

*"We can trace all our human problems to our view of God."
- Bill Bright, Campus Crusade for Christ*

Dear Faith Bible families,

We've arrived at our fourth and final Psalm 139 family devotion against the backdrop of some of the most turbulent weeks in recent history. Who could have ever anticipated the dramatic events of June 2020? Before all of this, God knew, and in His providence, He led us to reflect upon Psalm 139. Psalm 139 teaches our children who God is as He has revealed Himself. It also emphasizes God's intimate care for us individually. May this psalm be a source of comfort in knowing the One who is over all. May it encourage and give you hope, for He is the One who can truly change hearts and lives for His glory!

Regarding the Week 4 devotional, verses 19-22 are more difficult to understand and must be studied in context. In this regard, we have provided more scripting, content, and questions for your use. Please review and feel free to modify the material to meet your family's needs. We'd like to recommend that parents of high schoolers and middle schoolers take a look at this devotional to supplement the discussion questions from the Psalm 139 Overview (issued Week 1). We trust that there is enough here to provide several meaningful nights of discussion with your older students.

Here are some ways FBC families are implementing family devotions:

- Have devotions while taking a walk around the neighborhood
- Have devotions over dessert
- Break it up into smaller pieces for young ones, and do it over the week

Regarding the memory verse challenge, please let us know how many verses individuals in your family ended up memorizing. We would also love to hear any feedback, constructive or otherwise, to be able to better meet your needs as parents. Our email address is:

sixfukudas@msn.com

All in all, we hope that you have enjoyed learning about God together as a family. Wishing you a wonderful week!

In His love,
Dave and Laurie Fukuda

FBC FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP: WEEK 4

Main Point: **The God of the universe cares about me personally.**

Implications: *God will lovingly correct and lead me if I am willing.*

Theological

concept: God is **infinite** (without a beginning or an end); yet, He is personally **intimate** with us.

Bible Reading: **Psalm 139:19-24**

<u>PREPARE BEFOREHAND:</u> 1. Read, reflect, and pray about the passage. 2. Have WASABI/ROCK students read and consider questions or go over them together. 3. Preview “Introductory Activities” below. Both options need some set-up beforehand.	<u>MATERIALS NEEDED:</u> • Stuffed animal, toy, or treasure to hide. • Clues printed, cut and folded in half. • Optional for young ones: Ball of yarn • Bible <i>Optional MUSIC RESOURCE:</i> <i>"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (Psalm 139:13-14)" by Seeds Family Worship on Spotify, iTunes, etc.</i>
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Unit Memory Verse:

"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."-Psalm 139:13-14 (ESV)

Optional Bible Memory Challenge: Psalm 139:1-24

Refer to the Week 2 handouts of Psalm 139 divided into weekly memory sections. You could select one verse from this section to memorize as a family.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY - *Prior Preparation Required. See separate Activity sheet.*

“Search and Rescue” or Treasure Hunt

One of your child’s favorite stuffed animal/toy is missing! All you have to go on is clue #1 that was left in its place. It’s your family’s job to search and find it.

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- ✓ Have children take turns reading and answering the clues to prevent the oldest from always guessing the right answer.
 - ✓ For non-readers: Instead of clues, set up this activity ahead of time. Tie one end of a ball of yarn to the toy and hide it out of sight; trail the yarn up, down, and around the room. (Put any breakable items away. ☺) Use enough yarn so the other end is undetectable. Give child the free end to follow the string to the hiding place. You could also have the hunt go throughout many rooms if you’d like.
 - ✓ **Treasure Hunt:** Use the same clues to do a Treasure Hunt. Treasure ideas: a prize, a dessert, a coupon for a family outing, etc. You can add or delete clues to make it age-appropriate.
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TRANSITION and PRAYER- *What kind of thoughts and feelings were you having when you were searching for _____? How did you feel when _____ was finally found? From our Week 1 devotions, we learned that God knows everything about us. He doesn't have to search for us like we did for _____. God already knows where we are. Today, we will learn about a different kind of searching that God does; He searches our hearts. Let's pray and ask God to teach us more about this from today's Bible reading in Psalm 139.*

BIBLE READING AND DISCUSSION:

