

PSALM 139: David's Road Map To Relationship

Psalm 139:19-24

We continue to look at Psalm 139, a psalm of David that is so rich in theology, so deep with relational vocabulary. In writing this psalm, King David really helps us to go deeper with God. These verses, dear Christian, are truly the way to cultivate a deeper relationship with our Father God.

To meditate on these verses day and night, to internalize this vocabulary of intimacy, is to be rooted and grounded and fruit-bearing, as the Psalmist in Psalm 1:

Psalm 1:1-9

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

God has been so gracious as to give us, His children, Holy Scripture not only for instruction in righteousness, but to help draw close to Him, that He may draw close to us:

James 4:8a *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.*

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: In the past, what methods have you used to draw close to God, or to prepare your heart for private communion with Him? Why is Scripture such an important way to draw close to God?

As we prayerfully study out the last six verses of Psalm 139, God will show us great and marvellous things from His law:

Psalm 119:18 *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*

Psalms 139:19

(KJV) *Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.*

(NIV) *If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!*

When we align our hearts with God, we will love what God loves, and hate what God hates. We as believers in Jesus Christ are not unaware that there is a raging battle going on in the heavenly realm for the souls of men, women, and children - who will live the balance of their lives as God's children through Jesus, or remain in the deceptive clutches of the Evil One, the Father of Lies. The battle rages on...

2Corinthians 10:3-6

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and

bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

It is worth noting that the battle Paul is talking about in this passage is against the unbelieving, unrepentant, stubborn hearts of those still dead in their transgressions. It is a spirit, the spirit of the world. King David is addressing this spirit and those in whom murderous revenge (David's enemies?) and wickedness dwell. These are the enemies of God, and David, being a man after God's own heart, hates what and whom God hates.

We balance all of David's demands for justice against the wicked with the merciful nature of God, in that it is not God's desire that any perish, but that all might come to a saving knowledge of God:

2Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But there are those who are stubborn, who have hardened their hearts against God, who refuse to repent and receive salvation through Jesus. In Psalm 139:19, David is imploring God to slay these wicked ones. It is important that we understand that this is not the justice that our world dispenses - spiteful, vengeful, murderous revenge. No, no. This is God's perfect justice, even as He is perfectly just. King David so perfectly expresses here the heart cry for justice that resonates across our world today. Only God can and will administer justice that is in accordance with His character. We are wise when we allow Him to convict and judge on our behalf:

Romans 12:19

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

*STUDY POINT: Using your concordance, look up and write down all of the passages in the New and Old Testaments where God extends mercy when He could have administered justice.

As God's children, we also align our hearts with God's Word - loving what He loves, and hating what He hates. The names and numbers of those opposing David here are not as important the fact that God is presenting a picture here of good (David the God follower) and evil (David's God opposing enemies).

Psalms 139:20

(KJV) *For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.*

(NIV) *They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.*

The text in the two versions above present the wickedness of David's enemies through their speech. Their hatred for God is manifest through what they say. Jesus teaches us in the New Testament that out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. There really is no hiding the true wickedness in our hearts:

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The contents of our hearts spill out through our words:

Luke 6:45

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

As believers we are to guard our hearts, that is control what we input into our eyes and ears, so that our outward life - our behaviours, decisions, and words - do not bring dishonour to God:

Proverbs 4:23 *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What practical and spiritual safeguards do you have in place in your life to guard what goes into your eyes, ears, and heart?

Psalms 139:21

(KJV) *Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?*

(NIV) *Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?*

Here it is again. This alignment with the heart of God that caused God to call David a man after his own heart:

Acts 13:22

And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Let me say at this point that David is addressing the rebellious in his sphere of opposition, while God is painting here a grim picture of those who rebel and rebel and rebel against Him their whole lives, even as He holds out the free gift of salvation through His Son Jesus:

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Isn't it tragic that these rebellious people spend their whole lives kicking against God, only to come to the end of their lives realizing they have forsaken the Lover of their souls in exchange for a lie. And under the abusive hand of the Father of Lies. God will still forgive them if they repent on their death bed, but oh, the pain of wasted years enslaved to rebellious flesh!

Even as David was aligned with God through His Word, and experienced the favour of God through it, we have the very same powerful privilege to be right in the will of God whenever we pray and are in agreement with His Word:

John 15:7

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

It shall be done, dear Christian!

And how important it is to sit in God's presence with His Word and simply and humbly agree with Him! Not all prayer time, not all devotional time, needs to be filled with sound of our own voice! Let God speak, beloved!

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

Psalms 139:22

(KJV) *I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*

(NIV) *I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.*

God's enemies are David's enemies! The hatred of which David speaks here is God's hatred - not spiteful, vengeful, murderous hatred.

Psalms 139:23

(KJV) *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:*

(NIV) *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.*

What a contrast here in David's tone. He has become quiet and open before God. David has also shown us the gateway to true repentance. Repentance requires conviction of the Holy Spirit. And conviction comes only as we give God access to the deepest parts of our hearts. The parts that no one else sees. But God even sees the conception of evil in our hearts:

James 1:13-15

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

He sees, and hates, the devious thoughts and deeds that come as a result of this conception:

Proverbs 6:18

An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

The good news is that once God shines His holy searchlight on our hearts, we are able see our sin for what it is, repent, and ask God for forgiveness, which He grants to us instantly:

1John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalms 139:24

(KJV) *And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

(NIV) *See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Perhaps the word *wicked* in this verse puts you off a little bit. You see, the flesh and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) does not like to perceive itself as wicked, maybe bad, but not wicked. Our holy God, however, sees our sinful conceptions, desires, and thoughts for precisely what they are - wicked. This is why we appeal to our Holy God in the name of our eternal Saviour Jesus, Who is our Righteous Advocate (1 John 2:1) and He leads us back to the path of righteousness, where God dwells, forever.

John 3:17

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Beloved in Jesus, we conclude this study in Psalm 139 with the beautiful truth of the Gospel - that God sent His Son into our world and into our lives not condemn, but to save. And we see here the heart desire of God for His children to see their sin for what it is, forsake it, and receive God's forgiveness through Jesus. What a wonderful miracle that once we have been forgiven, our relationship with God is restored and refreshed by the Holy Spirit.

David's words in this psalm were inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) and when we memorize and meditate upon these words, we are by faith in His Word - our road map - drawn into alignment with the very heart of God.

In this way, you and I can be like David - children after God's own heart.

Hallelujah!

- Reverend Darren McClelland