

Dealing with our anxious thoughts

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Preacher: Rev David Macleod

[0 : 00] Well good afternoon and a warm welcome to the service this afternoon those who are here in the building and those who may be watching online or listening in now or after the event it's good for us to be able to come together and to worship God in this way.

We're going to begin this time of worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 51 Scottish Psalter and we don't sing but we listen to this psalm being sung and we listen to the verses 1 to 7 being sung to God's praise.

After thy loving kindness Lord have mercy upon me for thy compassion is great blot out all mine iniquity me cleanse from sin and through thee wash from mine iniquity for my transgressions I confess my sin I ever see.

We sing or we listen to this psalm being sung I can't get used to saying that but we have to over these months. We listen to this psalm being sung to God's praise from verses 1 to verse 7.

We listen to this psalm being sung to God's praise from sin and through the earth.

[1 : 37] We listen to this psalm being sung to God's praise from sin and through the earth.

We listen to this psalm being sung to God's praise. We listen to this psalm being sung to God's

praise from sin and through the earth. Thank you. We listen to this psalm being sung to God's praise from sin and through the earth. We know of that the mother will say God's praise from sin and through the earth.

We see God's praise from sin and through the earth. We see God's praise from God's praise from sin and through the earth. And we are going to say God's praise from sin and through the earth. For our speaker's praise from sin and through the earth. We pray to God's praise from sin and through the earth. AMER & O archjanalty in governor's praise from sin and through the earth.

We see God's praise from sin and through the earth. Behold, I am in a meeting, What for the moon may be.

My mother also me, auntie, In guiltyness and sin.

[2 : 55] Behold, I am in the inward parts, With true divided heart, And wisdom not shall they be yours, Made in the hidden parts.

To the wicked soul sprinkle me, I shall be wrenches all.

They wash for me, auntie, I shall be wrenches all.

I shall be wrenches all. Let's unite our hearts now in prayer.

Let's pray together. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day.

[4 : 13] We thank you for your house, Where we are able to gather as your people. We thank you for the promise that you have given to us, That where two or three gather together, In the name of Jesus, you will be with us.

And so we are thankful for the assurance of that promise, As we gather some of us in this place here, And we are thankful that your promises are not bound by time and space.

And so as we think of those who are meeting in other places, Some as families in their homes, Some in isolation in their own homes, We thank you that we are not alone, But we are bound together with the one spirit, As we seek to worship the one true God, In the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, And our Saviour.

We thank you that this is the Lord's day, A day that we are given as a gift, Where we stop work and we look for rest, In you.

And we know, Lord, that our souls are restless, Because of the sin that is within us. But we thank you that we are able to find rest, In you.

[5 : 43] And we thank you, Lord, That even as we reflect on the words of the psalm that we have sung, We see how that rest comes. We thank you, Lord, That we make an approach to you this

morning, On the basis of who you are, Not on the basis of who we are.

And we praise you that you are the God who is loving, You are the God who is kind, You are the God who is merciful and compassionate, You are the God who did not stand back from us, And leave us to sink in the mud, And the mire of our own sin.

But you came to us in Christ. You held out your hand to us, And offered to us that wondrous gift of being forgiven, For our sin and for our iniquity.

We thank you, Lord, That we can come as the psalmist did, And we can seek that cleansing from sin. We can think and seek that thorough washing, That you alone are able to give to us.

And so, Lord, This morning, We would come with that desire, And we would come as the psalmist did, Confessing that we are sinners, In our thoughts, In our words, In our actions, In our inactions.

[7 : 11] We confess, Lord, That we are sinners by nature, From birth. We are sinners by practice, Throughout our lives. We would not seek to hide that.

We would not seek to run from you, Or try to mask the sin that's in us, Or try to make excuses for that. But, Lord, We come to you, Asking that as you search us, And as you know us, That you would cleanse us from sin.

That you would give to us that forgiveness, That is offered to us in the gospel. We thank you, Lord, That if we confess our sin, You are faithful and just, To forgive us from sin, And purify us from all unrighteousness.

And we believe, Lord, That your word is true. And so we come seeking that. And we thank you, Lord, For the means through which that is possible.

As we look at this psalm, That we have sung, We see Jesus. We see the shadow of the cross, In all that we read of.

