

Search Me. Try Me. Lead Me.

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Bible Text: Psalm 139:23,24
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If you will this morning, turn with me in your Bibles to Psalm 139. Our text will be found in Psalm 139:23 and 24. These are the words of David.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, how gracious thou art. We thank thee, Lord, for thy faithfulness today to bring those back that were traveling and bringing me back also, Lord, from the sickness. And we pray, Lord, for thy healing hand upon those who are not here because of sickness. We ask, Lord, that you would be our present help now in this time, in this hour, Lord, as you bring forth thy word and bring it with thy purpose, thy purpose, Lord, to glorify thy holy name, to show the goodness of thee, Lord, to all of thy people, to bring us, Lord, before thee in examination that, Lord, we may know something today, that we may know that thou art with us, that we may know, Lord, that thou art in us, that we may know, Lord, this union. Make it alive, make it real. May thy people be brought to feel thy presence within as it pleases you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Our text, Psalm 139:23-24, David is brought to pray this prayer or to ask the Lord to search him. It's really remarkable. One of the things that Satan does in this life to the child of God, that he's always preying on fears. The fear to know. The fear to know things and truth is a devastating fear. Sometimes the assaults and the wiles of Satan as they hurl toward the child of God and they get in our mind and they torment us, there are times in our lives that we don't want to know. We don't want to know how things stand because we're fearful. We're fearful because of our unbelief. We're fearful because we know the depth or at least we think we know the depth of sin that lies within us.

And I do believe that every, I do mean every child of God that is represented here by David will be brought to ask the Lord to search him, to search him and to know his heart, to try him and to know his thoughts. It is truly a grace and if that grace is in our souls, if we are in part in this union that we have in Christ, we will always have a question in our minds, in our hearts, whether even if we be in the number, the number of the Lord's elect.

There are days that we feel that confidence and that confidence is there because his presence is so strong and it's such a presence that fills the soul that you know that the Lord is there and you know that you're safe and you're secure and you're kept by him.

Then as I said, there are times that we know that we're wayward or we're fearful and we don't desire this. We come to when we read a text like this, there are some that might be in here this morning that draw up and say, "Oh, I could never pray that prayer," and maybe you're disturbed when I tell you that all of God's children are brought to bring forth this prayer in one way or another because they have to know, they have to know that their Lord is in their soul and that desire to know is from the Lord. I understand that when I read this, that there are times I've read this and I've thought, "Oh my goodness, I can't pray this unless I'm ready. I'd better be ready for God to search me." There is no readiness for God to search you. That's his work. When he brings the child of God to him, the child of God's desire is to know the presence of the Lord in him.

We're told in the New Testament to make our calling and election sure but that's not something we can sit back and say, "Well, I'm gonna take inventory of my life. Or I'm gonna keep score. I've done good this way. I've done bad this way." If that's where you're at, you're lost because the bad will outweigh the good if you're ever true to yourself because the bad includes the thoughts, the Lord said. It's not the actions that the Pharisees believed, it's the thought, word and deed, and our thoughts can be downright antichrist. They can be horrific. They can be deeply sinful.

But what we have today, what we have in this passage, you know, many times Paul writes in the New Testament, he'll write in his letters to mortify the deeds of the flesh or he'll talk about mortification. This passage is the beginning of mortification. Mortification isn't something we do. We won't do it. It's something the Lord does and he brings the child of God to confess before him, "Lord, I need you to search me." David said in another place that, "Lord, to reveal those secret sins."

We have sins that are outwardly manifested in our life every day: unbelief, anger, fear, among many others, hardness, bitterness. Those things are pretty readily easy to see. Sometimes when we hear ourselves out loud say those things, the Lord brings conviction by the power of the Holy Ghost, but truly a Holy Ghost religion, one who searches the soul of the child of God, reveals deeply what he is without the Lord but what it is deep in his soul that keeps him from this communion.

