

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Commentary by Michael Sigler
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God Is All-knowing

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-16, 23-24

Key verse: “Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely” (Psalm 139:4).

How can we enjoy a relationship with God that is *real, authentic, and life-changing*? Psalm 139 is a testimony to this kind of walk with God.

In the opening verses, the psalmist is amazed at how *completely* he is known by God—a God who has “searched me and known me,” who knows “when I sit down and when I rise up,” who is “acquainted with all my ways” (vv. 1-3). God knows me so well, says the psalmist, that “even before a word is on my tongue,” God already knows what I will say! (v. 4).

Five-year-old Jonathan had been learning the Lord’s Prayer by listening to the congregation say it each Sunday in church. One Sunday, Jonathan felt that he had learned the prayer well enough that he could join the congregation in praying aloud. He could be heard praying confidently, “Our Father, who art in heaven, *I know you know my name.*”

God does know Jonathan’s name—and *your* name—and the number of hairs on your head (Matthew 10:30)!

The psalmist is amazed at how completely God knows him. But being known so intimately can be uncomfortable, especially when we realize that a completely pure and holy God sees all of our sins and impurities. There is evidence that the psalmist felt some of this discomfort, and that his reaction was to want to hide from God: “Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?” (v. 7)

After yielding to temptation in the garden, Adam and Eve tried to hide from God, too. Trying to hide from an all-knowing God is a common human response. But if you really think about it, hiding from God is “like a three-year-old playing hide-and-seek in a phone booth with Sherlock Holmes!”

Eventually the psalmist thinks better of this response. Instead of hiding, the psalmist comes to an important realization: *the One who created me and knows me the best is the One who loves me the most!* “For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb; I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are you works; that I know very well” (vv. 13-14).

I am reminded of the bumper sticker that, from a distance, read, “God is watching you!” Sounds frightening, doesn’t it? But when you got closer and read the smaller print, here was the rest of the message: “He loves you so much, He can’t take His eyes off of you.”

The psalmist first stands in awe at how thoroughly he is known by God. Next, as he realizes the implications of a holy God knowing all of his sins and imperfections, he wants to run and hide. But then the psalmist comes to this important realization: The One who made me and knows me the best is the One who loves me the most!

With that revelation in his mind and heart, the psalmist says, in effect, “*Lord, here I am....Search me, know me, take my life and make me all you want me to be*” (vv. 23-24).

Psalm 139 is an amazing testimony to the possibility and promise that we can have a relationship with God that is real, authentic, and life-changing. It requires us to be open and honest with God, to receive his forgiveness and grace, and to pursue a life-long relationship of intimacy and love with our Lord.

That is the kind of relationship with God that I want! Don’t you?

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