[8 : 22] We thank you, Lord, For the blood of Christ, That was shed. We thank you for that blood, That is sprinkled over our hearts, In order to bring to us that cleansing.

We thank you, We thank you, Not only for the cradle, In which the Lord Jesus was laid, As we think about that, Over this month of Christmas, But we thank you for the cross, That Christ was so willing to go to.

We recognize that he went there for us, To make it possible for us to be saved. And so, Lord, We come seeking that salvation, Calling upon the name of the Lord, And asking, Lord, That you would give to us that peace, And that rest that is found, Only in you.

Pray for any this morning, Who may be here, Or who may be elsewhere, Hearing this, Who have not yet, Found that peace with God, We thank you, That still we are living, In the age of grace, We thank you, That those who believe, In the Lord Jesus Christ, Shall be saved, And we ask that if there's any, Who have not yet, Come in faith, And called upon the name of Jesus, That even today, They would come.

And for any of us, Lord, Who may feel the weight of our sin, Who may come this morning, Aware that the devil, Has his finger pointed at us, For any of us, Who feel that weariness, Of being a distance from you, We pray that you would meet with us, In this hour, And that you would restore to us, The joy of your salvation, That we would know, The joy of the Lord, Which is our strength, We pray Lord, That you would open our eyes, That we would see Jesus, We pray that you would open our ears, That we would hear, Your word, We pray that you would stir our hearts, That the word of truth, May find a straight way, Into our hearts, And that our hearts would be like, That place where the good seed of the gospel, Would be able to grow, We pray for this congregation, We thank you for them, And we thank you for your hand upon them, We thank you for the prospect,

[10 : 45] Of new ministry here, In the weeks to come, We thank you for Ian Thompson, And for your clear call, To him as he, Has considered coming to this place, We ask that, As you call, You would equip, We pray that you would be with him, As he thinks, About the move, And as he thinks about the prospect, Of ministry here, And also that you'd be with his wife, Connie, And the family, We ask Lord, That you would use them for your glory, In this place, That they would be a blessing, Within this congregation, That they would see, You much at work, In the years to come, We thank you that you're the God, Who hears, And who answers prayer, And we thank you for that answer, And we ask Lord, That we would see you at work, In the years to come, We pray for, Those in the congregation, Who are struggling at this time,

We're always conscious of, Those who are grieving, And this month in particular, Can make grief, All the more acute, But we ask, That you Lord, The God of all comfort, That we draw near, To those

who grieve, That you would be, To them, The friend, Who sticks closer than a brother, That they would know, The peace of God, That passes all understanding, And the hope, That is finding the gospel, Pray for those, Who are struggling, With illness as well, And we ask that your hand of healing, Would be upon them, Those who may be struggling, In their homes, Perhaps others, Who may be in care homes, Or in hospital, As they come to, Our mind's eyes, We pray for them, And we ask Lord, That you would meet them, At the point of their need, We pray for the young people, In this area, And connected with the congregation, Those who, Will meet in Sunday school, In the Zoom, Facility,

We pray for those, Who have met, In past weeks, On Zoom, The point to life group, And we ask Lord, That you would be working, Amongst our young, That they would remember, And come to know, And trust their creator, In the days of their youth, We ask that they would walk, Close with you, All the days, Of their lives, We pray Lord, For all the, The different ages, Of your people, Throughout the congregation, Those in middle years, Who find that there are, So many responsibilities, And so many conflicting interests, May we, Be those who seek first, Your kingdom, And who have that, Appetite and desire, For your righteousness, And for your glory, So have your hand, Upon us Lord, We pray, In this day, Draw near to us Lord, As we, Seek to draw near to you, In the name, And for the sake of Jesus, And Lord, Be at work, Hear our prayers, Take away our sin, Help us to fix our eyes, On Jesus, For we pray these things, In his name, And for his sake, Amen. If you could open, Your Bibles please, At Psalm 139, Psalm 139, It's on page, 627, Of the Bible I have here, We read the whole of this psalm,

To the choir master, A psalm of David, O Lord, You have searched me, And known me, You know when I sit down, And when I rise up, You discern my thoughts, From afar, You search out my path, And my lying down, You are acquainted, With all my ways, Even before a word is on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, You know it altogether, You hem me in, Behind in the fore, And lay your hand upon me, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, It's high, I cannot attain it, Where shall I go from your spirit, Or where shall I flee from your presence, If I ascend to heaven, If I ascend to heaven, You are there, If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there, If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there,