Q1: From our other devotions, what things have we learned about God? (*He is omniscient/all-knowing, omnipresent/ever-present, omnipotent/all-powerful, He created us, He has more thoughts than we can count*)

*These are called **God's attributes**, because only God possesses these amazing qualities and abilities.*

- ✓ For Older Children: *"Did you also know that God has always possessed these qualities for He has always existed? No one created Him; He is Creator of everything. We say that God is **infinite**, meaning that He has no beginning and no end; God is self-existent. From last week, we saw that God's thoughts are also infinite and incomprehensible to the human mind. The person of God is truly awe-inspiring!"*

In this week's reading, David continues in his response to God as he looks at his own life in view of the splendor of God's magnificence. Let's read Psalm 139, taking it a few verses at a time"...

(Note: The following verses 19-22 are geared toward older children. Those with little ones may consider skipping to #3/verses 23-24.)

(Read vv. 19-20)

Q2: Who is David speaking about in these verses? (*Those who are against God.*)

Q3: What are some of the words that David uses to describe them? [*wicked, men of blood (blood-thirsty), adversaries (enemies)*]

Q4: In verse 20, what are they doing to God? (*speaking against God, misuse/take God's name in vain*)
"In light of God's awesome holiness, David wants nothing to do with ungodliness. He chooses to be on God's side."

2. (Read vv. 21-22)

"We really need to talk about what David means about having 'hatred' toward those who oppose God. In fact, Jesus says in Matthew 5:44-45: 'But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.'"

Q5: David describes these people by their actions. What phrases does he use? (*those who hate God, those who rise up against God*)

Q6: Reading these verses in context, do you think that David hates the individuals themselves or does he oppose the people's evil intentions and sinful behavior?

Q7: When David counts these people as his enemies in verse 22, what do you think he is declaring? (*He is not supportive of those who hate God. He will not compromise and allow God to be disrespected. His allegiance is to God, not to evil.*)

Q8: Why is it important to make the distinction between a person and a person's actions? (*Every person is made in God's image. God tells us to love our neighbors, even our enemies! We are not, however, called to love or accept sinful attitudes or behavior.*)

3. (Read vv. 23-24)

David ends his psalm by asking God to examine him.

Q9: As the psalmist invites God to search him out, notice the use of imperatives. What actions does David want God to take? (*Search me, know my heart, test me, know my anxious thoughts, see my offensive ways, lead me.*)

Q10: What does David want God to search out or examine? (*his heart, his thoughts, his ways*)

The Bible says, “The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” - I Sam. 16:7

In another psalm, David writes, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” - Psalm 51:10.

In the Bible, we can understand the “heart” to be our inner thoughts and desires, the seat of emotions. David knows how important it is for God to keep our hearts cleansed from sinful thoughts. David’s son, King Solomon, also writes, “ Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” -Prov. 4:23.

Q11: Is there any connection between what’s in our hearts, anxious thoughts, and “offensive or grievous ways”? Explain.

Q12: Many times, it seems harder to live for God and do things His way, even though we know that it’s best for us (the everlasting way). What are some things we can do to keep close to God? (*Realize that we are sinners who need a Savior, be quick to confess any wrongdoings, pray regularly and ask God for help, enjoy Christian fellowship, encourage others spiritually, read God’s word daily, cultivate a humble heart, follow God’s leading.*)

CLOSING and PRAYER:

Psalm 139 has given us two major truths about God. First of all, God is the amazing Creator of the universe, awesome in power and wisdom. The other is that God has lovingly planned and created each one of us to be unique, special, and loved by Him. God knows us intimately. Not only does He care about being with us; He cares what’s inside of us. If we invite Him, He will help us to conform our hearts, thoughts, and ways. Let’s pray, thanking Him for who He is and for His love for us.

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES:

1. Plan one-on-one times (such as at bedtime) to reflect upon God’s love and care for each child personally. Has God revealed any “offensive ways” that need attending to? If the child admits and shares something, encourage them to confess this to God. Assure them of God’s promise of forgiveness and restoration (See I Jn. 1:9). Be prepared for the privilege of sharing the Gospel.

2. Learn more about God’s attributes as a family. Here’s a brief article to start your conversations:

15 Amazing Attributes of God: What They Mean and Why They Matter

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/15-amazing-attributes-of-god-what-they-mean-and-why-they-matter.html>
