BIG PROBLEMS? BIGGER GOD!
Part 17: Problem of Identity—Psalm 139

INTRO: "Who am I?" is age-old and all-important question of IDENTITY. Moses (Exo. 3:11), Gideon (Judg. 6:15), David (Psa. 8:4). All struggle. How we answer impacts so much about our lives. Who we listen to matters in defining who we are. Our IDENTITY (Who am I?) is NOT in earthly relationships, our work, our possessions, appearance – these distort. All are external. Only place to find true identity is enter relationship with the ONE who created us. Each of us is incredibly valuable to God. Why? Creation (who came from), salvation (what cost), sanctification (who can become), glorification (where we are going). David wrote this psalm, divided into 4 paragraphs of six verses each. It is a psalm about God and His relationship to each of us. Just exactly how does God relate to us? What does God think of us? Psalm says *God sees every person as awesome and amazing*. Each section of six verses answers a question.

I. "HOW WELL DOES GOD KNOW ME?" HE *KNOWS* US PERFECTLY (vv. 1-6)

A. Answer? v. 1 "search. . . know me." Search is to dig deep (God digs us!) How so? How well does God know us? Perfectly!

B. In every way (vv. 2-5):

1. (v. 2) our conscious life (sit is passive & rise up is active). Resting or moving He knows. He knows when we get up, lie down, and all in between! Even our thoughts (reads our minds!).
2. (v. 3) our choices and habits – knows us intimately inside and out. He knows our patterns and tendencies.
3. (v. 4) our words (language) – what we say
4. (v. 5) He is actively involved in our past, present, and future. He guides us. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He "lays His hand on us" – bestows blessing. He is in control.

C. Result? v. 6. It's too much! Amazing to realize! He perfectly knows and understands each of us and He loves us anyway!

J. I. Packer stated, "I am never out of God's mind . . ."

II. "HOW CLOSE IS GOD TO ME?" HE *PURSUES* US RELENTLESSLY (vv. 7-12)

A. (v. 7) If God perfectly knows us our first instinct is to run. Why? He is holy! He knows my lies, hypocrisy, selfishness. Question: "Lord, how can I get away from You? Is there any way to escape my guilt?"

B. (vv. 8-12) Answer – No place to run or hide. He is everywhere. His presence is meant to comfort us and not make us fearful (vv. 9-10; Gen. 3:9-10). If I could travel the speed of light "wings of the morning" to farthest horizon, You'd be there. Plus, not even darkness can separate us (vv. 11-12). See Rom. 8:35-39. . . ILLUS— Little girl with cleft palate. . . "I wish you were my little girl."

III. "HOW WONDERFUL HAS GOD MADE ME?" HE *DESIGNS* US PURPOSEFULLY (vv. 13-18)

A. *He created and uniquely designed each of us (vv. 13-16a)*. He knew us before our parents produced us! We are fearfully (awesomely) and wonderfully (amazingly) made. So much so, "Wonderful are thy works (ME!)!" All people (kids, teens, deformed, illegitimate, elderly, etc.). We all matter to God. Unpack vv. 13-16a. . . Note God/me (you) interplay. Rick Warren said, "You are not an accident . . ."

B. *He designed me for a purpose (v. 16b)*. He has plans for me. My design determines purpose. Max Lucado said, "You were born prepacked . . ."

C. He will receive and welcome me in the end (vv. 17-18).

IV. "HOW MUCH DOES GOD PROTECT ME?" HE *PROTECTS* US FAITHFULLY (vv. 19-24)

This last section seems to take an abrupt shift. He asks for two things: take care of the problem of evil and protect us and help us not be part of the problem.

A. *From Others/Enemies (vv. 19-22)* 6xs! Everything affirmed in Scripture is not necessarily with the approval of God. He asks God to deal with the wicked; not himself. The psalmist sees the easiest way to deal with evil is to eliminate it. BUT, He'd have to eliminate ALL of us!

B. *From Myself (vv. 23-24).* What a wonderful prayer for God to reveal his sinfulness and to guide his life.

CONC: ILLUS – $20 dollar bill crushed still holds value . . . So, "Who am I?" I am a child of the King created in the image of God to make His name great. Do you hear it? God's whispering 7 Words, "I am glad you are my child."