



FAMILY DEVOTIONS
SUMMER 2020

Camp Omega
[K]NEW
2020 Psalm 139

KNOWN: Personally

Psalm 139:1-6

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.” -Psalm 139:1 NIV

Think about the person you know best. Is it a family member? A close friend? That person is incredibly complex and has many things that you know about them, but also many things that you don't know. There are so many things that make someone unique and we probably don't know everything about them. People grow and change on the outside and it is easy to see, but people also change on the inside and that is harder to see, even if you know them well. Now think about the person who knows you best. Do you think that person knows everything about you? Or are there still some things that are a secret from them?

In Psalm 139 verses 1-6, we can see that there is someone who knows everything about us. God cares so much about us that he knows our day to day activities. He knows when we get up, brush our teeth, and eat breakfast because he cares about us. In Luke 12:7, Jesus tells us that he loves us so much that he knows how many hairs are on our head! This attention to detail can only come from someone who loves us so incredibly much that he wants to know everything about us.

Sometimes we feel like we are alone, or that nobody cares about us. Have you ever felt like nobody was paying attention to you? Even when we feel sad and alone, we know that there is someone who is always there for us. Jesus, who is God, knows us completely and will always be there for us. He wants us to talk to him and let him know what is going on. Even though he does already know what is going on in our lives, he has invited us to talk to him in prayer and form a relationship with him.

James 5:13 says, “Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.” In each and every situation, God wants us to talk to him and we can be assured that he hears us. Because God loves us and knows us so well, he knows what is best for us and will bless us according to his incredible plan.

Let's Pray:

Dear Jesus, thank you for knowing us. You know everything about me, and you love me! Please help me to remember that you are always there for me and I can come to you in prayer. Amen.



KNOWN: His Creation

Psalm 139:13-16

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” -Psalm 139:13-14 NIV

Think about something that you made. Maybe it was a picture, or maybe it was a sculpture out of clay. Did it have long straight lines, or curvy edges, was it very colorful or just one color? If you make something, you know a lot about it because you made it! You cared a lot about it and took the time to make it just the way you wanted it to be.

Sometimes we might ask, “How does God know so much about me? And why does he care so much about me?” God is not only all-powerful, but also our creator. He knows us and cares for us because we are his creation and made just the way he planned. He sees us all the days of our lives and helps us through each and every one of them. God even took the time and care to knit us together in our mother’s womb! Isn’t it amazing that the God of the universe took the time to form you and me?

Because of this, David in the Psalm responds, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made!” Do you know what it means to be “fearfully and wonderfully made”? It doesn’t mean you are scary or cause fear! This means that you are made in such an amazing way that the person who made you should be worshipped because he is so amazingly powerful. We can praise God for all of the amazing people he has created around us, including ourselves!

In Colossians 1:15-16, Paul writes that Jesus “is the image of the invisible God” and that “all things were created by him and for him.” Jesus was also there from the beginning, working and creating us. His love for us is so amazing that he would even go to the cross and die for our sins. His resurrection on the third day reassures us that we will also be raised with him as a new creation free from sin.

Let’s pray:

Dear Lord, Thank you for taking the time to create me and know me fully. Help me to continue to realize just how much you care for me that you would sacrifice your life for me. Amen.

KNOWN: Redeemed

Psalm 139:17-24

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

-Psalm 139:23-24 NIV

Can you think of a time where you did something that you didn't want anyone else to know about? Sometime we do things that we know are wrong and hurtful to other people. Sometimes we don't even know that those things will hurt others, but they do. It doesn't feel good when someone finds out what we've done. Sometimes it is scary because we don't know what that person will do.

God knows everything we have done because he created us and knows us. That is sometimes a scary thing to realize, especially when we have done things that he wouldn't like. Just like when we do things and don't want other people to know about it, we definitely don't want God knowing it. When we sin, do we need to worry about God moving us from the “nice” list to a “naughty” list?

