

## *Everyday Prayers for Everyday Life*

### PSALM 139 PRAYING TO THE REAL GOD

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**For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.**

**1** O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. **2** You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. **3** You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. **4** Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. **5** You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. **6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. **7** Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? **8** If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. **9** If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, **10** even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. **11** If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," **12** even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. **13** For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. **14** I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. **15** My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, **16** your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. **17** How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! **18** Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you. **19** If only you would slay the wicked, O God! Away from me, you bloodthirsty men! **20** They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name. **21** Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD, and abhor those who rise up against you? **22** I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies. **23** Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. **24** See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

1. How might someone live if they felt isolated and unnoticed? Have you ever lived this way? Describe what that looked like.
2. Read Psalm 139:1–6. List the things that God knows about you. What does it mean to you that the God of the universe knows you so intimately?
3. Read verses 7–12. Where is God? Do you think this comforts the writer of the psalm or bothers him? How about you?

4. Does it sound like the psalmist is trying to hide from God? Have you ever wanted to hide from God? Were you successful?
  
5. Read verses 13–18. How far back does God’s knowledge of you go?
  
6. What words are used to describe how God made you?
  
7. What does verse 16 tell you about your life? What attitude change do you see in verses 17–18?
  
8. What does it mean to you that God knows all about you and that he acts in your life? What have you learned about God from this psalm?
  
9. In verses 19–22, what angers the psalmist? How can this anger be reconciled with Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:44?
  
10. Why do you think verses 23–24 immediately follow the discussion on hatred?
  
11. Are you ready to ask God to search your heart, test your thoughts, and lead you in the everlasting way? Put verses 23–24 in your own words and express them to God in prayer.