

Psalm 139

GOD, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand.  
I'm an open book to you;  
even from a distance, you know what I'm thinking.  
You know when I leave and when I get back;  
I'm never out of your sight.  
You know everything I'm going to say  
before I start the first sentence.  
I look behind me and you're there,  
then up ahead and you're there, too—  
your reassuring presence, coming and going.  
This is too much, too wonderful—  
I can't take it all in!

Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit?  
to be out of your sight?  
If I climb to the sky, you're there!  
If I go underground, you're there!  
If I flew on morning's wings  
to the far western horizon,  
You'd find me in a minute—  
you're already there waiting!  
Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark!  
At night I'm immersed in the light!"  
It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you;  
night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you.

Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;  
you formed me in my mother's womb.  
I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!  
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!  
I worship in adoration—what a creation!  
You know me inside and out,  
you know every bone in my body;  
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,  
how I was sculpted from nothing into something.  
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;  
all the stages of my life were spread out before you,  
The days of my life all prepared  
before I'd even lived one day.

This reading from the Bible tells us that all of us are special to God. We are all special to God, even though we are different from each other.

In some ways we can be the same. For example, people can support the same football team. Hands up if you support Manchester United.

Okay, hands down. Hands up now if you support Newcastle.

Hands down, and let's try another one. Hands up if you're a boy.

Hands down. Now, hands up if you're a girl.

Wonderful, looks like everyone got that right! Except maybe some of the teachers.

Now, I'd like everyone to spend a moment, quietly, thinking about the person sitting on your left. Think up three things that make you the same as that person. If you don't have someone on your left, then pick someone else. What makes you the same as them?

Okay, hands up. Who can tell me something which makes you the same as the person next to you?

Thanks everyone. Now, again, could everyone sit quietly for a moment and think of three things that make you different from the person on your left. Again, if you don't have anyone on your left, pick someone else. Think of three things which make you different.

Okay, hands up again. Who can tell me something which makes you different from the person next to you?

We can be alike in many ways, but sometimes people are very different from us. And sometimes it can be hard to remember that we're still special, even if we're different.

(bring out Amy)

This is Amy, and she is different. Not only because she is a teddy bear, and most of you are not. You all have something which she doesn't have, and this makes her shy. She's embarrassed because she's different.

(find a child)

What's different about Amy? What's she missing?

(an eye)

Yes, she's missing an eye, and that makes her different. And she's shy about that. Does not having an eye make her less special?

(no)

Of course not. She's still loved, I love her. And God loves us all as we are. God loves us whether we support Manchester United or Newcastle, whether we're a boy or a girl, whether we have all our legs and eyes and arms or if we're missing one. We're all special to God, and God loves us just as we are.