

Examined By God

Psalm 139:1-24 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. 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. 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, 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. 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. 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? ²² I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies. 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!

❖ Introduction

➤ Next Week

- We will be doing a Spiritual Assessment as a Church
- I want to encourage everyone here to be here to be a part of it...
- I also want you to encourage others you know to come and take part in it...
- It is an important part of your journey while in this world
- As God is working in you to prepare you for His kingdom...

➤ We need a Checkup...

- All of us from time to time need a checkup...
- Need to go to the Dentist...
- Car needs oil checked
- As you get older you need your heart checked out
- Women need to go regularly for checkups...

➤ We need a Spiritual checkup...

- And a complete analysis of where we currently stand in our walk with God...

➤ Let's not be like:

- The Ostrich.... Who loves to bury his head in the sand when Danger is around...
 - Show pic...

❖ Psalm 139:

➤ We are looking into Psalm 139 in an effort to encourage us to Examine ourselves...

- Outline: 1) Known 2) Surrounded 3) Here 4) Made 5) Immense 6) Separate 7) Examine

➤ Psalm 139 teaches us that God knows us...

- He knows even the most intimate details of our lives
- Inside and out...

➤ I do not want to make this Psalm fit what I want it to fit...

- If that is not what it says...

- I say this so that you can always be aware that we are to take Scripture
- In context... and in such a way as to rightly divide it...
- Never are we to be speaking into the text, but allow it to speak to us...
- **With that being said, I believe Psalm 139 is most appropriate**
 - For a word from the Lord to encourage us to be Examined...
- **Psalm 139 teaches us....**
 - That God has examined us, and knows us in great detail...
 - And David states in very specific ways how God knows us and is always with us...
- **The Ending of Psalm 139 is our focus:**
 - He ends with asking God to search us...
 - And that is what we want to do...
 - We can say all the day long that we need to examine ourselves...
 - But there is never any true examination without
 - The Lord God revealing our hearts to us...
 - So let us pray with the Psalmist...
 - Search us Oh God!
- **Do something with our findings...**
 - Does no good for a big business to hire someone to help them do an internal report...
 - And after getting their findings...
 - Just let them sit there and do nothing about them...
 - Let's begin to take action with what God has revealed to us...

❖ Known

- O LORD, you have searched me and known me! ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. ³You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.
- **A Very Personal Psalm**
 - **David does not speak to God and of God in His relationship to men**
 - In a general way here...
 - He speaks very personally...
 - **48 Times David uses (Me, my, or I) 48 times...**
 - David is making it clear that God knows him in particular...
 - That his relationship with God is one in which God knows him personally...
 - **So read and understand these verses in light of God's intimate knowledge of you**
 - Take these verses to heart here today...
 - Take the personally...
- **Have Searched me and Known me...**
 - The idea is almost like that of Mining...
 - When the miner is digging for gold, he is going through every piece of dirt
 - He is working through all of it till he finds even the tiniest speck of gold
 - This is how well God has searched us and known us...
 - **When I sit**
 - **When I rise up** – the totality of our daily lives...
- **Discern my thoughts**
 - Not only does He know our thoughts...
 - He discerns them... meaning He recognizes them and separates them...
 - He knows what they mean and where they come from...
- **Search out my path and my lying down**

- He investigates and discovers our paths... what we will do in life...
- **Acquainted with all my ways**
 - He knows all our ways... He understands the things we like and do not...
 - He knows what makes us angry or sad or mad...
- **Know my words all together...**
 - Even before I say it...
 - Often I try to finish what my wife is saying.... (don't ever do that)...
 - I often try to say... I know what you are thinking... or what you meant by that...
 - All... bad ideas...
 - But God knows them before we even think about uttering a word...
- **Hebrews 4:13 ¹³ 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.**
- **Practically I look at this personally...**
 - **If the psalmist is gonna say me and I... I need to look at it the same way...**
 - **And it could be embarrassing...**
 - And I know from these verses that God knows me deeply...
 - And I will say even much more deeply than I can ever know myself...
 - **So God has mined through my character and who I am as a person**
 - Not what everyone else sees...
 - And maybe He has found a few precious stones...
 - But I fear He has found a lot of dirt... alot of stuff to dispose of...
 - **He knows my thoughts... and all my ways... and my words before they are uttered**
 - He knows when I think a negative thing about someone else...
 - He knows when I try to make myself look better in a situation than I really am...
 - He sees the lack of trust I have in him often
 - He sees when I think impure thoughts
 - He knows those cursings that I do not utter out loud but are under my breath
 - He knows when I am not generous but stingy with my possessions and my time...
 - **God knows me deeply...**
 - And the Psalmist knew this... and He took His walk with God as a personal thing...
 - Between Him and God...