David asked the Lord, "Search me, O God," and I do believe it's every sinner's desire that he's made and I mean a sinner in Christ, who is made to desire and who loves the salvation that's found only in Christ, to be searched. It's his desire to be searched because he knows that's the beginning of the Lord and the Holy Spirit convincing him of sin, convincing him of repentance, convincing him of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ to take away the multitude of sins, to cover them with his blood.

I think so much, often when I partake in conversation, religious conversation – I use that term loosely because I term that religion conversation based when people mention the

word "God" or "Jesus Christ." And there is no depth in it. It's all man-centered and a man-centered religion will never pray this prayer because it's okay with man, it's alright in his soul. I was brought up in terminology that told me that I needed to make myself right with the Lord. I can't make myself. My ledger is too full of sin. My merits are not good enough to make myself right with the Lord Jesus Christ. He must search me.

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 16:25, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man," that way is the fallen way of life to every man. It's the life we have and inherited after the fall. Everything is right in our own eyes: in how we judge life, in how we judge the things in life and how we judge ourselves. We won't wake up ourselves. We won't call out to the Lord. We know that salvation as Jonah put, is truly of the Lord and only of the Lord, but yet we'll fret in everyday life, we'll worry in everyday life, we'll fear in everyday life, we'll become hard in everyday life and all of this knowing where salvation lies.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man," man's way, "but the end thereof are the ways of death." Have you been convinced of that? If you've been convinced that the way of man is death, the Lord will cause you to cry out to him to search you. And that, "O God," terminology tells us that there is a union and a relationship, "Search me, O God." This isn't a Lord that you can't approach and this mountain that's got breathing out all the fire and everything. No, we approach the heavenly Father through the Son, through his finished redemptive work, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to bring to light the work of the Son, the intermediary work of the Son, the high priestly work of the Son.

Paul in writing in 1 Corinthians 5:8 says, "Therefore let us keep the feast." You and I don't keep feasts. How does that pertain to us? It's the way, it's the Gospel, it's the life. "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven." This is a warning. What is old leaven? "Neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness." Does it offend you that David cried out to the Lord to see if there be any wicked way in him? Maybe you think wickedness is for other people. Maybe you don't associate that term with any part of you. Maybe you think you're too good. Maybe you think that wickedness is just for people in jails or the people out there that are God-haters. But there always will be a part of you that is at enmity with God and wickedness is the order of the day in the person of the old man.

"O Lord, see if there be any wicked way in me." And yes, it's not a flippant prayer. It's not something you pray when you go to bed at night and go, "O Lord, search me," just like all the mimickers of Paul that walk around and go, "Oh, I'm the chiefest of sinners. Oh, I feel so bad. I'm the chiefest of sinners." Absolutely not. That's Holy Spirit work to plow the child of God to reveal it to the child of God that your sin is worse than anything Paul ever did. The sins of your thoughts and your mind are worse than anything any man on the face of the earth has ever done. That's the Lord's work. By nature we never believe that we need help or salvation. We believe that we can attain to that of ourselves, of our own intellectual mind or if we do this or we have this duty, or if we do this for the Lord.

But Paul said, "neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." What you have before you today is sincerity and

truth. This is Holy Spirit religion. That's what you heard last week from the pastor. There is no life outside of the life of the Holy Spirit working in you. We are dependent and praise be to God that we are because the Holy Spirit, the Lord himself is faithful, we are not. I am so thankful that we do not have a Lord that is unfaithful or can sin or take his mind off of me for a moment like I am. I can't keep myself. I have things that indwell in me that come up in me that I don't know are there from day to day, and when the Lord's providence brings things into my life, that's when he reveals them. That's how you are without him.

Job, I think of Job a lot because I know what a burden it is for me to hear the religious world today and for him to sit there as he had been stripped of everything that he had ever relied upon, and have all the religious world around him telling him all these lies of what he had to do and how he makes himself right with God. And Job said this in Job 31:6, he said, "Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity." Job was brought to the same place David was, "Lord, search me. Weigh me in the balance of your mercy, in the balance of your justice." It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.

