

**Victoria Ave/Emmanuel Baptist**  
**Sunday, May 10, 2020**  
**Psalm 139:23-24**  
**“Letting God Examine Your Heart”**

In 1996, I was living in Branson, Missouri and working at a Ruby Tuesday restaurant. After a few months of working as a waiter, I was asked if I would like to become a trainer of new staff. I enjoyed the work (and it came with a bit more pay) so I took the company training and became officially a “3-Star Corporate Trainer.” I would oversee the training of new waitstaff for my store but I would also be part of a larger team of trainers that would go for several weeks at a time and help train staff for stores that were just opening for the first time.

In the summer of '96, I moved to Kissimmee, Florida, looking to fulfill a dream of mine to work at Walt Disney World. Even though I would eventually work in a restaurant in the Magic Kingdom, the process took much longer than I expected, and money was starting to run low. I needed a job!

Just down the street from Disney was a Ruby Tuesday. I knew that I had the experience to work there, and I knew what skills I had to offer the company. With résumé in hand, I walked into the restaurant one morning and asked to speak to the general manager. I presented myself and my qualifications and asked for a job.

The manager seemed guarded, but he asked if I could start that afternoon...which I did.

After the shift was over, he came to me and admitted that he had been skeptical of my abilities. Over the years he had hired promising workers only to be disappointed by their performance. They had promised him the moon – but failed to deliver. He was pleased to keep me on and I really enjoyed my time there. When time came for me to return to my studies, the manger offered me a managerial position, if only I would stay.

It is one thing to say you can do something...it is another to be able to deliver!

Today we wrap up this incredible ode to God's character and love penned by King David.

We have been reminded that we have a God who sees and knows us. A God who pursues a relationship with us. A God who knows us because we are His creations. God not only listens to us, but he wants 2-way communication as He responds back to us. We are so overwhelmed by his desire for relationship, that we respond. We grow to love God more and more and find that we start to hate the enemies of God. We also find ourselves brokenhearted by our own sin.

The last two verses tie it all up! Let's read Psalm 139:23-24

**<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.**

**<sup>24</sup> Point out anything in me that offends you,  
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.**

How willing are we to allow ourselves to be put under a microscope? To let others pick apart your life, your work, your relationships, your values, choices, and decisions?

I don't like it all! I have been through excellent, uplifting evaluations that gave constructive criticism that helped me do my job and I have sat through biased, flawed, derogatory meetings and evaluations that tore down with no helpful advice.

David has judged the enemies who willfully rebelled against God and has judged them harshly! Instead of waiting for God to come by and pat him on the head and reward him for a job well done, David turns the spotlight on himself!

He turns to God and prays, "Search (examine me)! Know my heart!"

This is the request of a true believer, follower, a true disciple. It is an invitation to intimacy.

In reality, David is re-acknowledging a fact he already has testified to. God already knows us better than we know ourselves! Psalm 139:1 – “O Lord, you have searched me and known me!”

We all have a tendency to wear masks. We like to manipulate how people see us while hiding the skeletons in our closets.

Have you ever gone to a funeral and heard a glowing eulogy and thought, “I must be at the wrong service – that isn’t the person I knew.” I had a great t-shirt that read:

***“Live your life in such a way that the pastor won’t have to lie at your funeral.”***

The world often criticizes Christians for being two-faced or hypocrites. Often we are. We often act one way at church but are different people in our communities or work places, or with our friends.

David is reminding us to be better followers of God! Too often we respond to Jesus’ call on our life in a way where WE try to dictate the terms.

True intimacy with God is when we give him permission to use our lives for his glory and purpose AS HE SEES FIT!

The world tells us that the “be all and end all” of existence is to be the master of our own destinies. Christ-followers realize that true fulfillment only comes by “submitting” (a very politically incorrect term today) to Jesus’ will for our lives.

Not only are we willing to submit, but we are willing to be CALLED OUT for our own sin and disobedience. We are willing to be reminded that we need to confess our rebellion and repent (change) our ways!

As we allow God to know us intimately, we will know ourselves better. Isn’t it wonderful to gain self-clarity and identity? There is more to it than spiritually “finding ourselves.” The goal should be righteousness.

Our prayer, like David’s, is that God should search our hearts and find our doubts and fears and all those “anxieties” that would make us doubt our Creator and lead us into sin.

We should want God to expose “any wicked ways” so they can be dealt with and left behind.

***What needs to change in us today?***

True intimacy with God will allow Him to “lead you in the way everlasting “ (v.24).

God created us and every fiber of our being wants to be near the heart of the Father. God knows you. He created you. He loves you and you are the object of His thoughts! Stop and ponder that for a moment...you are in God’s thoughts.

**Psalm 139:23-24 New Living Translation (NLT)**

**<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.**

**<sup>24</sup> Point out anything in me that offends you,  
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.**

Amen!