

Psalm 139

I. The context

This psalm is clearly born out of a trial in David's life (see v. 19-22)

II. God's Omniscience (v. 1-6)

A. v. 1 is the theme verse for this section: God knows everything about me

1. God knows everything I do (v. 2a, 3)
2. God knows everything I think (v. 2b)
3. God knows everything I say (v. 4)

B. v. 6: David's response: such knowledge is too lofty for me!

III. God's Omnipresence (v. 7-12)

A. v. 7 is the theme verse for this section: where can I go to escape you?

1. I can't go far enough up or down (v. 8)
2. I can't go far enough left or right (v. 9-10)
3. I can't get in dark enough place to escape your notice (v. 11-12)

IV. God's Omnipotence (v. 13-16)

= He is all-involved in my life, not just a casual observer

A. He hinted at this earlier

- v. 5: you have laid your hand upon me
- v. 9-10: your hand is guiding me

B. Now he explicitly states it

1. You made me the way I am at birth (v. 13-16)
 2. You are in control of all my days from birth to death (v. 16b)
- Already written in his book = part of his plan

V. David is in awe of the fact that God is infinite and intimate

A. Infinite (v. 17-18): too hard to even comprehend how great God is

B. Intimate: David's point is not just that God knows everything in the world and is everywhere, but that God knows him intimately, and is with him wherever he goes, and has his hand on his life

VI. This reality can be terrifying

A. There's something so confining and almost smothering about this God we can never escape. We like our freedom and space, but we are "hemmed in" by God (v. 5)

1. We try to deny the reality that God is with us wherever we go, and we just make decisions without taken Him into account

B. There's the fear of being totally exposed. He knows all the sin and brokenness that we wish we could hide

1. Adam and Eve at the fall (Gen 3)
 - a. They try to cover their nakedness with leaves
 - b. They try to hide from God in the bushes
 - c. They try to cover and hide by shifting the blame onto someone else

2. We do the same thing today, only we have more sophisticated strategies of covering and hiding
 - a. We hide in our accomplishments
 - b. We hide in our physical beauty
 - c. We hide in our own moral efforts
 - d. We hide in our busyness
 - e. We hide by deflecting the blame on someone else and play the victim

VII. This reality can be comforting

- A. If God loves us in the midst of our brokenness, then his total knowledge of and presence with us can be a very comforting reality
- B. This is David's response (v. 23-24)

Since you already know me and love me, I invite you to search and no me
Analogy: like a swaddled baby: at first they fight it but then give in and find comfort in it
- C. We are called to come out of hiding.
 1. We are clothed in Christ's righteousness (just as God clothed Adam and Eve in animal skins), so our sins are covered and paid for
 2. So we can come out of hiding, and invite God into those dark places in our lives to experience forgiveness and healing

VIII. Challenge

Let's take David's posture of prayer in v. 23-24 throughout our week. Honestly opening ourselves to God and asking him to do the healing work only he can do

Discussion Questions

1. Psalm 139 is a very familiar psalm. What new perspective or idea struck you from Sunday's conversation about this psalm regarding God's omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence?
2. Of all the ways we try to cover and hide our brokenness mentioned on Sunday, which one do you connect with the most (or do you have another strategy not mentioned on Sunday)?
3. What has been your experience of "coming out of hiding" and opening the darker places of your life up to God? That is, what have your experiences of total honesty and openness with God been like? What has been the fruit of that, if any?
4. To what extent is it also important to come out of hiding not just with God but with one another? Is it enough for God to know all our dark places and sin or is it important for another human to also know them? How do we live faithfully in this regard?