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## *Search me, God, and know my heart*

Psalm 139 is a rather unusual Psalm in more ways than one. It is a grand Psalm. It is a very personal Psalm, from start to finish. It is a statement of king David's response to God and his greatness, which teaches us about how we should respond to God.

The first 16 verses survey God's greatness.

- In verses 1 through 6 David tells us that God knows everything. The theological term for this is *omniscience*, which refers to God knowing everything, His knowledge being both infinite and eternal. God never discovers or learns anything, He knows it all. God knew when David got up and sat down, all his ways, what he said before a word rolled off his tongue. This all-encompassing knowledge, David confessed, "is too wonderful for me."
- In verses 7 through 12 David reminds us that God is everywhere. There is nowhere he could go where God did not know the place and him. Even in the pitch black dark times that darkness was "as bright as the day" to God. God is spirit. One thing this means is that He is not limited in terms of space. God does not, as it were, divide Himself or His attention into all the places that exist and so be partially present everywhere. God is everywhere all the time, at the same time, with His entire being. While some think David was trying to hide from God, or at least fearful of God being every where he was, that was not the case. He was rejoicing in this wonderful truth. God's people are never beyond His loving watchcare!
- Then in verses 13 through 16 David reminds us that God created us. He paints a brief but detailed picture of God creating his "innermost parts", weaving him together—all in a beautiful and awesome way. God is the omnipotent, the all-powerful Creator who gives life. There would be no life, there would be nothing if God were not actively involved in giving life, in bringing things into being.



While David has already given us some of his response to God's greatness, verses 17 through 24 give more detail about his response, and show us how we should respond to God's greatness.

- The first step is to humbly and reverently worship God. To truly worship God is to truly declare with all that we are in all that we do the matchless greatness of the character and work of God. Verse 17, “How precious also are Your thoughts for me, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You” (17-18). Earlier in verse 14 he tells God, “I will give thanks to You, because I am awesomely and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well.” His example is one we are to follow, to humbly and reverently worship God for how great He is, and for His great works.
- The second step of response to God’s greatness is to boldly take our stand with Him. We pick it up at verse 19.

“If only You would put the wicked to death, God; leave me, you men of bloodshed. For they speak against You wickedly, and Your enemies take Your name in vain. Do I not hate those who hate You, LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with the utmost hatred; they have become my enemies” (17-19).

“Where did this come from?” David has been singing about God’s greatness, and now this? Yes, God will judge the wicked, but why is this here? The greatness of God, His holiness, sovereignty and love moved David to boldly declare his allegiance to God with no compromise, including asking God to judge evil. We are to follow this example.

- Verse 23 is another abrupt change which brings us to the third step in responding to God’s greatness—sincerely asking and trusting God to lead us in His way. Look at verse 23,
  - “Search me, God, and know my heart; put me to the test and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there is any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way” (23-24).

How we need to follow this example!

David opened the Psalm by telling us God had searched and known all about Him. He closed by asking God to keep on searching and knowing his heart. He wanted God to try him, to probe and examine him to see what was *hurtful*, things that were not as they should be, things which he might not be aware of. He did not want any sin in his heart to hinder his relationship with God or hurt others. The truths of God’s greatness led David to want to know and understand more, to want the Lord his Shepherd to lead him in the true, loving, everlasting way. That should be the burning desire of our hearts.

Let’s join David in standing in awe of our great God, worshiping Him today, in each day and every circumstance.

*Pastor Lyle*