"Lord, weigh me in the mercy that only you have." He remembers that we are dust. Does that excuse our sin? Absolutely not, for he is a just Lord. He chastens those whom he loves and he does bring hardship into the life of the child of God. He does search the child of God. He does it in many ways. One of the ways he does it is in and through the word.

I read a lot and I know the writers of old, they bring a lot of...they'll tell you how the word searches you through the holy law of God. And I believe that to be true but, dear ones, I'm going to tell you something: I am equally searched by the red words in my Bible. The Holy Spirit when the Lord speaks in the word of God and he says, "My people shall be willing," when he says, "They shall come to me," or the Lord, anything he pronounces is searching to me. It's very searching to me because, "Lord, have I been willing? Have you brought me to you? You say I shall hear your voice. You say, Lord, I shall follow you. Am I following you? Is your work in my soul?" That's searching to me to hear the Lord pronounce the Gospel, for him to say, the Lord who is truth to say, "This is the truth," is the most searching thing to me because the Holy Spirit says that's the measurement. That's the truth.

Is that truth in you? I don't need Sinai to tell me how holy and just God is, although it does. The Lord Jesus Christ in his purity, in his holiness, in all that he wrought for his people, it's a searching Gospel. But that's a good thing. It's a good thing. It is a great mercy to be brought where David is to say, "Search me, O God. Know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see." And that clause goes to all of that up above. "See if there be any wicked way in me. See, Lord. Search with the light of thy Gospel. Search with you voice and your power. Bring forth that unleavened bread. Bring forth that malice. Bring forth all of that stuff and crucify it, mortify it, nail it on the cross. Show me. Bring me to repent."

In a few minutes, we're going to go to Psalm 51 to look at it a little bit, of how the Lord brought David in that moment of great repentance, but the things that he was brought to say, it was not out of a fear underneath a rock saying, "O Lord, you're going to crush me." It was a beautiful union of having revealed to him what and who the Lord is in salvation.

I believe every child of God does not want to be deceived by sin. He does not want to be deceived by his own wicked heart. He does not want to follow the ways of Satan. He does not want to be swallowed up by the world. Did you hear that? Because that's what the Scriptures say. The Scriptures tell us not to love the world. The Scriptures tell us the world is at enmity with the Lord. How is it with your soul today? Do you see it that way? Do you see the enemies of God as your enemies?

"Search me, O God. Know my heart." The Lord also searches us through the ministry. I often think about in Jeremiah's time where the people wanted to hear the smooth things. "O say to us, peace, peace." We have so many social gospels and so many feel-good gospels that are out there and they're not Gospels. Let them be accursed. They prey on man's love for himself, his desire to feel good, and dear ones, the only thing if you are a child of God, the only one who can come to your soul to give you joy, joy is a fruit of the Spirit. It must come from him. He is our joy.

And I think of all of those who used to, "Prophesy to us these things. We want to hear those things." And the churches today or buildings, whatever you want to call them, are filled with people desiring a feel-good message and I hope you do too from the standpoint that the Lord's finished work is a feel-good message to you; that your soul is filled with what he has done; that he begins with you in that chair today and that you never begin with him because you will ask amiss.

The Lord is faithful. He's faithful in the ministry and all of the things that the smooth things, the dead doctrine, the blah, blah, blah, the do this, the commands, the empty commands to stand in front of people and put a yoke on them and let them walk out of here like mules under a yoke, how is that glorifying to a Lord Jesus Christ who has finished and removed that yoke from off all his people? How does that glorify him?

But the ministry does search but as I said, what is it Paul said he preached? He preached Christ crucified and if hearing about what resurrection life is doesn't search you, I don't know what will. Of hearing what Christ has done and the fruit of the Spirit and everything the Lord does for his people, if that's not searching to you, if you just sit there and you have no conflict in you and you just sit there and go, "Oh yeah, that's what he's done for me, now let me get out of here and go back to my life," you're lost and you're dead in sins and trespasses and you're dead in a false religion.