Although we deserve to be punished for what we do wrong, God has sent his son Jesus to become the sacrifice for us. John 1:12 says “to those who believed in his (Jesus’) name, he gave the right to become children of God.” We no longer are known to God as a sinner who has done things wrong, but because of Jesus, we are now children of God.

As children of God, we are called to live a life full of love. Just as God has shown immense love to us, Jesus commands us to love each other. We love our neighbors not because it will get us a spot back on the “nice” list, but because we want to show others the love which God has shown to us. Now that we are fully known by God and grow in our knowledge of him, we can share that knowledge with others.

Let's pray:

Dear God, Thank you for knowing us. Thank you even more for not leaving us in our sinful state but for sending your Son to pay the price for our sin. We love you. Amen.



LOVED: Through the Shame

Psalm 51:1-12

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.” -Psalm 51:10-12 NIV

There once was a very poor man who didn't have anything except for a little lamb. He loved this little lamb like it was his own child and took it everywhere with him. The man fed the lamb with whatever he had for dinner and let it sleep beside him in his bed. There was also a very rich man that had many sheep. One day, a traveler came to visit the rich man and the rich man looked for a way to feed his guest. Instead of taking one of his many sheep to feed him, he decided to take the poor man's only lamb to feed his guest.

What? Why would a rich man take a poor man's only lamb instead of using one of his many sheep? This was a story told to King David, because even though he was the king and had a lot, he still took from someone who had only a little. When he first heard the story about the sheep, he was outraged at the rich man. Once he found out that he was the rich man from the story, he was confronted with his sin and he felt deep sorrow and shame.

David was the author of the Psalm we read today. After realizing that he did wrong, he appropriately turned to God for help. When we sin, our first response is usually to cover it up or try and make it right on our own. However, we are sinful and cannot make things right by ourselves. We need help to be right with God. Jesus has come and paid the price for our sin so that we can be made right.

Even though David was ashamed of what he did, God forgave him for his sin and he forgives us for our sins. We pray for God to create in us pure hearts so that we can reach out to others in loving ways. We pray that God will continue to bless us with the Holy Spirit so that we may remain firm in our faith. We pray that God will give us the joy that comes from knowing that we have been redeemed from our deserved punishment of death through Jesus' death and resurrection.

Let's pray:

Create in us pure hearts, O God, and renew steadfast spirits within us.
Bless us with your Holy Spirit and give us the joy of being saved and redeemed so that we can live with you forever. Thank you for loving and forgiving us even when we are ashamed of what we have done. Amen.



LOVED: Though Unlovable

John 4:7-30

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." -John 4:13-14 NIV

When practicing social distancing, it is not unusual to try and go somewhere at the least busy times. Grocery stores, parks, and other public places are seeing an increase of people during times that they usually aren't that busy. Some stores are even enforcing times that will be less busy for people who need it.

The Bible tells a story in John about a woman who practiced social distancing. This wasn't, however, because she didn't want to get sick, she believed that she was unlovable. She had some things in her past that caused other people to look down upon her and made her feel sad, so she avoided other people. She didn't go to the well to draw water in the morning with the other women of the town. Instead, she went at the hottest part of the day, when no one else would be around.

Thankfully, one day, someone else was there. Jesus was there and told her about living water. Living water? That phrase is strange to us and to the woman at the well that day. Jesus promised living water that comes from the knowledge of God and faith in Christ. Just as we need water to survive, we need living water from Jesus because through it we gain eternal life.

In our lives, sometimes we feel like we don't deserve love. There may be something that we have done that makes us want to go into our rooms and hide rather than face what we have done. We want to avoid people who remind us of what we did, just like the woman did.

However, God is love. It is impossible to do something that would change the fact that God loves us. In Romans 5:8, it says that "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Christ is the ultimate example of God's amazing love for us, and even more amazing is that he died while we were still sinners! We didn't have to prove anything or make up for our sins before God would act. He knows that we can't live perfectly but loves us so much that he sent Jesus to make up for what we can't ever do.

