

## Prestonwood Connection 2004

### Search Me

### Psalm 139

Wednesday, May 26, 2004 • Dr. David McKinley  
Lord's Supper

[Dr. McKinley, message *Search Me* ] < 239 >

Well, tonight is the night of completion, completion of what has been a wonderful series of weeks that we've come together to worship the Lord on Wednesdays, to pray for one another, to encourage each other in the faith and of course there's no greater way to bring that...this time to a close than to also make it a time of consecration, a time of really committing our hearts and lives and what we're gonna be doing over the next few weeks and months to the Lord afresh and anew and I am so thankful that you're here and a part of this and I'm certainly very grateful for a..., the time that we've shared already in song and in worship tonight.

As I was looking at all these young men up here, of course I have of them in my life and family, but all of them, I was thanking about a little boy who was a..., on his way home from church after a Sunday morning service and he announced to his mother in the car, he said, "Mom, I've decided to become a minister when I grow up." And his mother looked and said, "Well, honey that's okay with us, what made you decide that?" He said, "Well, I have to go to church on Sunday anyway so I figure it'd be more fun to stand up and yell than to sit and listen." Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh. [congregation laughter] Well, we've got a group of guys here tonight who aren't standing up and yelling but I will tell you they decided to stand up and be leaders for Christ and I think God for that in their life and I hope that that's the commitment of your heart, is that you would stand for Christ and that you would live for Christ and of course the way that we do that is to rely upon His strength and His power and not our own and tonight we come to a very wonderful and precious time together and it's the time of consecration and gathering at the Lord's Table and every time I come near to the Lord's Table I cannot help but in my mind and in my heart go to a significant verse that is found in the book of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter 11. It's verse 28 and in just a moment I want us to look at this verse because this verse always impresses me with the fact that when I come here I need to get ready to be here. I can't just come and do this like I do other things a..., it is something that I must do in preparation, coming before the Lord and seeking the Lord and coming clean before the Lord as I approach this table. If you've ever had the opportunity or the occasion, living in this community we live in, that's always growing and...and expanding and sprawling, of maybe walking up on one of the new buildings or the new houses that are going in in the communities around us it's not uncommon to get right to the doorway and finally realize that there's a sign there that says, "No Trespassing." In

other words, yes this is something that in a work in progress that's under construction, but you don't have the freedom to just go here there a warning and in a very real sense there's a warning when we come to this table. It's not that we cannot come here, because Jesus is the new and living way, in fact Jesus invites us to come. He says,

... *"I am the way the truth and the life..."*

But just as much as the Bible invites us to come to Christ and to come by the way of the cross the Bible does warn us about a casual trespass into these holy things without acknowledging the need to prepare our hearts. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:28 says:

*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

*...let a man examine himself,...*

Self-examination, not being casual, not being careless, not being without understanding, but examining yourself, spiritual investigation is important and the Bible tells us that when it comes to the table of the Lord we need to do some spiritual investigation, because one of the purposes of the supper is to cause us to go back to the cross and to examine our lives in light of the price that Christ has paid for our sins. If any one of us can go on living in sin and giving of ourselves in sin, in attitude, in acts then we have wandered away from the magnitude of God's grace that has been extended to us at the cross. The cross calls us to humility, to confession, to release and rather than living as though it were and getting by in this world much like this world we need to always demonstrate and awareness and a sensitivity to the sin that breaks the heart of God and that cost God the price of the cross and therefore the cross is always to be very tender to us. Now when the Bible tells us to examine ourselves it's not because the Bible wants us to go to seed on some form of morbid introspection and I am sad to say there are some Christians who seem to love at the level of just spiritual navel gazing, they just, you know, are constantly introspecting themselves. There is a grace, there is a mercy, there is a great grace and a great mercy to bring forgiveness for sin. But at the same time the Bible does remind us that we are to do these things in remembrance of Jesus and to remember Him is to remember His cross and is to prepare my heart and to afresh and anew present my life as a living sacrifice unto God. So when I think of examining myself and preparing myself I think of a Psalm and I would invite you to turn with me from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11 to Psalm 139, because in Psalm 139 we have a simple prayer that I would encourage to be the prayer of your heart in this time of drawing near to God and drawing together as brothers and sisters in Christ. In Psalm 139 in verse 1 the psalmist says:

*O LORD, You have searched me and known me...*

Whether you examine yourself or not God has already examined you. God knows where you are and how you are tonight and it doesn't say that God's

search is a probability, it is stated as a fact:

*God, You have searched me and You have known me...*

And Psalm 139 opens with both a comforting and a disturbing statement about the nature and the knowledge of God. He has searched me. He has known me. Literally the Bible is saying your life and my life is cellophane to God. There is a transparency. You know how you use cellophane? You use that as a covering over a dish that you put, maybe, in the refrigerator, some leftovers to look at again and you wanna be able to see in and to see it and just as that cellophane covering is there my life is a cellophane, a transparency into which God can look in and see everything about me, my thoughts, my attitudes, my motivations, all that there is of me is transparent before God. And so with that broad general statement about God seeing into me He then begins to acknowledge some things about God and who God is and what God does. Let's continue reading in verse 2, he says:

*<sup>2</sup>LORD You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. <sup>3</sup>You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup>For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. <sup>5</sup>You have hedged me behind and before, You've laid Your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain to it.*