[15 : 52] Your hand shall lead me, And your right hand shall hold me, If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, And the light about me be night, Even the darkness is not dark to you, The night is as bright as the day, For darkness is as light with you, For you formed my inward parts, You knitted me together in my mother's womb, I praise you, For I am fearfully and wonderfully made, Wonderful are your works, My soul knows it very well, My frame was not hidden from you, When I was being made in secret, Intricately woven in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed substance, And your book were written every one of them, The days that were formed for me, When as yet there were none of them, How precious to me are your thoughts, O God, How vast is the sum of them, If I would count them,

They are more than the sand, I awake, And I am still with you, O that you would slay the wicked, O God, O men of blood, Depart from me, They speak against you with malicious intent, Your enemies take your name in vain, Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord, And do I not loathe those who rise up against you, I hate them with a complete hatred, I count them my enemies, Search me, O God, And know my heart, Try me, And know my thoughts, And see if there be any grievous way in, And lead me in the way everlasting, Amen, And may God bless that reading of his word to us, Again, Let's pray for a moment, Just as we come to consider this passage, Heavenly Father, Heavenly Father, Heavenly Father, Heavenly Father, We thank you once more for your word, We thank you that this is the spirit-inspired word of God, And we pray for the help of the Holy Spirit to be our teacher, As we would seek to meditate upon these verses, We acknowledge that we cannot speak, We cannot understand, We cannot take in and respond appropriately to your word, Unless you are active in the power of the spirit within us, And so we ask, Lord, That you would do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, Move around us in this place, Move in us, We pray, Work to bring glory to your name, Work to bring salvation to those who are still lost, Work, We pray to sanctify your people, That we would be made more and more like Jesus, And what we pray for ourselves here in this gathering, We pray for the congregations around us, The different denominations in the island,

We pray for every place where Christ crucified is preached, May you be at work, Lord, We pray, Building your church, And we ask all this in Jesus' name, And for his sake, Amen.

Well, if you could have the Psalm, Psalm 139 open before you, That would be helpful to both you and to me. We're going to try and step through this Psalm in the next few minutes.

[19 : 35] And I'm hearing the rustling of pages just now as we look at the text of Scripture. But one thing that we've become accustomed to in the past months is not so much the rustling of pages, But I see people of all ages flicking and swiping devices of all kinds.

And this period of lockdown and restrictions has found us becoming much more technologically aware than many of us ever were before the period of pandemic.

And when we're using these devices, And when we're looking at our phones or we're going through iPads or computers, Almost every time we come to a website, We get that box that stops us in our tracks, And we have to tick the box and accept what's been asked for.

And if you look at the box, It almost becomes something that's subconscious for us now. But if you look at the box, What each website asks us to do is accept cookies.

And we might wonder, Well, what on earth are these cookies? And sadly, they're not the delicious things that we try to resist. These cookies, I didn't really know what they were. So I did a little bit of reading up on them this week, Five minutes or so, Nothing too deep.

[20 : 54] And I learned that these cookies that we accept, They're little files that are sent to our devices to monitor us and to remember us, To gather information about us.

That's why when you go to some websites, Before you ever put your address in, They seem to know where you live. And you might wonder, What else do they know? Well, I'm told that they know our ages, Usually.

They know our gender, If we declare it these days. They know whether or not we're homeowners.

They know whether or not we have family, Whether we're married.

If we have stocks and shares. They know what our professional interests are. They know often what our personal interests are. These cookies enable people behind websites To know the things that we've bought in the past online.

They enable them to know also What we may be thinking about buying in the present. So these cookies, They enable the people behind the websites To gather quite a lot of knowledge about us.

[22 : 04] But the point I want to make as we begin in this psalm Is that the knowledge that they may have of us, Which is substantial, Is nothing In comparison To the knowledge that God has of us.

That's the first point. We have four points within this psalm. It fits into four stanzas of six verses. So verses one to six speak to us.

God through the psalmist, He speaks to us about His perception. So if you write down points, The first point would be the perception of God, The knowledge that God has of us.

We begin in verse one, Oh Lord, you have searched me And you know me, Or, oh Lord, you have searched me And known me, As the ESV puts it.

