

Psalm 139:1-18
Created on Purpose

Warm Up

I remember at school, making a plastic bookstand in my Technology lesson. It was a bit wobbly and the finish wasn't quite right, but I was proud of it. What is the best thing that you have created/made/ designed? Why did you do it? What was it like when completed? How did you feel about it?

Background and context

This psalm of prayer and praise written by David, focuses on the intimate relationship between David and God. The repeated "I-you" combination underlines that God's knowledge of us is personal and relational, not merely abstract. The four part psalm marvels at God's understanding of David who declares that such knowledge is "too wonderful" to grasp. David realises that God has been with him since before he was born, providing comfort and strength. He recognises that he is "fearfully and wonderfully made" and his life is in God's hands. As a result David praises God, and humbly asks Him to 'search him' and lead him, for evermore.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Psalm 139. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?



1. **Read v1-6.** Where do we see that God's knowledge of David is complete?
2. **Read v 5. "You hem me in"** (NIV) is this a picture of protection or imprisonment? Why?
3. How do you feel knowing that you can never surprise God? None of our thoughts or actions catch Him off guard!
4. **Read v7-12.** David asks **"Where can I go from your Spirit?"** (NIV) How does he reveal his understanding of God's omnipresence?
5. Why should this be a comfort when we feel alone and isolated, particularly when facing challenges? Share a time of God's closeness, when you felt surrounded by Him.
6. **Read v13-18.** What in these verses suggests God's deliberate and careful creation of David?
7. How does knowing that your life is not a cosmic accident or a random roll of the genetic dice impact your life choices and attitudes?
8. What does the word "fearfully" mean in the context of the verse? What does it teach us about God?
9. **Read v 19-22.** There is a sudden shift here to an angry rant about the wicked. Why do you think David does this? (Look back at what you have just studied)
10. **Read v23-24.** How does the psalm end? (look back at v1) What is the difference? What does this mean for us? How should we respond to God in the light of this psalm?

Discipleship and Application



11. How does knowing that all humans are God's creation, "fearfully and wonderfully made", and image bearers impact our treatment of others?



Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.