In these opening verses the psalmist just says **GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING**. And can I remind you tonight as we come to this table that God knows everything? He knows it all. It's that quality we call omniscience, an all-knowing God. He is not limited in knowledge. Every day of my life I'm reminded that it doesn't matter how much I read, how much I study, how much I think, how much I try to comprehend, I am always limited in my knowledge. I learn something new every day that I didn't know. But God is unlimited and He knows everything about us. Now if we're trying to hide in our little bowl something that is displeasing to God then the fearful thought in this is that because my life is like cellophane God sees it right now. But the wonderful thing about knowing that God knows everything, is knowing tonight that He knows your need and He knows your name. He knows your needs tonight and as you come to this table remembering what Christ has done for you, the Bible tells us in the New Testament if God allowed Christ to die for us while we were sinners, how much more will God provide everything that we need to live because we now are His children. He loves you and yes, He knows everything, but most importantly He knows your need and He knows your name. And for some of you the need is to confess tonight. He knows that you have a need to confess and to be right with Him and the Bible says if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and I'm telling you tonight that God knows and sees into your life so you can sit here in fear and trembling and say, oh no, God sees? No! It's to say God You already know and therefore I wanna confess and I wanna be made right with You. There's a challenge tonight, because God knows everything, for me to be sure that I try to cover nothing,

because listen to me tonight ladies and gentlemen, if there is a principle that we all need to learn spiritually it is this; whatever I cover, God will uncover, because He knows it, it's not hidden from Him. I can cover it with what I think is something hidden but God already knows it and He'll uncover it. But whatever you uncover, God will cover because love covers a multitude of sins and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. And whenever there is sin in your life and you uncover it God covers it, because that's how He works in His mercy and His grace. He already knows, but He's made a great provision for you. Let's keep reading verse 7:

*<sup>7</sup>Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup>If I ascend into heaven, You're there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. <sup>9</sup>If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup>Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. <sup>11</sup>If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; <sup>12</sup>Indeed, the darkness shall not hide You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike unto You.*

Not only does the psalmist, in this search process, realize that God knows everything, He simply says it, **GOD IS EVERYWHERE**. He is everywhere. There's not a place that God is not. He is more than someone who has a distant knowledge of my life, He is here and now. God is everywhere and God is with you. And I guess if there's something that I would want you to think tonight as you are searching in your life, in your heart, because not only do some of us come tonight and have to deal with the fact that there are some things that we need to acknowledge before God, there are some of us walking through some experiences and pathways in life tonight that frankly God seems distant, disease, death, sometimes debt, financially and the inability to seem to get back on our feet, a..., decisions that we have to make in life, sometimes life has a way of making us feel that God is distant. But as we come back to this table tonight can we let this table be a reminder to us that God is not off out there, He is the God who saw our name and our need and who stepped out of heaven and stepped into earth in the person of Jesus, that He might live and walk among us, that He might become one of us, that He might die for us and Jesus knows the needs, the struggles, the pains that you bear tonight and God is everywhere.

There is never a pathway of life that will distance you from God's abiding presence.

Let me say that one more time.

There is never a pathway of life that will distance you from God's abiding presence.

Now, yes, sin can separate us in the sense of separating our fellowship with God, but I'm talking about the life experiences, the fires of affliction, the adversities, the conflicts that come into our hearts, the

things that weigh us down, the sense of...of disillusionment, the fact that we don't understand sometimes and I begin to feel distant on a pathway and I'm wondering, God do You see where I am, do You know what's happening? Yes, tonight He sees, He knows, He cares and nothing can separate you from His presence. He has said this: [Hebrews 13:5]

... "I will never leave you or forsake you."

And that covenant was sealed through the death and the blood of Jesus Christ. He is everywhere. And then verse 13:

<sup>13</sup>For You have formed me in my inward parts; You've covered me in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup>I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. <sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. <sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in your book they were all written, The days fashioned for me, ~~When there was not...when there was as of yet there were none of them.~~

God knows everything. God is everywhere. **BUT, GOD CAN DO ANYTHING.** Creation is the evident reality that our God can do anything. And of course you just have to look at your hands. You just have to look at the wonder of your life, the uniqueness of this package that God has made and called you, to realize that you are a living testimony, an evident work of the greatness of the power of God. With men there are many things that are impossible, but with God all things are possible and if God can create man out of nothing and shape him and make him such an incredible part of the crown of His creation, then we need to see that the wonder of this Creator God should impact every sphere of life. The contemplation of God, the wonder of God, who He is, where He is, what He does impacts all of my life. As I live my life day in and day out overwhelmed with the fact that God can do anything. And of course when we come to the supper we're reminded that Jesus suffered, He died, He was buried, and then what happened? He rose again! And if God can overcome the power of death through the resurrection of Jesus Christ then ladies and gentlemen there is not anything tonight that God cannot do. All of my life is ultimately limited by this dark pathway called death and God has taken the end out of the grave, God has taken the darkness out of death, God had overcome the power of death through the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And therefore tonight we have life in His name. And tonight we have come to celebrate that life that He has given to us. So how does Psalm 139 end? Let's look at it, verse 23:

*Search me, O God,...*

Do you remember how it started?

*O LORD You have searched me and known me...*

But look at how the psalmist now ends, it's become a prayer:

*<sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; <sup>24</sup>And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.*

Search me! Try me! Lead me!  
Search me! Try me! Lead me!

May I submit that that's a wonderful prayer for you tonight as we hold these elements in hand, that we recognize who Christ is and what He has done for us? Through His tender mercies, His great love He has become the substitute for sin for us in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And so tonight while we have no merit of our own by which we come to these elements, we come fully and confidently in what Christ has done for us and so amazed are we by that grace that has been applied to our hearts through the work of Christ on our behalf that the only response that we have to this wonderful love of God shed abroad toward us is this:

Search me! Try me! Lead me!

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me Lord and know my thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.*