And the word that David uses here for search Is a word that's worth noting, Just to get an idea of what that means. I can say to our girls, I have three girls, Two are, Well, one's a teenager, The two are just a little behind that.

[23 : 18] And I can say to our girls, Go and search for the remote control, Would you please?

Because it's always going missing. And they'll be sitting on one couch, And they'll casually glance In the direction of the other couch, And say, I've looked and it's not there.

That's not a search. And that's not the kind of search That David is speaking about, As he tells us how God searches us. The search that God performs on us Is a thorough investigation.

It's not a casual glance In our direction. It's a deep, personal search. Weerspe, the commentator, says The verb search means to examine With pain and care.

The Jewish people used this word To describe digging deep into a mine Or exploring a land. Or investigating a legal case. And so that's the search That we come under As God looks at us.

He searches us. He digs deep into us. He knows us. And that comes through As we step through the verses. You know verse 2, When I sit down And when I rise.

[24 : 29] Sitting down in that context Refers to It refers to our casual activities. In fact if we take it broader than that Sitting down and rising up.

They refer to all David's activities. The relaxing pastor. The walk on the hill. The working endeavor. God knows. Verse 3 You discern my thoughts From afar.

So we could say As we get more of a picture Of God's searching of us His perception of us And not only does God See where we go. Not only does God See what we do. But even the things that we think. God knows. Our good intentions. God knows. Our bad intentions. God knows.

[25 : 28] Our wholesome plans. God knows. He discerns. Our less than wholesome plans. God knows. He perceives them From afar. Now when we think about things That are afar.

We don't have much clarity on them. I take my glasses off. I can barely make out Who it is that's afar. That God's vision Is 20-20 vision.

And even those who are afar The things that are going on afar He sees them crystal clear. Verse 3 You search out my path And my lying down You are familiar You are acquainted With all my ways Commentator Lane Says going out And lying down Cover all our waking And sleeping hours And every state Active and passive So we see how forensic This search is Verse 4 Even before a word Is on my tongue You know it completely Oh Lord And so the indistinct Are mutterings The under the breath Are grumblings That are barely audible For others God hears them The things that We may just Whisper that other people

Don't catch And it's just as well They don't God catches them all And even the words That we begin to form In our minds That we manage to catch Before they trip off Our tongues God knows them Such as his perception Such as his knowledge Of us And if we just hit pause For a moment I wonder Does this make us nervous That God would have Such complete Knowledge Of us That our lives Would be such An open book Before God What we have done In our past What we are doing In the present What we may Still Do in our future God knows Verse 5

It continues You hem me in Behind and before You have laid Your hand Upon me So we learn there That God Is the one Who is behind us In our past God is the one Who is ahead of us In our future And he's not Distant from us In the present He's not uninvolved With our lives At this moment He has his hand Upon us Spurgeon says Behind us There is God Recording our sins Or in grace Blotting out The remembrance of them And before us There is God Foreknowing All our deeds And providing For all our wants We cannot turn back Says Spurgeon And so escape him For he is behind We cannot go forward And outmarch him For he is before He hems us in And the Old Testament

[29 : 01] Scholar Alec Mottier He notes That the In the grammar Here The words used In the Hebrew Are in the perfect tense Which indicate to us That this Searching of God This discerning Of God This perception That God has As he looks Into our lives It's a constant thing You know we might work On a construction site And maybe once Every three Four years The health and safety Inspector walks on the site There's a thorough search At that point But the rest of the time There isn't much searching And the picture we're given here Through the The text Is that God's Searching of us It's not a once Every year It's not a once Every decade This is a continual Constant searching That he Performs Of us And as we consider this

As I first consider this Much longer than You consider this As we consider The perception Of God That the completeness Of the knowledge That he has of us Of our lives Day by day How do we react to that?