"Search me, O God." He searches us through his providence. Zephaniah 1:12 he said, "And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles." Yes, the candles represent the light of the Lord. I think about that every time I go from a dark room and I turn the light on. I think about my soul. I think about the darkness that the secret sins and all the things that lie within me, and then when I turn the light on I think

that's how the Lord reveals what's in there and there is no darkness in the room. And I think how faithful he is to do that in his time to purge, to purge, to mortify. Do you want to know what growing the grace and knowledge is of the Lord? That's what he does to his children.

I chuckle every time I hear, well, I'm past chuckling anymore. I've got to be honest with you, I get upset all the times I hear about man-centered religion and everything man has to do. You know, you need to make these people obey by putting the law on them, or you've got to do... That's what the law was, a schoolmaster. Listen, the schoolmaster, the law was never in the hands of man. It's never to be in the hands of man to invoke a burden upon his brother. It's spiritual and we do not wield the power of the Holy Ghost. No man. The Lord is faithful. The Lord reveals sin in the child of God by revealing how holy he is.

He searches us through afflictions and we know that. I think this is definitely an afflicted body. You know, David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." I think about that a lot when the Lord brings afflictions into my life because it's a *selah* moment for me. The Lord makes me sit and rest whether I want to or not. He'll knock me down and say, "This is what I have for you." And I've found as I did last week when the Lord afflicted me with the sickness that I had, his presence there. His presence is powerful to reveal those things, to reveal my need of him every hour, my inability and insufficiency to be the Lord of my life. I can't give myself help. I can't bring myself to love. You think you can? Try to love somebody when you're sick. Try to love somebody when you feel so miserable that all you care about is yourself. It's not going to happen.

We stand in need of the Lord every day and, yes, dear ones, the Lord also uses Satan to search us. Yes, he does. The Lord said to Peter in Luke 22:31, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." There are times in this life we are sifted as wheat but I've got good news in the next verse, the Lord said to him, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." The gift of faith to apprehend what the Lord has done is a great and mighty gift. It is the greatest gift in this life on this earth. To know and to understand and to be revealed what the Lord has done is a great merciful gift.

"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." And if the Lord gives faith, it will not fail and as Satan comes and assails and throws his darts and comes, what is the purpose in that? I want to ask you a searching question right now: do you hate him? Do you hate Satan? Do you hate the devil? Do you hate what he does to you? You say, "That's pretty strong language." Yeah, it is. That is the design of the Lord bringing these things into our lives and the assaults of Satan, you are going to hate him with a holy hatred. It's the same way he brings sin to light in our life to hate sin. Do you hate the wicked one and how he assails you? Have you been given faith and the light of the Gospel to see that he does attack you? Because if you have, it is a great mercy of the Lord, a great, great gift to know that the Lord's enemies are your enemies. That means you're in the same number with him. There are many who blindly walk in this life today that are friends with the

world, that are friends with the devil and have no problem with sin. How is it with you this morning?

David doesn't just ask to be searched, he asks to be tried. "O Lord, search me. Search me, O God, and know my heart because only you can know it, Lord. It's desperately wicked. Who can know it? It's deceitful above all things, Lord, who can know it?" The Lord can. The Lord must reveal it. The Lord must reveal how truly wicked you are and I don't preach these things so that you walk out of here with your head between your legs, your tail tucked down saying, "Oh, my gosh! Look how horrible I am!" But it is a Gospel truth. We're all sinners and come short to the glory of God but in Christ we are triumphant. In Christ that new man, that new nature, is triumphant in the child of God. He has prayed for us. He has prayed that we're not sifted by sin and we're not sifted. You say, "Well, I've been sifted many times." Yes, but not to where you have been defeated or destroyed. He is faithful.

