

GOD SEARCHES US AND KNOWS US

If you haven't read Psalm 139 lately, you really ought to take a few minutes and read through it. It's one of my favorites. Actually, it's a psalm I like to read at funerals, because it talks about God being with us and loving us, no matter what. God knew us through and through even before we were born; he created us, and even today, he is "acquainted with all our ways."

The last time I studied Psalm 139, however, it was verse 1 that reached out and grabbed me. Verse 1 says, "Oh, Lord, you have searched me and known me." This reminded me of flying to visit my brother in Delaware a few years ago. For whatever reason, security at Hartsfield was extra tight that day. I had to take off my shoes and jewelry. Inside a glass booth, a female security officer who clearly didn't know her own strength gave me a thorough frisking. She then scanned me with a metal detector, which took forever – after many, many broken bones and surgeries, I have metal everywhere and had to explain every beep. Finally I had to stretch all different ways and was then deposited outside the booth, shoes in hand, a little rattled and disheveled and somewhat the worse for wear.

I think it's safe to say: I'd been searched.

So in spite of the grace and comfort of most of Psalm 139, I believe it's true that no matter how it happens, being searched is no fun. And yet this is one of the ways God's Spirit is constantly working in our hearts and lives. You've heard the saying, "God loves you just the way you are. And he loves you too much to let you stay that way."

God searches us and knows us. He wants access to every part of our minds and hearts – no secrets, no pretending everything's fine. Even though it goes against all our human impulses, our job is to give the Spirit this access and humble ourselves enough to be honest with him and let him into every corner of our being. If we're hanging on to sin or darkness, we need the light and warmth of Jesus. Why keep on just growing mushrooms when Jesus offers us healing and forgiveness?

No, it's not easy. We'll definitely have to be willing to humble ourselves. We'll have to admit we're far from perfect and often just completely out of line and sinful. But with that honesty comes the promise of God's grace. Being searched can be unsettling, but God's grace is stronger than all our sin.

And Psalm 139 reminds us again and again of God's overwhelming, faithful, eternal love for us. He knows us completely and loves us anyway. There may be some pain involved. We may even feel a little disheveled and rattled. But to be searched and known by the One who loves us so completely results only in our healing and peace.