How does that make me feel? How does that make you feel? Well one commentator Eveson says To someone who hates God This is an awful thought But for David The psalmist It's awesome And so David responds In verse 6 As he thinks about this Perception This knowledge of God And he says in In verse 6 Such knowledge Is too wonderful for me It's high I cannot attain it He's overwhelmed By this Sense That the God Whom he worships He knows him He understands him There can be times In our lives When we feel Like no one Truly understands us Teenagers Especially There's not too many Teenagers here But We may Have teenagers In our homes It's not unusual For teenagers To say to us In the midst of some Kind of Domestic conversation You don't understand You don't know What I'm going through And that may be Perfectly possible But the The teaching That comes through This psalm Is that we have A God Who does know And who does Understand So if there's Teenagers watching this Know that God understands you God knows you He understands the Twenties as well And the thirties And the forties And the fifties And the sixties And the seventies All the way up And all the way back To the zeros We have a God Who knows us Who understands us

Who has walked In the places That we have walked Who has felt The things that we Feel And David as he Thinks about this Knowledge of God He's amazed He is full of joy This God That

knows him So well David is overwhelmed By the fact That this God Who knows him So well He doesn't push him Away But he draws him Close This God That knows David So well He doesn't He doesn't Take his hands And stand back But he puts his Hands Upon David The psalmist He draws him Close And I suppose As we think About the fact That this is The month of December That's the message Of Christmas God With us Matthew 1 23 The message To Joseph The virgin [33 : 22] Will conceive And give birth To a son And they will Call him Emmanuel Which means God With us And I think It's right For us To take That encouragement This afternoon When we think About our lives We think about Who we are We can be Encouraged By the fact That the God Who knows us Better Than we know Each other And we know Even ourselves He doesn't Stand back From us But he came Forward to save To save us The same God That David Speaks of In this psalm He doesn't Cast us off But he takes us Into his presence We sometimes Sing a hymn Over in Harris I stand

Amazed In the presence Of Jesus The Nazarene I wonder How he could Love me A sinner Condemned Unclean How marvelous How wonderful My song Shall ever be How marvelous How wonderful Is my saviour's Love For me There's great assurance In knowing That the God Who perceives us So thoroughly Takes us close And doesn't Push us back And yet I wonder If perhaps There's also A gentle rebuke Here When we think About how we Sometimes deal With each other Because sometimes When we're dealing With each other For as long As we behave Well We allow other People to come Close But sometimes If somebody Grieves us Or disappoints Us Or hurts us What do we Do with them We don't do What God Does We don't Step forward In compassion We step Back Sometimes We push Them away We don't Want that Close to us And it Strikes me In a challenging Way As I think About myself Not pointing Fingers at Anyone else When we push People away When they Disappoint us How unlike God that is Because he Doesn't do that With us Does he The perception Of God Is the first Point The second Point here Is the presence Of God And that Takes us From verses Seven Through to Verse twelve David Speaks to us About the Presence of God He says In verse Seven Where shall I go From your Spirit Or where Shall I Flee From your Presence He asks A question And some Of the Commentators Think that David as He comes Under God's Searchlight He becomes Uncomfortable And he Wants to Flee You know Like when You pick Up a Stone And all These beasties A thousand Beasties Who were under The stone Happily They all Scamper They can't Bear the Light They go Looking for Another stone To hide Under And some Of the Commentators Are thinking Well that's What David's Doing here He wants To hide From God When he Realises How thoroughly God knows Him But I Think that's Not the Right Interpretation And John Stott Thinks that Also so you

Can listen To him More than Me Stott Says This question Of David Expresses Not the Desire to Escape But the Joyful Astonishment That escape Is impossible And that God's hand Is everywhere To guide Him And to Hold Him David is Aware Of the Presence Of God And the Presence Of God With him Is everywhere There was There was a Period There was a Period in David's Life When he Wrote These Verses There was A period In David's Life When he Fell When he Sinned And he Went on The run And for About a Year You think That David He sought To establish A distance Between himself And God Rather than Confessing Sin He carried It for A period Rather than Coming to God in Repentance He He stayed Away He sought Almost to

[38 : 24] Hide He writes About it In Psalm 32 He says In verse 3 Of Psalm 32 When I Kept Silent My bones Wasted Away Through my Groaning All day Long For day And night Your hand Was heavy Upon me My strength Was sapped As in the Heat of Summer And so David As he Writes This Psalm He writes As a man Who's Experienced How miserable It is And how Futile it Is to Try and Flee The presence Of God David Knows From Experience That God Is everywhere And God Knows Everything And so David writes From the Perspective From the Perspective Of one Who's encouraging us Not to try to carry our sin Or to hide our sin But to confess it That's something that we need to be doing constantly