Let's pray:

Lord, when we feel unlovable, help us to remember that we are loved by you. Help us to remember the ultimate action of your love through Jesus' death so that we could have living water. Amen.



SAVED: By His Shame

John 19:1-30

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

-Isaiah 53:5 NIV

Have you ever been accused of doing something that you didn't do? It is tough when you know that you didn't do anything wrong but have been accused of doing it. It is even worse when you have to deal with the consequences of the action that you didn't even do. Sometimes you have to clean something up that someone else broke or ask forgiveness for something you didn't do.

In John 19, Jesus was accused of things that he didn't do. People said that he was going to destroy the temple and was lying about being God, but Jesus never did anything wrong. The people accusing him didn't care that he didn't do anything wrong. They didn't like him and wanted to see him suffer because of it. Jesus was beat, spit upon, and sent to be crucified, as a punishment for things that he didn't do, but he never stopped them or fought back because he knew that this had to happen.

The Bible verse for today comes from a section of the book of Isaiah that describes a suffering servant. This servant does not fight back against those who do awful things to shame him. He is described as a "lamb led to the slaughter." These aren't comfortable words for us to read because we don't want to think about someone who is suffering so much. We especially don't want to think about the reason he went through that shame and ridicule.

However, it is crucial that we do remember that Jesus went through indescribable things because it reminds us just how much he loves us. He chose to go through that because he knew that by it, we would be saved. John put it this way, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

Let's pray:

Dear Lord, Thank you for bearing our punishment, even though you didn't deserve it. Help us to remember what you went through and be even more thankful that through it, we can be children of God. Amen.



SAVED: By His Death

John 19:17-30

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. -Galatians 2:20 NIV

I have always loved to watch the Olympics and see the athletes from around the world compete. It is fun to cheer on different countries and hear stories behind how the athletes got to this elite level. After a while of watching a sport you get to understand how it works and can judge how the competitors are doing. Sometimes I start to get critical of athletes that aren't doing too well. "This figure skater isn't keeping tight enough form on her spins. This distance runner should have taken it easier at the beginning so that he had more energy for the final lap. Why isn't he trying harder?" All of these things I say while sitting on my couch because there is no way that I could do them myself. However, sometimes pride makes me think that I know better than someone who is a professional.

Pride also sometimes makes us think that we haven't messed up that bad and we don't actually need saving from our sins. Surely all the good that we have done will make up for the bad things, right?

Paul states in Romans 3:23 that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." All means all, including us. We sin and because of that, we fall short of God's glory and deserve his wrath. Thankfully, God doesn't leave us in that sorry state, and Paul continues saying that we "are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." Jesus came to this earth and lived a perfect life, something that we could never do. He then suffered for something that he wasn't guilty of and was put to death because of it. All this he did out of his love for us.

Because of what Jesus did, we now can have life. As it says in the verse above, our sinful selves have been crucified along with Jesus so that now, because we have been redeemed, Jesus lives in us and we can show others his love. Giving ourselves up to God's service becomes our response for all that he has done for us.

Let's pray:

Dear Lord, Thank you for going through shame, torture, and a horrible death on the cross. Because of it, you gave us new life. Help us to use this new life to serve you by shining your light to others. Amen.



SAVED: By His Resurrection

John 20:11-18

If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. -Romans 6:5 NIV

While Jesus was on earth, he did some amazing miracles. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and fed thousands of people with a little boy's lunch. A more impressive miracle was when he raised Lazarus from the dead four days after he had died. All of these are amazing things, and there is no way we could do any of these things.

The most amazing miracle Jesus ever performed, however, was raising himself from the dead. Some people think that running a marathon would be a miracle. However, can you imagine how much harder it would be to run a marathon if you're asleep! And wouldn't it be impossible if you're dead?! It is hard for us to comprehend Jesus healing a blind man, but it is more amazing when he, as a dead man, raises himself from the dead.

