



Big Idea Of The Series: Psalm 139 is well-known devotionally. Psalm 139:14, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made,” is emblazoned on T-shirts, coffee mugs, and social media memes. The psalm’s ubiquitous nature and conventional usage can hide its deeply important statements on the nature and goodness of God. This series will explore David’s understanding of his God, our God, with particular attention to four of the classical attributes of God: omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, and omnibenevolence. The goal is to both teach correct theological points regarding these incommunicable attributes of God (attributes which He alone possesses) and to help people to understand why these attributes matter for their lives. Ultimately our goal is to discover our all-knowing, always-present, all-powerful, and all-good God, who is always for us and never against us.

Week 4 - An Unexpected Ending

Text: Psalm 139:19-24

Topic(s): Attributes of God, Omnibenevolent, Perfect Love, Perfect Hatred, Spiritual Enemies

Big Idea of the Message: God is omnibenevolent. He is fully, wholly, completely and utterly good all the time. We, as humans, can do good things, but only God is wholly good. His goodness is not limited and has no bounds. He is good to both the righteous and the unrighteous. God is perfect in his love for people and hatred of sin. We, too, are called to love our enemies and to pray for them, like children of God would. We also must understand that our enemies are not people but sin - primarily our own. We must desire it’s defeat with the same passion David had for God’s enemies.

Setting the stage:

Leaders: Please read aloud to your group Psalm 139:1-18, then pause and tell the group they are about to experience an unexpected ending. Then read Psalm 139:19-24

As a group: Understand that God's Omnibenevolence is not limited to these verses written by David but is instead a foundational attribute of His being evidenced continually throughout time by many of the writers of the Scriptures. As a group take turns reading aloud the following verses in order to understand the pervasiveness of this revelation:

God is Omnibenevolent - Old Testament Evidence

"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!" (Psalm 34:8)

"But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." (Psalm 86:15)

"For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." (Psalm 100:5)

"The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing." (Psalm 145:9,13-16)

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him." (Nahum 1:7)

God is Omnibenevolent – The New Testament Evidence

"Why do you call me good?' Jesus answered. 'No one is good—except God alone.'" (Mark 10:18)

“But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:44-45)

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

“For God does not show favoritism.” (Romans 2:11)

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

“Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (1John 4:8)

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Questions For Group Discussion:

1. *(Read for group)* When we say that God is **omnibenevolent**, we are saying that God is all good, all the time, to all. There is no action or motive or thought or feeling or anything else about Him that is not purely good. Human beings can do good things, only God is omnibenevolent, or wholly good.

When you come to know in an experiential way that God is omniscient (He knows everything), omnipresent (He is everywhere and sees everything) and omnipotent (He is all powerful), **why is God’s omnibenevolence a comforting truth?**

2. The most common objection to the assertion that God is omnibenevolent, as well as omnipotent and omniscient, is the problem of evil. **If God is all-knowing and all-powerful and perfectly good, why does evil exist? How do you reconcile this?** (Resource linked in question: <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-allow-evil.html>)

3. When we last left David, he was sitting in awe of God. If you or your group participated in last week's homework assignment, **review and share some of your awe experiences and how they made you feel.**

4. David's experience of being overwhelmed with awe leads him to a complete hatred for his/God's enemy. His enemies were physical, ours are spiritual - sin. **Has your conception of God (awe) ever caused within you a complete hatred of sin?**

5. **Who have you seen as your enemies/adversaries in the past? Have they been yours or God's? Whose enemies have you felt more hatred for?**

6. According to the writers of Scriptures, we each have three enemies: Satan/spiritual forces, the flesh (our sinful nature) and the world (the cultures in which we exist). **Are you aware of them in your own life? Could you give an example?**

7. **How do we "hate perfectly?" How have we hated imperfectly?**

8. In his talk ,John read the quote from John Calvin regarding perfect hatred: *"We are to observe that the hatred of which the Psalmist speaks is directed to the sins rather than the persons of the wicked. We are, so far as lies in us, to study peace with all men; we are to seek the good of all, and, if possible, they are to be reclaimed by kindness and good offices: only so far as they are enemies to God we must strenuously confront their resentment."*

Some have equated this with “hate the sin, love the sinner.” Why might it be better to say “hate the sin, love my neighbor?”

9. Jesus said to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Paul took it a step further: “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.” (Romans 12:14) **Have you ever blessed an enemy? This Thanksgiving week, how could you bless and not curse those who have persecuted you?**

10. In light of Psalm 139 and a God that desires to be known, **how have David’s insights helped you to know God better?**

11. David rejoiced in being known by God! He knows you completely and loves you truly. **If someone were to ask this all-knowing God about you, what would He say about you? How would He describe what He knows about you?**