Our sin is ever before us So we need to keep bringing it before God Constantly Repentance is not a one-off act It's a continual posture Malcolm McLean Writes As we think about the knowledge of God We can see that there are no secrets We can hide from Him So we should be encouraged to be honest Before Him At the same time we can be very hopeful Because He knows us I can remember my younger sister When she was maybe three or four Round the back of Kennedy Terrace She decided one day She would She would have a taste of some coal So my parents could see her out

the window And there she was In her pink Baby jumpsuit She's got a bit of coal in her hand Like an apple So they went charging off out of the house To confront her And take the coal off her And as she saw them coming She dropped the coal

And they said to her Aileen Were you eating that coal And she said no She's got coal in her lips She's got coal in her face She's got coal in her hands She's got a suit from head to toe It's ridiculous Couldn't be hidden And that's a picture of us When we try to hide our sin From the God Who knows us And so David Says to us Through various psalms This one included Don't do it In Psalm 32 David after Talking about the groaning And the misery Of being on the run from God He says in verse 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you And did not cover up my iniquity I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord And you forgave the guilt of my sin Therefore he says Let everyone who is godly Pray to you While you may be found

So we ask David The psalmist Where can God be found And David answers In Psalm 139 He can be found everywhere Don't have to go hunting He's everywhere If I go up Verse 8 To the heavens You are there In the high places Spiritually and physically God is there Think about the wedding in Cana In John 2 God the Son was there In the high points of life Rejoicing with those Who rejoiced God was there If I make my bed In the depths In Sheol As it puts it in the ESV You are there So we learn that in the low places In trouble In grief God is there Even in death

Sheol is the place Of death God Jesus the Son Was there He's gone ahead of us Into death's dark veil We learn that in Psalm 23 He's able to To be with us In death's dark veil He's able to To carry us Through death's dark veil Into life that's everlasting If we are trusting him If we're able to say The Lord is my shepherd The King James Version Many of you Are probably reading it Says If I make my bed in hell Behold thou art there Spurgeon says this It seems a wonder It seems more a wonder To meet with God in hell Than in heaven In Hades Than in paradise Of course Says Spurgeon The presence of God Produces very different Effects in these places But it is unquestionably In each [43 : 29] The bliss of one The terror of the other What an awful thought Says Spurgeon That some men Seem resolved To take up Their night's abode in hell A night Which shall know No morning God is with us In the heights He is with us In the depths Verse 9 If I rise On the wings Of the dawn If I settle On the far side Of the sea Or if it puts As it puts in the ESV If I take the wings Of the morning And dwell In the uttermost parts Of the sea Even there Your hand will lead me And your right hand Shall hold me There's great comfort There for God's people If we're God's people There's great comfort In knowing That there's Nowhere we can go There's no place

That we can move to Where God is not there Before us To be our guide And our protector Even in the mundane Things of life I can think of A lady Known to some of us here We've moved from Harris To Park End In the last few weeks And this is a promise That even Encapsulates that There's nowhere We can go Whether it's close by Or it's at the far side Of the sea That God is not there With us And he's there Before us There's comfort in that And yet there's a warning To those who are not God's people Or those who may be God's people And who like David Was for a period On the run We learn here There is nowhere We can go Where we can Run and hide From God Remember Adam and Eve In Genesis 3 Hiding in the trees God saw them Remember Jonah Hiding in the depths Of this boat

Heading in the opposite direction From where God Called him to be And yet God saw him Sent a storm And a whale To fetch him Verse 11 If I say Surely the darkness Will hide me And the light About me Be night Even the darkness Is not dark To you The night Is as bright As the day For darkness Is as light To you Malcolm McLean Writes The most dangerous Time for a person In the ancient world Was the hours Of darkness But the presence Of God Is not diminished By the things That make us afraid Instead Says Malcolm The things That make us afraid Should be diminished By the fact That God Will be with us Wherever we are All he ought

The commentator Says remember It was God In the beginning Who divided light From darkness He is not The servant Of either But the Lord Of both And again As we reflect On that There's both comfort And there's challenge There's the comfort Of knowing That when our Circumstances Sometimes change Very suddenly And when it feels To us Like we've gone From the light Into some Deep Darkness We have the promise Here that Even though we may Not be able To see him For a period God is with us There's the challenge Here Also To remember That God Always Is with us Even when no one Else is looking And listening God is seeing