We too get to experience some amazing miracles from God. Although we don't get to see Jesus walk on the water or turn water into wine, we do see God working. An amazing miracle he gives us is the miracle of baptism. In baptism, God creates new sons and daughters. Through the waters of baptism, we are united to Christ.

As it says in the verse for today, we are "united with him in his death." That is sometimes a surprising statement. Didn't Jesus die so that I don't have to? Jesus did sacrifice himself so that we wouldn't face God's punishment, but that doesn't mean we can go on living as we are. We are sinful people but through baptism we are united to Jesus in his death. Our old, sinful selves are drowned and we come out as new creations, spotless and holy as Jesus is.

It is an amazing assurance that we will also be united with Christ in his resurrection. When we die, we don't need to worry if we have been good enough to get into heaven, but we have certainty that Jesus has paid the full price for our sins. When Jesus returns as he said, we will be raised with all of the believers and spend eternity with him. We wait for that last day when there will be no sadness or night. As it says in Revelation, "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp...On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there."

Let's pray:

Dear Lord, Thank you for your death and resurrection so that through you we might die and be raised as new creations. Help us to look forward to the day that you will return to make everything new. Amen.



CALLED: Given Confidence

Exodus 3:1-12

And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you. -Exodus 3:12a NIV

Have you ever been doing an ordinary everyday task and something out of the blue has happened? Perhaps you were at the grocery store and saw someone that you haven't seen in a while or you were out on a walk with your friends when suddenly a huge storm rolled in out of nowhere. How did you respond? Were you excited? Scared? A mix of both?

If you're anything like me, you have a small fear of storms. I remember one time I was having fun and walking around with my friends when all of a sudden we found ourselves trapped at a park in the middle of a storm. One of my friends suggested that we should move to a safer place where we could wait out the storm. I was too frightened to move and wanted to stay exactly where I was but my friends promised me that they would keep me safe. They helped me gain the confidence and understanding I needed in order to get to where we needed to be.

In Exodus Chapter 3, Moses was out tending to the sheep of his father-in-law, nothing out of the ordinary for him. It wasn't until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God, when something surprising happened. He noticed that a bush was on fire, but it was not burning! At the bush, God spoke to him saying, "Do not come near; take your sandals off of your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." Moses hid his face out of fear.

God needed Moses to go to the Pharaoh in order to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. Frightened, Moses questioned God about whether or not he was supposed to talk to Pharaoh. He didn't think that the Egyptians would believe him. God helped Moses by saying "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you."

It is important that when we are in situations like Moses, where we may be scared, frightened, or even confused, that we have faith and know that God is always with us. God gives us the strength, faith, and confidence to do His work. Let us remember the promise that God will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Let's pray:

Dear Lord, Thank you for giving us the confidence that we need to do your work. May we find comfort knowing that you will always be with us and that you guide us whenever we may feel scared, tired, or lost. Help us to comfort and support others in time of need, giving them the same confidence that you have provided in us. Amen.



CALLED: Given Purpose

John 1:43-51

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. -Matthew 28:19 NIV

People always say, "I'll believe it when I see it." There are many times in life where we believe what we hear without actually seeing it firsthand. For example, when you watch the news or listen to the radio you often believe what you hear because you trust that their words are true. But what does that mean for us as Christians? In John 20:29, Jesus says "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." So why can it sometimes be difficult to believe and trust in God when we can't see him or feel his presence?

Doubt is the biggest obstacle when it comes to our faith. When we begin to doubt, we often think that in order to feel God's presence and know that he is there, we need to see something happen. In John 1, Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael to follow him. Upon hearing that Jesus was from Nazareth, Nathanael doubts that Jesus is truly the Messiah and asks "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip simply responds with "come and see." A simple invitation. It wasn't until Nathanael accepted the invitation and witnessed Jesus' abilities firsthand that he believed.

