanity shown in God the Father being willing to send his son Jesus to the earth to rescue and save us is very reassuring.

Jesus sacrificed greatly for us. We need not forget that God the Father also sacrificed greatly for us by accepting that Jesus would humble himself to become as we are, to live a life of suffering and rejection to rescue us from death and the misery of this world.

“I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.” (Jer 17:10 ESV)

“And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” (Heb 4:13 ESV)

This is a good thing knowing what Jesus has done for us in Jesus Christ.

“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 were none of them.”

Psalm 139:13-16 (ESV)



As we read these verses, we can feel the love that David had for God as he recognized his greatness and his involvement in his life even from before his conception. God knew David would be born even before this birth!

This is a very clear indication that life indeed begins in God and physically in the womb. Human life is precious to God.

In “the inward part” is translated kidneys and rein in the King James version.

The word in the original Greek can also be translated as the heart and the mind as we see in Jeremiah

“But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.” (Jer 11:20 ESV).

God has created our mind and the centre of our emotions. All that we are is created by God! We are so complex that even with the advancements of medical and biological science, we are still learning about how fantastic and

wonderfully made is the human body.

The average adult human brain has about 100 billion cells. Linked by synapses, each brain cell can connect to tens of thousands of other brain cells. It's still a mystery exactly how these connections work together to create all the marvels of our brains. (Wikipedia)

Our body is made up of 37.2 trillion (37.2 followed by 12 zeros) cells. This is not a final number, but it's a very good start. While it's true that people may vary in size—and thus vary in their number of cells—adult humans don't vary by orders of magnitude except in the movies. (Wikipedia)

David did not have that kind of information but he knew he was wonderfully made.

Because God holds time and because he is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, he knows the days of our lives.

“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.” (Ps 139:17-18 ESV)

Psalm 139:17- 18 (ESV)



King David was reassured by God’s presence with him all the time.

God was with him even in his sleep. When David awoke from this sleep, he knew he was still with God and that God was looking after him.

He was very reassured by this fact. He did not have to fret and worry because he had enemies.

This Psalm is very realistic. We know David did not have an easy life. His life was in danger many times at the hand of Saul and others.

He also made terrible mistakes by sinning against God as we read in Psalm 51 after his sin with Bathsheba and the premeditated murder of her husband, Uria. David, being secure with God and in God, could be transparent and share his challenges in writing for everyone to see. Knowing that God is our Father and Jesus our brother makes us confident. We know we do not have to fear what others will think of us as we walk in the ways everlasting. Our identity is in God and not in others.

He was able to take ownership of this horrible sin. He accepted God’s punishment as

he fervently prayed to God not to take away the Holy Spirit from him.

The next few verses show the reality of what David had to face. We can learn much from these verses.

19 Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!"

20 "They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain!"

21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?"

Psalm 139:18-21 (ESV)



At that time, David did not know that Christ would die on the cross and that God the Father would reconcile the whole world to himself in Jesus Christ not counting their sins against them (2 Corinthians 5)

The reality that David faced about men and women who were opposed to God and rebellious against him is no different than what we face today.

Just like David, we live in a world where there is a lot of turbulence because evil still exists in our world.

In our Western societies, there is a tendency to make science a god and to rely on it more than we rely on the Almighty God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Science is a good thing as it reflects the discovery of God's magnificent creation, the laws of nature, etc. But it becomes problematic when we make it an end in itself. It then becomes an idol.

Then, there are all the false religions some that completely deny Jesus Christ and others would take on his name and masquerade as Christians.

Evil exists everywhere as we see in the groaning of nature, the pollution of our planet, the famines, the wars, the pandemics, etc..

All of these have been existing in every generation since the creation of man. In the revelation of Jesus Christ, to the churches in Asia Minor, these are identified as the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

In Revelation 6, there is

- the white horse who represents the power of evil imitating Jesus;
- the red horse is a symbol of blood which represents wars - conflicts between nations, between kingdoms and between individuals;
- the black horse which represents greed and injustice which leads to hunger and famine
- the pale horse whose rider is death and Hades followed him. It represents death riding through the earth, and the grave, now personified is gathering up the corpses. (Paraphrase from Discipleship on the Edge by Darrell W Johnson page 171-172).

These horses have been riding in every generation with an accelerating tempo.

We also live with a terrible invisible enemy, Satan the devil.

The apostle Peter wrote about him and said to the first Christians in his care, **“8 ¶ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 ¶ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”** (1Pe 5:8-10 ESV)

One of his techniques is deceit. The devil is a master at concealing and misrepresenting the truth.

‘2 But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practise cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord,

with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.' (2Co 4:2-5 ESV)

In spite of the suffering caused by evil of all sorts, we, like David, can have assurance that the great Shepherd, our Lord Jesus, is looking after us and guiding us.

David was very a humble man. The following is what he asked God.

“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!” (Ps 139:23-24 ESV)

Psalm 139:23-24



King David had so much trust in God and felt so secure in him that he asked God to try and know his thoughts.

In other words, he had so much trust in God in the assurance that he was loved by him that he asked God to scrutinize and examine his heart.

David did not have an attitude of defensiveness before God but welcomed God’s correction. He wanted to know how God knew him and if his thinking and heart were in error, he wanted to be in line with God’s will. His desire was for God to correct him.

He wanted to know and become aware of any wicked or grievous thoughts he might be carrying without his even being aware.

In the praise song **Shine Jesus Shine**, one of the stanzas has similar words where we sing:

Lord, I come to your awesome presence
From the shadows into your radiance

By the blood I may enter your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me.

I have met some who are afraid of singing those words as there is a fear of God's correction. It reflects distorted view of God.

It was not so with David.

David had a child-like attitude towards God. He was trusting. Like a child, he did not hide anything from God. Like he child, he was not afraid to share his victories and struggles with others. We see in David, a man who let himself be known by God and in godly wisdom known by fellowman. He shared his story, the story of a journey that still inspires millions and millions. David's story is so relevant that God has preserved it for every generation to read and study, including us!

Do we have an attitude like David acknowledging and welcoming being known by God and having a great desire for God. Do we want God, in his grace and mercy, to shine on us?

It is a question that we all need to ask ourselves?

The bottom line is that we need not be afraid because our great Shepherd is Jesus and when we see Jesus we see the perfect representative of God the Father. He is completely for us and desires to bring us in the fullness of his kingdom where there will be no more pain, sorrow, tears, sins, death. He wants to share his abundant life with us!

Let us simply and humbly welcome his presence!

Let us pray