

Week 3/ Our Sin Wears Camo

“Forgive us our debts,

Throughout the Bible, fasting and prayer are accompanied by repentance. If we seek God, we must be honest with Him about our failings and rebellion. Sometimes our sins are difficult for us to recognize, because they frequently occur in the mind and heart. Satan wears camouflage, but our sins are camouflaged too.

Psalm 139 gently guides us into repentance by helping us see ourselves. We know that God knows us entirely, but spend time mulling over what He knows. Answer each prompt to see yourself more clearly.

1 “O Lord, you have searched me and known me!

My delights and joys, which are ...

My fears, which are ...

My motives...

My strengths ...

My besetting sins...

2 You know when I sit down

At the table, what I say and do...

At the computer, what I see and do...

In the car, how I behave...

In my favorite chair...

At church...

At the theatre...

and when I rise up;

from lying down, in the morning, when I don't feel well...

from sitting,

You discern my thoughts from afar.

of myself...

of others...

of You...

3 You search out my path

to work...

around the house...

my errands...

my favorite places...

my habits...

my routes...

and my lying down

resting, on the couch, in the hammock,...

sleeping ...

*tossing and turning, because...
reading...
my final laying down...*

and are acquainted with all my ways.

*my laugh...
my walk...
my roles...
my choices...*

4 Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.

*my pet opinions...
words spoken too quietly for others to hear...
my questions...
my choice of words and phrases...*

Nothing is hidden from God, nothing. Here are the psalmist's responses.

5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

7 Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence?

8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there!

9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

10 even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,"

12 even the darkness is not dark to You; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with You.

Our total vulnerability to God can intimidate and scare us into trying to hide, but God's faithful presence, despite our faults, reassures of His unfailing love.

13 For You formed my inward parts: You knitted me together in my mother's womb.

14 I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well.

15 My frame was not hidden from You when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

God makes each of us uniquely with all of our quirks and signature qualities. We can rejoice in our identities as He made us. His complete knowledge of us reassures us of His love.

Skipping to the last two verses, these circle back to the first verse with one difference. What is the difference?

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!

24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

The beginning of the psalm states God's knowledge of him. The end of the psalm is a plea for God to know him and to help him change. The psalmist has a renewed heart to welcome repentance, because he is assured of God's unfailing love and interest in him.

Hear Henri Nouwen's words, "When we pray, we come out of our shelters and not only see our nakedness but also to see that there is no enemy to hide from, only a friend who likes nothing better than to clothe us with a new coat."

We cannot ask for forgiveness unless we know our sins. We cannot change unless we know what to leave behind. Ask God to pull off your camouflage so that you may know and be known.