"Yes, Lord, know my heart. Give me a blessed assurance that you, Lord, are the Lord of my heart. That you keep my heart. That you, Lord, are the way." We have to know these things. I've shared that poem with you many times. It often causes anxious thoughts, "Lord, am I his or am I not?" And you might think that's, maybe you come here every week and maybe you go out in your life every day and you don't have those problems. "I know I'm saved." I know people like that. I've lived my life with people like that all my life and when you talk to them about the things that plague the soul, there's a disconnect, a huge disconnect, a great gulf fixed.

So, yes, today I am preaching to exercised souls, souls that know what it's like to be at war, to have this warfare going on. "Lord, we have to know. Know my heart." How do you think it was with Peter when the Lord asked him three times, "Lovest thou me more than these?" And that was very searching for Peter and Peter kept saying, "Lord, you know my heart. Lord, why do you keep asking?" Yes, the Lord knows our heart, we don't. That's why he kept asking, "What is it you don't know, Peter? What is it you have to be shown? What is it that you will be brought to see in this life?" That I'm totally dependent upon the Lord. Totally.

Peter was very, you know, he had a lot of pride. Yeah, like any man. He depended upon himself a lot. He said, "Lord, I'll never betray you," and all the rest of them said, "Yeah, Lord, we'll never betray you," and then the Lord had to show him. Peter didn't know that lay in his heart. He had no idea. He thought when push came to shove he would always stand in the truth and you and I today as we sit here today and we see the wickedness in this world and we see things get worse and worse around us, you might entertain that thought too, that you'll always stand in the truth, that you'll always... Listen, dear ones, we're dependent on the one who keeps us. He's faithful and if those moments do come, I have all the confidence in the world and out of the world, whichever way you want to look at it, that he will perform that for me as it brings glory to him, as it brings glory to him and the Father and the Holy Ghost.

I want to see the Lord's evidence in my soul. "Lord, search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." How is it with your thoughts? Have you ever sat there and thought, "How did that get in my mind? That was a wicked and horrible thought that I'd have about this person or even about yourself or just about things going on in the world, or things you see on tv." How wicked those thoughts are.

"Lord, know my heart." Know my thoughts because I'm always going to look at myself better than what I am. That's what we have partaken in in the fall. That's what we've always seen out of man. We really are better than we are, than the truth of the matter is.

Hold your finger there and turn over to Psalm 51 a minute, would you? Now, we're familiar with Psalm 51, right? We know that this is a very low time in David's life when sin was revealed, when he knew he sinned against the Lord. But look at verse 6, look at what the Lord after the confession of sin, look at what the gift of repentance does. Look at how good the Lord is in the soul of David.

Verse 6, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." Do you see that? In the hidden part, Lord, you will make me to know wisdom. Do you see how he brought that one that before when Nathan came to him and he said, "Oh, just show me who that person is. Show me that person who would do such a wicked thing." "Thou art the man, David." There was none of this of the inward parts, "Lord, you don't see it." There was none of that. There was a resolve of a proud and haughty man but the Lord brought him to the end of himself to confess these words, "you desire truth, Lord, in the inward parts." Why? Because that's where Christ resides. The Holy Spirit reveals to us in our soul, it's the truth of Christ must be there.

"And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop." That's not a good thing. That's, "Lord, chasten me." The child of God just like in today's passage where he's brought to cry out to the Lord to search him, knows that chastening is a necessary love of the Lord for his people. It is a necessary exercise in the soul. Without it, the Lord says we are bastards and we are not known of him.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." You see no creature here. You'll hear David going, "Lord, I'm going to go and I'm going to build you a tabernacle. I'm going to go over here and I'm going to do this for you." Do you hear what his soul is crying out? "Lord, you do it. You purge me and I'll be clean. You wash me and I'll be whiter than snow."

Look at verse 10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." You, Lord. You create a clean heart within me. I can't do that.