He is hearing He is with us Isaac Watts In the hymn Writes Darkness and Light And this agree Great God They're both Alike to thee Thine hand Can pierce Thy foes As soon Through midnight

Shades As blazing Noon The presence Of God We see in these Verses The perception Of God We see in the Opening of the Psalm The third thing Here Is the power Of God Now it takes us From verse 13 To verse 19 We'll move more Quickly now And we see here The creative And the sustaining Power of God Verse 13 For you created My inmost Being Or my inward Parts First to the To the The emotions The conscience The inner person The personality

[48 : 34] God created us You knit me together In my mother's womb I praise you For I am fearfully And wonderfully made Wonderful are your works My soul knows it very well My frame was not hidden From you When I was being made In secret Intricately woven In the depths of the earth 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 were none Of them And so we learn And so we learn here That from the The beginning Of our lives From before We were even born Right through Till our last day God is the one Who sees God is the one Who knows God is the one Who blesses us With his life Giving power So when we look Around us At creation When we look Around us At each other When we look In the mirror And see ourselves When we press

Our fingers Against our wrist And get that pulse We are taught About the power Of God How many children Over the years On Christmas morning As it comes close Have been given A toy for Christmas I can remember It vividly myself And you're full Of excitement Opening up this toy And you're taking All the plastic And you're cutting All the straps The cable ties Off the toy You release it You push the button Nothing happens Because you realise It needs batteries And batteries Are not included And batteries Are not in the house And batteries Cannot be bought In the shop For the next two days So you have this thing That you desperately wanted And it's now sitting In your living room And it can do nothing It's a picture of us You know we are So arrogant As a people We think we power ourselves

But all God has to do Is take the battery out Our days are done And so every day We have Every breath we take Speaks to us About the power Of God And as we think About that How should we respond To that Well we should respond To that As the psalmist Responded to that Not with a self-centred Arrogance But with that Genuine Heartfelt Worship And praise And that's what David does here Verse 17 He says How precious How precious To me Are your thoughts Oh God How vast Is the sum of them If I were to count them They are more than the sand I awake And I am still with you And that's David He's singing a song of praise He's responding in praise All my life Says David Every day I'm given Is for praising you And then when I sleep Says David And then awake Still am with you And that's true Not just of The night And then the morning But that's true Of the day In which we sleep In time And wake In eternity Kidner The commentator Says When I awake May have a glimpse Of resurrection And I think It does have a glimpse Of resurrection We have the promise That those who Sleep in Jesus Have that promise That as they awake They awake In that place Of never Ending Life That place Where God's Presence Is known That place Where God's Power Is experienced In a whole New measure

So we have The perception Of God We have the Presence of God We have the Power of God And finally We see As the psalm Comes to an end The purity Of God Or the holiness Of God Verse 19 Oh that you Would slay The wicked O God O men of Blood Depart from me They speak Against you With malicious Intent Your enemies Take your name In vain Do I not Hate those Who hate you O Lord And do I Not loathe Those who Rise up Against you I hate them With a complete Hatred I count them My enemies And this is The stanza Actually That many people Would rather Not read I've been to Many services Many funerals Actually When this

[53 : 39] Stanza Is never read And people Would say Why not Finish on the Positive We could have Finished on the Positive On the Last point The night Before one O'clock Well it's Not up to me When we Finish The spirit Of God Made no Mistakes In inspiring David To include This stanza About the Purity of God The holiness Of God And David In his life And in his Kingly reign He encounters People who Speak evil Against God Verse 20 He encounters People who Are just Defiantly Wicked Verse 19 He encounters People who Misuse Who take The name Of God In vain Verse 20 He encounters People who Openly hate God Verse 21 Who rise Up against God And David

Says I hate Them Get them Away from Me They are My enemies Because they Are God's Enemies And I think There's something In us That Wants to Say and it's Probably something In us that's More Shaped by the Culture that we Live in We almost Want to say David that's Not very Nice I'm not Sure that's Very Christian But Calvin Notes That we as a People Are very Quick to Defend

