

4Ws TRUE WORSHIP

PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF GOD:

Rejoice and Request!

MAY 11, 2025

WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Prepare the Way of the Lord, I Love to Be in Your Presence, He Knows My Name, Here in Your Presence, Never Once, I Offer My Life

WELCOME

Have you taken a loved one for granted in the past week? How about God?

WORD

PSALM 139:1-10 (read the rest of the psalm)

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

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.

³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O Lord, You know it all.

⁵ You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.

⁶ *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.

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

⁸ If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the dawn,
If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

¹⁰ Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

How do we actually practice the Presence of God?
According to Brother Lawrence, *"The most holy and necessary practice in our spiritual life is the presence of God. That means finding constant pleasure in His divine company, speaking humbly and lovingly with Him in all seasons, at every moment..."*

Our objective is not to learn about worship, but to learn to worship. Psalm 139 shows us at least two ways we can practice the presence of God:

1. REJOICE

David gives three reasons in Psalm 139 why he rejoiced in God: 1-God knows me! 2-God is with me! 3-God made me! The word "searched" in **verse 1** is in the past tense and the word for "known" means an intimate knowledge. This means that God knew everything about David's past, as well as yours. God also knows our "thoughts" (motives) **(v.2)** even when we don't even understand why we do what we do. But how do you respond to the fact that God knows us? Is it in fear, or does it make us feel safe, love and protected? How we respond to who God is and what

He does is so important!

God knows everything---nobody had to teach Him anything because He already knows everything (**Isaiah 40:13-14**). But what does that mean for us today? Jesus tells Nathaniel that before they even met, Jesus has already seen him in His mind's eye (**John 1:47-48**). Even before we come to Jesus, He already knows about us and what we're like. How do we respond to that? May we be like Nathaniel in our response to who Jesus is --- he acknowledged that Jesus is the Son of God, the King of Israel (**John 1:49**)! It takes humility to worship God, to recognize that He is God, and we are not.

The psalm continues to say that the Lord scrutinizes David's path (**v.3**) which is an agricultural term for separating the useful part of the plant (grain) from the useless part. We can even practice the presence of God while lying down. We can pray that God will guard our dreams! God knows our words before we even say them, because as Jesus explained, "out of the overflow of the heart", the mouth speaks, and God knows what's in our hearts (**v.4**). Have you ever spoken words that you wished you could take back? Let's pray that God sets a guard over our mouth and watch over our lips (**Psalms 141:3**)!

Psalm 139:5 gives us a picture of complete security for God has enclosed us and has His hand upon us. The word "enclosed" refers to a military garrison, like an impenetrable castle built on solid rock, like having Jesus as our strong foundation. In fact, Jesus assures believers that we are eternally secure, held tightly in His and the Father's hand (**John 10:28-30**). Such is God's knowledge, love and care watching out for us. Let us be intentional to remind ourselves of God's presence and not take Him for granted. This awareness will result in not being shaken, gladness, and even our bodies will "dwell securely" (**Psalms 16:8-9**). David seemingly paused from writing his thoughts, because he was getting overwhelmed by who God is and what He's done that David "cannot attain to it" (**v.6**).

When David describes how he cannot escape God's presence, we may misunderstand it to mean that he's complaining. This was not so, in fact, David was rejoicing that God was always with him (**vv. 7-8**)! This is worship, our proper response to God and what He has done. Are

there times you want to flee from His presence? When is His presence the most precious to you? The psalmist also knows that even if he traveled "at the speed of light" to the farthest point in earth, God still holds us (**vv.9-10**). You are never really lost because God is with you. It doesn't matter where God takes you, what situation you're in because God's hand is holding you. There is no such thing as darkness in the presence of God because God is light (**vv. 11-12**). If you're in a dark place right now, God is with you so take His hand and let Him lead you out of that place into His light. As Stormie Omartian wrote, "*Sometimes what seems like the darkest step we've ever been on comes just before the brightest light we've ever experienced*". Isn't God amazing?

Some people have been rejected even while in their mother's womb. But **Psalm 139:13** says that we were formed and woven by God, His masterpiece. This means that God owns us because He made us with detail, focus and intricacy; we belong to Him and the psalmist responds in thanksgiving (**v.14**). When God formed you, no one else was allowed in the exclusivity of your mother's womb. Mothers, you were God's studio when He created His masterpieces! Even in the unlikely event that a mother forgets her child, God will never forget because He has engraved us in the palm of His (Jesus') hands (**Isaiah 49:15-16**). God has written about you and your life even before you were born (**v.16**). No matter what has happened in your life because of some foolish choices you've made, etc., God still has a wonderful plan for you. Once more, David is amazed at how much God thinks about him (**vv.17-18**)! You are not an "accident" or a "mistake"! God is faithful, and never once we'll we ever walk alone.

2. REQUEST

There are two requests at the end of Psalm 139 (**vv. 19-22**): 1-Lord, protect me! God's enemies are our enemies, but it is not other people (**Ephesians 6:11-12**); we need His protection against the devil. 2-Lord, lead me! We need God to search (dig into my heart as deep as You want) and test me to see where I'm genuine, or fake. Ask God to lead you to a way of life that pleases Him and causes others to want to know Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. The Lord knows everything about you and is with you everywhere you go. How should that impact your daily life?
2. The Lord made you and has a divine plan for your life. What will you do to better align with God's plan and purpose?
3. Take time to let the Lord search your heart. Any anxieties or hurtful ways? What will you do about these?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for more people to know Jesus as the God who knows us, who is with us, and who created us. Live a life of humility and worship, that people may want to know Jesus. Share the gospel to others as you practice the presence of God daily.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- For the rest of the Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the civil war in Syria to end peacefully, protection for Christians and other minorities, and freedom from oppression for Syrians. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout the country.
- Pray for Nigeria and persecuted Christians there; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions

worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 139:23-24

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