❖ Surrounded

- 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.
- **Hemmed in Behind and Before**
 - So... the idea here is being totally surrounded...
 - I can not help but think David has a sheep pen in mind when He writes this...
 - **My thoughts run to cattle...**
 - We own cattle... and they are all fenced in...
 - And we are able to round them up and put them in even smaller pens made out of metal pipe
 - And no matter where they try to go... they are gonna stay right there...
 - And it doesn't matter how big and bad they are... They are surrounded by the fence...
 - **Now... that is almost seen in a negative light...**
 - But here... I believe it is a **comfort**....
 - It is also eye opening and should be something that causes us to **revere** God...
- **Lay your hand upon me**
 - So... I think there are two ways to see this laying of God's hand on us...

- One is Comforting... the other Afflicting... Or Correcting....
- In one way He is there to comfort us... the other to grab hold of us to correct us...
- **Let me illustrate it with two verses from Psalms... both psalms of David**
 - **The Affliction or Discipline:**
 - ◆ Psalm 38:2-3 ² For your arrows have sunk into me, and your hand has come down on me. ³ There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation; there is no health in my bones because of my sin.
 - **The comfort:**
 - ◆ Psalm 18:35 ³⁵ You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your right hand supported me, and your gentleness made me great.
- **David's Response = Our Response**
 - Knowledge to wonderful for me
 - It is High and unattainable

❖ Here

- 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, 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.
- **His Presence is Everywhere**
 - Heaven: check
 - Hell: Check
 - Deep Sea: Check
 - Darkness: Check
- **Jeremiah 23:23-24** ²³ "Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away? ²⁴ Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.
- **He is There... He is Here...**
 - Leading Me
 - Holding Me
- **Darkness is not dark to Him**
 - You can not turn out the lights on God.... Isn't that good to know...
 - Isn't that comforting...
- **Practically:**
 - What a great set of verses...
 - We can know that no matter where we go in life... God is there with us...
 - Somehow or another God can be everywhere all at once...
 - And deal with all of us individually...
 - Just like in verse 6... that is wonderful to me... it is too high for me to attain it...
 - I can not even understand that... But I know it to be true...
 - He is everywhere for me... and wherever I am He is there to lead me... He is there to guide me...
 - So... that means when we are at church He is there for us...
 - It also means He is there with is in the pig sty ... down in the nasty mud and slop
 - Do not run from God...
 - Don't be like Jonah... God found Him... cause He was never lost or hidden to God
 - Even in your darkest hours... turn to God...

- You are only fooling yourself and hurting yourself when you hide your face from God...

❖ Made

- 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.

➤ Formed and knitted me

- Frame not hidden
- Eyes saw my unformed substance
 - Wow... look at how detailed David speaks of God's knowledge of him...
 - His knowledge of me is the same...
- **Personally**
 - God placed me in my mothers belly...
 - When I was so small I could only be seen through a microscope...
 - When I was nothing but DNA... He was forming me...
 - He personally formed me the way I am...
 - ◆ He gave me the hair I have...
 - ◆ And the skin and the brown eyes...
 - ◆ He gave me my fingers and toes...
 - ◆ He made my nose and my mouth...
 - And He was working on me before I could see or speak or hear...
 - ◆ God was planning out who I would be...

➤ Our Response: Praise

- Why? Because ...
 - **Fearfully Made**
 - **Wonderfully Made**
 - **Wonderful are your works... My soul knows it very well**
 - ◆ How well does our Soul know how wonderful His works are...

