

10. What the Bible Says About Respect for Life - handout

Psalm 139.1-18, as Psalm of David.

Type [bit/ly.nlncmu](https://bit.ly/nlncmu) into the address bar of any browser for a series overview and session notes.

A. Getting started - Tim

- Did anyone write a prayer to God this week? Are you willing to share it?
- Layout of today's psalm: 1) You are Omniscient, 2) Omnipresent, 3) Caring, 4) The ASK

B. Psalm 139.1-12 (omniscient) – Ryan

1 O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.
2 You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.
3 You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do.
4 You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.
5 You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!

Questions

- Why do you think deism is a popular way of viewing God?
- How does this passage counter the perspective of deism?
- God desires an intimacy with us that can be both comforting and scary. How can we remind ourselves of God's presence even when God doesn't feel near to us?

C. Psalm 139.7-12 (omnipresent) – Ryan

7 I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence!
8 If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there.
9 If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans,
10 even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.
11 I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night—
12 but even in darkness, I cannot hide from you. To you, the night shines as bright as day.
Darkness and light are the same to you.

Questions

- V11-12 say that "I could ask the darkness to hide but even in darkness, I cannot hide from you." Why do humans tend to be attracted to the "darkness" and how does God's light shine through?
- What are some other verses that mention light or darkness?

D. Psalm 139.13-18 (God cares) - Tim

13 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.

14 Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

15 You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book.

Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

17 How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered!

18 I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Questions

- So, God knows every detail of our lives, and is present in our every moment. What would Google do with such access? What does God do?
- Psalm 139 is a favorite passage for the pro-life (anti-abortion) movement. Can you think of any other scriptures along the same lines? – [Deut 30.19-20](#) says “choose life.”
- How might a Christian stand on the pro-choice side of the political abortion debate? – See [Let's Consider Abortion](#).
- Other than abortion, how else might we interpret God's instruction for us to “choose life?”
- Respond to this C.S. Lewis quote from *The Weight of Glory*, “Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses.” – *Robin's bubble concept*.

E. Psalm 139.19-24 (the ASK) - Tim

19 O God, if only you would destroy the wicked! Get out of my life, you murderers!

20 They blaspheme you; your enemies misuse your name.

21 O Lord, shouldn't I hate those who hate you? Shouldn't I despise those who oppose you?

22 Yes, I hate them with total hatred, for your enemies are my enemies.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

24 Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Questions

- How do you feel about David's “ask?”
- What ASK would you like to make of God this morning? – Handout [Let's Start with Jesus](#)

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Teaching notes are in italics; these are eliminated in the Handout pages. Type **bit/ly.nlncmu** into the address bar of any browser for a series overview and session notes.

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When examining life in regards to its importance in the historical context we see that individuality is of little importance. Generally, the richer or higher status one has the more value and respect is given to that person. That paradigm has shifted; while people are put on pedestals, achieving status and showing individuality has become an ultimate goal. We believe that all life has equal value regardless of achievement, riches, or place of birth. Furthermore, people aren't simply singular bodies that become less valuable as they age. There is a belief of deism today, that is a view that God created this universe and has taken a hands off approach since.

Questions

- Why do you think deism is a popular way of viewing God?
- How does this passage counter the perspective of deism? — *God not only knows the names of everyone that has ever lived, God knows everything about each of us. In these first few verses, the psalmist reiterates this belief. God is so great that we can't completely grasp His ways but he still cares for each of us.*
- God desires an intimacy with us that can be both comforting and scary. How can we remind ourselves of God's presence even when God doesn't feel near to us?

C. Psalm 139.7-12 (omnipresent) – Ryan

- 7 I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence!
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Questions

- V11-12 say that "I could ask the darkness to hide but even in darkness, I cannot hide from you." Why do humans tend to be attracted to the "darkness" and how does God's light shine through?
- What are some other verses that mention light or darkness? — *Beginning with Genesis 1:3 on throughout the Bible there are references to light and dark. Some of those are: Isaiah 9:2, Isaiah 42:16, John 1:5, John 8:12, 2 Corinthians 4:6, and 1 John 1:5-7.*

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Questions

- So, God knows every detail of our lives, and is present in our every moment. What would Google do with such access? What does God do? – *Google would use it to influence us and profit from us. God will use it - even our sin - to grow the intimacy between us.*
- Psalm 139 is a favorite passage for the pro-life (anti-abortion) movement. Can you think of any other scriptures along the same lines? – [Deut 30.19-20](#) says "choose life."
- How might a Christian stand on the pro-choice side of the political abortion debate? – See [Let's Consider Abortion](#).
- Other than abortion, how else might we interpret God's instruction for us to "choose life?" – *caring for the refugee, undocumented immigrant, mercy killing of the elderly, capital punishment, war...*
- Respond to this C.S. Lewis quote from *The Weight of Glory*, "Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses." – *Robin's bubble concept*.



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Questions

- How do you feel about David's "ask?"
 - *Expect the class to notice and be troubled by David's harshness towards his enemies... David's hatred of evildoers and his call for their destruction also disturbed me - until I dwelled on verses 23-24. There David caught himself and wrote, "If I'm asking the wrong thing, point it out to me." So I decided to start with Jesus and realized that a thousand years later, you responded to David's request through Jesus: "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven."¹ What a change in focus!*
 - *Probably will have to pull out the notice of v 20... It caught my attention because of the increase in white supremacy in our country. At least partially, this rise is facilitated by self-identified Christians misusing the Bible to justify an evil practice. There's just no way to support white supremacy when we start with Jesus.*
- What ASK would you like to make of God this morning? – Handout copies of [Let's Start with Jesus](#)

F. Closing

¹ [Matthew 5.43-48](#)