Ourselves When others Wrong us But we Are Quotes Calvin Abundantly Timid And cowardly In defending The glory Of God And David As he Writes these Closing Verses He shows Courage He shows A conviction He shows Great zeal When he Squares up To the Enemies Of God And why Does he Do that Because he Is a zeal For the Lord Because he Is a Deep Love For God And David Speaks this Way Because I Think he Has a Better Understanding Of the Fact That God Is holy And God Is pure And sin Is serious So serious That God The father Sent God The son To be Our savior God Takes Sin So Seriously That he Would go To a Cross To crush It And you Know our Response If our Response Is to Turn Our noses Up At the Closing Verses Of this Psalm Our Response Doesn't Indicate A problem Of intolerance Within God Our response Actually indicates A problem Of sin Tolerance Within us And we Must repent Of it And that's The note The psalmist Ends on He says Search me Search me Oh God And know My heart Try me And know My thoughts You'll see In the footnote In the ESV That it's Thoughts And cares Literally I think The better Translation Is test Me and know My anxious Thoughts See if There is Any offensive Way in me See if There be Any grievous Way in me And lead Me in the Way Everlasting As we Finish Note that In the Finish Here We learn The context Of the Psalm David Doesn't Tell us The context He's Full Of Vision Of God And he Shares That with Us But he Doesn't Tell us The context Of what's Going on In his Life Until the Last two Verses And what's Going on In David's Life Well David Is struggling With anxious Thoughts And cares [58 : 44] And it Strikes me That there's Never been A time Where we As a People Have been More anxious Even the Young people Those that We look at In school And we Think Are Worry Free You speak To the Teachers In schools Today Overwhelmingly Our children Our teenagers They're anxious They're struggling With anxiety And psychologists And teachers Are rolling out Programs To try and Deal with That And doctors Are handing Out pills To help Us deal With our Anxious Thoughts And yet David

As this Psalm closes He says To us This is how I deal With my Anxious Thoughts I come To the God Who knows Me Who understands Me And yet Who still Loves me He says I come To the God Who is With me Who never Leaves me Who never Forsakes me Who never Lets me run So far That I'm Lost He says He never Loves me He says He says I come To the God Who gives Me life And breath Who created Me And who Sustains Me He says I come To the God Who is Holy And yet Who doesn't Drive me A sinner Away But takes Me Close And forgives Me When I Fall And picks Me back Up When I Fail This is The God Says David Who deals With my Anxious Thoughts In life This is The God Who is even Able to deal With my Anxious Thoughts About death And lead Me In the Way Everlasting This is My God Says David And he Can be Our God To If we Will trust Him So may Each of Us Be encouraged

To trust The God Who perceives Us Who knows Us The God Who is With us The power Of his Presence Always The God Who gives Us power Life And breath The God Who is Pure And holy And who Yet Enables Us To come To him Through Christ And all That he Did for Us On that Cross Be Encouraged With the Psalmist To trust In this God Who deals With our Anxious Thoughts We'll Pray Lord God We do Thank you For this Psalm And we Thank you That you Reveal Yourself To us Through this Psalm We thank You that You are Able to Deal with All our Anxious Thoughts And our Cares What a Friend we Have in Jesus All our Sins And griefs To bear What a Privilege To carry Everything To God In prayer Enable us We pray To carry Ourselves To you In prayer And may Each one Of us In this Building Each one Of us Who is Tuning in Whatever Be those Who are Able to Say with The Psalmist This is My God The Lord Is my Shepherd The one Who is With me In life The one Who is With me Through death And the One who Who takes Me Into the Way Everlasting Hear our Prayers Help us We ask In Jesus Name Amen We'll finish By listening To the Sing Psalms Version Of Psalm 139 And we'll Hear verses 1 to Verse 10 To God's Praise Number Oh, Lord, you have a child with me.

[63 : 49] You hold me to you and to you. I say, say, say, say, oh, my God, how long I'm going to you.

My glory, my God, how long I'm going to you. I pray before you.
Before I see power, O Lord, it is well known to you.
You kept me in the eye before. You lay on me in your hand.
Such knowledge is too wonderful to hide, to understand.

[65 : 03] Where God I come, your spirit in thee, or from your presence, oh, it is well known to you.

It is true, the heaven to our death, or in the death below.

If I should take the plains of love and well beyond the sea, may also you will be my heart, your right and holy me.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all, both now and forevermore.

Amen. Thank you.