➤ Before I had any days...

- Every day was written in His book...
- Before they were formed...
- **Before I took my first breath... God wrote down my days...**
 - I find it so neat that God takes such care over His children...
 - But gives us such great freedom to pursue Him in a million different ways...
 - He allows us to make choices on what to study and spend our time on...
 - Yet in every thing we can do... We can do it to bring honor and glory to Him...
 - ◆ So that others will come to know Him...
- **God gives you freedom to pursue your interests and grow in your gifting...**
 - Just remember who the giver is...
 - And worship Him and not the gift...
 - Remember whose Kingdom you are to be enhancing... His, and not ours...
 - ◆ Because our kingdoms are finite and will crumble
 - ◆ But His is infinite and will last forever...

❖ Immense

- 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.

➤ **His thoughts are vast**

- More than the sand
- **Isaiah says it even more clearly...**
 - Isaiah 55:8-9 ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- **They are precious to David...**
 - And they should be precious to us...
 - God's word should be so precious to us...
 - That we spend time in it...
 - That we place it into our heart for remembrance...
- **God knows me...**
 - And He knows how often I have neglected the reading of His word...
 - He knows how often I have been lazy about placing it into my heart...
 - To my own detriment...
- **After Isaiah speaks of God's thoughts... He directly connects it to His word...**
 - Isaiah 55:10-11 ¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
 - God's word is great and mighty and should be precious to us...

➤ **I awake and I am still with you**

- This verse right here is so real to me...
- I often say... "He just won't leave me alone"
 - And I mean this with all reverence... and thanksgiving... He is there...
- No matter how far I run from Him... No matter how evil my heart can be at times...
- When I awake... guess who is there.... God!
 - So He is there to guide us back to Him...
- **He is there as our Helper**
 - Hebrews 13:5-6 ⁵ Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." ⁶ So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

❖ **Separate**

- 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? ²² I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.

➤ **A Great Difference Between Wicked and the Man of Psalm 139**

- Speak against God with a Malicious heart
- Take His name in Vain
- Hate Him
- Rise up Against Him

➤ **The Humble Man of Psalm 139**

- Desires the end of God's enemies...
- Why? Because He loves the God that knows Him...
 - He loves the God that has been merciful to Him...
- The Godly man finds God's enemies to be His enemies...

➤ **Application**

- If this is to be true of us... We must stop loving the world...
 - 1 John 2:15 ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

➤ **Humility and Pride at the Heart of Separation**

- The man of Psalm 139 spends His time in praise and adoration of God...
- He attributes all good things to God
- The enemy of God exalts himself above God...
- He does not trust God or give Him credit for His goodness...

❖ **Examine**

- 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!

➤ **Invite the Examination of God upon your heart...**

- He is there already...
- The Psalmist takes 22 verses to tell of the closeness of God to the person...
- He takes 22 verses to state... to proclaim God's nearness and knowledge of Him....
- Then He asks God to examine Him.... He asks God to search him out...

➤ **God Examine me... And show me**

- Search me and know my heart
- He ends where he began... He began saying God had done this... and now asks God to do it...
- Mine through me... Sift through my dirt...

➤ **Try Me and know my thoughts**

- He is asking God to test Him...
- To run him through a purifying process...
- In the same way they melt down gold to remove its impurities...
- **This is what He is asking God to do for him...**
 - Our response should be the same...
 - We should be open to the trying of the Lord...
 - Because it is good for us...

➤ **Any Grievous way**

- He wants God to look at Him...
- And to show Him if there be any sinful ways about Him...
- Let us pray and ask God the same thing...
- Let us be honest with God and ask for Him to show us what He has seen...

➤ **Lead me in the way everlasting...**

- The way everlasting is contrasted against the grievous way... the sinful way...
- God's ways lead to eternal life...

➤ **God's Way is the Everlasting Way...**

- Have you followed God's way yet...
- **As you ask God to examine you... you may hear Him telling you...**
 - You do not even know me yet...
 - Give your life to God this morning...