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." How can David say that? Well, that's what we heard last week, we're dependent upon...I hope when you walked out of here last week, you prayed and asked the Lord, "Don't take your Holy Spirit from me!" That is life. The Holy Spirit reveals life in Christ.

David is begging. His soul is saying, "Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." Look at 14, "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." Deliver me, Lord, from the sin. Deliver me from the blood that's upon my hands. Deliver me, Lord. Only you can.

Verse 16, "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering." Did you hear that? The Lord does not delight in how many times you pray or how many times you go to church or how many good deeds you think you do. The Lord does not delight in that.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart," and that is a heart that is dependent upon the Lord, humbled in the school of Christ to depend upon his Savior for all things.

"O God, thou wilt not despise." And he can't because that's his work. David said, "Try me, Lord, and know my thoughts."

Zechariah 13:9 says, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name." You see the design in the trials. You see the design in the ministry. You see the design in the Lord's work in the child of God's life to empty them of self, to bring them to him. To call out for the Lord, "I need thee, Lord, every hour."

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God." My Lord and my God. Flesh and blood will never reveal that unto you.

And after all of this today, after being taught to examine himself, as he has been brought to the end of himself, as he's been brought to say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me," after all of that, that soul then cries out to the Lord to lead him, "lead me, Lord. I can't walk on my own. Lead me in the way everlasting." What is that way? What is that way to you today? John 14:6 tells us that "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." That's the way David wants. "Lead me into the way of Christ. Lead me away from self. Lead me into this union, Lord, that I may see thee reigning."

Now, I have purposefully in this sermon, I have not looked at this Psalm yet but I want you to back up with me now and read through this with me as we close today. Psalm 139. Listen, I pray the Holy Spirit comes and searches you and you see how David is brought there. Listen to where David is brought in his life.

"O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me." Do you understand that the Lord's candle will search his people? His Spirit will search every nook and cranny of the child of God. There is no running from the Lord.

"Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." Do you know that today because that's peaceful to me that the Lord knows all my ways because he is the way. He's the one who's the path of life and the path of righteousness. He's the one to put me on that path. He knows my ways. He knows my wanderings and it's a good thing.

"For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." Do you see the union? Do you see that David says, "Lord, I know you know everything about me." And the devil comes and tells us, "No, hide from him. You don't want him to search you. You don't want that relationship with him. You're going to be destroyed." Listen to the soul that's been born open and has been healed with the Lord's blood and knows that his Lord is a merciful and longsuffering and loving Lord.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Leading me and holding me. Preservation and care of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Shepherd to his sheep.

"If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." There is nothing new under the sun. There is nothing that you have done or will do that the Lord does not know of. It might be things you don't know of yet, but this is how merciful our Lord is. This is how all-knowing he is. This is what we have in this union. And I don't know about you, but when the Holy Spirit reveals this to me, it takes away the fear. It takes away Satan's assaults that say, "You don't want to be known." Yeah, I do. I want to know his presence. I want to know that I have a relationship with him.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Every bit of your life.

"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" Do you see that? No fear. Do you see that? The Lord shows him that the thoughts toward us are love and good. That isn't what the wicked one says, is it? It's not what your old nature says, is it?

"If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain." And what does the Psalmist say then? "O Lord, you have enemies"? No,

"Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?" Remember I asked you that a while ago? Do you hate the wicked one? Do you hate sin? Do you hate the things that cause enmity between you and the Lord? Do you hate the world and the way the world is at enmity with God and wants your soul too? Do you hate that?

The Psalmist says, "Do I not hate them that hate thee, Lord? Am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies." Do you? That's where we come to the text. That's where he's brought to say,

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Dear heavenly Father, may you answer that prayer. May you author that prayer in our souls. And Lord, may you bring us to thee in this wonderful union to cry out to thee, Lord, to search us, to know, Lord, that we may know and be revealed thy presence in our souls and that you have saved us with how great a salvation. May you make that real this hour as it pleases you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.