Even though we can't see it, the Holy Spirit is always actively working through us. God calls us to "go and make disciples of all nations." As Christians we often get into the routine of going to church and then spending the rest of the week going about our own lives. However, God calls us to take what we learn on Sundays and go out and share the good news with others. We may not always see the change that sharing the gospel may cause, but we can have faith knowing that the Holy Spirit is working inside of them.

The next time you begin to doubt, remember that God is always with you. He won't abandon you even if you start to doubt. Find comfort in knowing that "believing is seeing," not the other way around.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for always being there to guide me and comfort me. Give me the strength on the days where I may doubt your presence to believe without seeing. Help me to spread your love and share your word with others. Thank you for being my guiding light. Amen.



NEW: Clothed with Christ

Genesis 3:1-21

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
-Galatians 3:26-28 NIV

Have you ever been playing outside and gotten your clothes really muddy? Maybe your parents told you specifically not to jump in the puddles, and you did anyway. When we get messy and muddy what we really need is a bath to clean off all the dirt so we can be clean again. After you get clean, would you put your dirty clothes back on? Of course not! After a bath, it feels good to put on clean clothes again.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve sinned and tried to hide from God. He punished them because they did wrong, but he also was merciful to them by giving them the promise that Jesus would come to save his people from their sin. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit, they realized they needed clothes. God provided that for them. When we sin, God provides us with something we need too- forgiveness! Just as God promised to Adam and Eve, He sent Jesus to die for us to wash away our sins.

Galatians 3 reminds us that God doesn't see our sin anymore because we are clothed with Christ. This happens through the waters of baptism. Just like we need to take a bath when we get muddy, we need to be washed clean of our sin. Through baptism, God the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts and provides us with the forgiveness we need. Unlike how we need to keep taking a bath when we get dirty, we only need to be baptized once! The Holy Spirit continues to work forgiveness in us through our baptism.

Because we have been clothed with Christ, we can ask for forgiveness when we do wrong. Through Jesus' death, God forgives us for our sins. Now, because we are clean through Christ, we can share His love with others that we meet because Jesus died for everyone and wants us all to be holy as He is holy.

Let's Pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus to die and rise again for me so that I can be clothed with Him. Thank you for washing me clean from my sin through the waters of baptism. Amen.

[R]NEW

NEW: Walking in New Clothes

Colossians 3:9-17

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” -Colossians 3:12 NIV

When I was growing up, I wanted to be a fashion designer. I would spend hours coming up with different designs for how I wanted my clothes to look. I would draw different patterns on them and sometimes add accessories. It was important to me that my clothes looked good and fashionable.

When we are walking through life there is something always on us and near us- our clothes! Our clothes are the first thing people see. Often we worry about how our clothes look because it is something everyone sees. Clothes also need to be practical so that we can do everyday tasks like chores, but also so that we can do fun things like playing games or going to the beach.

Colossians 3:12 states that we also have spiritual clothes. We are called to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Just like our ordinary clothes, these should be what people notice about us as Christians. But do people always see these qualities in us? We try to be patient, kind, and gentle, but we are imperfect people who are not always good at wearing what Jesus has called us to wear.

Jesus, however, is the perfect example of what this should look like. His miracles show his compassion for people. He shows kindness by befriending the people that no one else would. He is the Son of God, but he humbles himself to take on human likeness. We see his gentleness in the way he interacts with those he heals. He is patient with his disciples when they do not understand his teachings.

While we cannot perfectly wear our spiritual clothes, we have the Holy Spirit working in our hearts to put on these traits. Because of this, other people will notice the difference between our clothes and the clothes the world wears. With God’s help, we can point others to Christ and He can give them new clothes to help more people.

Let’s Pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus to be the perfect example of what it looks like to wear spiritual clothes. Help us to share your love with others by clothing ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Thank you for giving us the ability to do this by your Holy Spirit. Amen.

[R]NEW