

May 5

Psalm 139, 145, 148, 150

Happy May 5<sup>th</sup> everybody! I'm Margie Alford, the Connections worship leader and I want to welcome you to the May 5<sup>th</sup> installment of the project 4:4 accelerators. Our reading today is Psalm 139, 145, 148 and 150.

Psalm 139 is about the omniscient God, the all-knowing God. Some of us have lived a little while and know a few things. Others, having lived a little longer, know more things. But God is eternal. He created everything and He understands everything there is perfectly and sees every connection.

This is one of the more well-known Psalms. David wrote it. It starts, "*O Lord, you have searched me and you know.*" In the Hebrew it doesn't say you know me, it just says, "*You know.*"

The first four verses of this Psalm focus on the thought that God is omniscient. "God," he says, "knows my actions: When I sit, when I rise, when I go out and when I lie down!" Can you think of any action that is not performed in one of those positions? God knows all our actions.

By the way, the word "searched," in verse 1, suggests exhaustive, painstaking searching, like that of the archaeologist working often with a toothbrush to carefully sweep away dust and grime from a delicate shard of pottery -- not wishing to miss anything at all. That is the way David says God has searched me.

Then David says that He knows my thoughts - God, "*you perceive them from afar.*" God is the creator. He is in one sense far away - outside of all that He has created. (The theological word is, "transcendent,") but incredibly He not only knows in general terms what is happening upon the earth, He knows the very thoughts of every single individual. You know, we can all hide our thoughts pretty well and think that no one knows what we are really thinking, but God knows.

And David goes on, "*Before there is a word on my tongue you, O Lord, You know it completely,*" - before I speak it - and He knows it completely - not just what I say, but what I mean.

God knows everything there is to know about you, your actions, your thoughts, and your words. He knows them better than you do, and even before you think, say or do them. Does that feel uncomfortable at all to you?

One of the big reasons that we guard our inner lives and our private lives so carefully, is because we are afraid that if you knew me like I know me you wouldn't like me anymore.

Well then, think about this - God already knows everything there is to know about you - all the secret thoughts, all the buried actions, all the hidden meanings behind the words - everything. He even knows the words you haven't uttered yet, and the stunts

you haven't pulled yet. God knows it all - and here's the clincher - He still decided to love you. He sent Jesus Christ to die for you, and He is not about to change His mind about you

Omnipresence. God is present everywhere – all at the same time - without interruption.

David mentally explores all the options. The heavens - He's there. The depths- (he means hell or at least the place of the dead) - even there I can't escape Him. The far side of the sea - from Palestine that's west - and the wings of the morning are in the east. But I can't get away from God no matter where I go. God is everywhere. I can't even hide from Him in darkness. There's literally nowhere to run and no place to hide. God is aware of me and God is present.

I hope and pray for you as you read those words that it will comfort you. It's so easy to feel "alone". Being lonely is very hard. Whether you feel alone simply because you have no one to talk to or confide in is very difficult. But going through hard things that life can bring, can feel very lonely too even if there are people around you. Your situation might make you feel like no one else has hurt like this or no one else can understand my pain.

God is all-knowing and all-present. He will never leave you or forsake you.

#### Psalm 145

An interesting note about this Psalm - it was written as an acrostic in which each verse begins with a letter from the Hebrew alphabet.

The attributes and acts of God form the theme of this hymn and in Jewish practice, this Psalm was recited twice in the morning and once in the evening. Not a bad idea....

Verses 4-9 talk of one generation telling another generation of God and his mighty acts.

This is a great responsibility that we have. Passing on to our children whether they be in our own homes or people that we mentor or minister with is an important task for us as God's children.

This Psalm along with Psalms 8, 33 and 104 are considered the "Psalms of creation".

And since the Lord is so good to his creation, how much more does he care for his people!

Starting with verse 18: God is near to all who call on Him. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him. He watches over all who love him. What amazing promises.

#### Psalm 148 & 150

In Psalm 148 we are told to praise Him because He is the creator and ruler of all nature. By His limitless power and wisdom He has named and numbered the stars

God governs nature -- sending rain and causing grass and crops to grow, bringing about the seasonal changes we experience and governing the storms that send us scurrying for cover.

God has revealed Himself in His creation to all people everywhere. Anyone on earth can look up at the heavens and around Him at creation and be impressed with the power and the purposefulness of the One who created it all.

As to the question of who should praise God -- well Israel should -- as should all of the saints. The angels should and even the sun, moon, stars and all creation should praise God. Psalm 150 pretty well sums it up, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

And how should we do this? By singing and with instrumental music that is the main way -- did you notice all of the instruments listed? Trumpets, harps, lyres, tambourines, strings, flutes, cymbals. God loves music -- He loves to hear us sing and play music to Him. It is incredibly important to Him!

And oh yes, if you can't sing or play an instrument, God says you ought to dance. Yes, we should praise God in dance. Maybe that doesn't happen very often, but God says it should!! "Let them praise his name with dancing." So, I'm going to exit with this great salsa music and hope that you dance today! See you tomorrow.