



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

March 22, 2020

God's Loving Heart and Piercing Gaze

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! —Psalm 139:23-24

My how things have changed in March! In a few short weeks, our world shut down and we're confined to home. Regular habits have stopped and past certainties are all in question. Will I have my job again? What will my source of income be? Will I have an income? Am I as secure as I've always thought I was?

There's an old saying. "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future." We're living through a time when our faith needs to become our food, as we learn exactly how faithful God really is. We deeply sense our need of God and long for Him to hold us close and prove that He is who He says He is, and He'll do what He's promised.

Three millennia ago, King David stopped to reflect on the God he served, and as he did, his jaw dropped in amazement. He couldn't hope even to list the facts of God's greatness, much less describe them adequately. Here's what the sweet psalmist of Israel has to say about the God who keeps us.

- **God knows us personally and completely.** *You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways (Psalm 139:1-6).*
- **God is with us and we can never escape Him.** *If I make my bed in Sheol (the abode of the dead) you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me (8-10).*
- **Nothing is hidden from Him.** *If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you (11-12).*

God's omnipresence and omniscience are more than abstract facts. They're qualities of our Creator and Keeper—descriptions of His intricate knowledge and meticulous care for His own.

- **He's personally invested in us.** *I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth (13-16).*
- **We'll never grasp the breadth of God's understanding of us and our need.** *How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand (17-18a).*

Seeing who God is and grasping how precious His thoughts are toward him evoked David's rage against the wicked (19-22), who rebel against such a wondrous God. David hates evil along with the people who embrace it. So naturally he asks God to search and cleanse him from his own sin (23-24).

David trusts in his loving God, so he asks Him to search him thoroughly to cleanse him from any sin that would harm his relationship with His God. Confession is an act of faith that trusts God to examine and cleanse from sin. God hates sin, not just because He's holy, but because He loves and cares for His children. God loves us so much that He hates whatever harms us or separates us from Him. And that is why we hate sin and seek His forgiveness and cleansing.

Asking God to search our hearts is essential to drawing close to the One who's "Beautiful beyond description, too marvelous for words." Self-examination and confession are how we draw closer to the One who knows us perfectly, yet loves us despite our sins and failings. Times like we're going through now remind us that our greatest need is God.

Open your heart to God's searching and cleansing. Let nothing separate you from the only One who knows you completely, loves you absolutely, and cares for you eternally.

To the praise of His glory.

Prayer for the Week

Ask God to lead us to honor and serve Him during this corona virus crisis. Ask Him to ...

Strengthen those who help to ...

- provide needed care
- comfort those in grief and loss
- maintain health under stress

Open our hearts to the needs of others, so we can ...

- heal the sick
- provide for those in need
- proclaim God's truth in love

Show us our need of God to ...

- provide all our physical, social, and financial needs
- deal effectively with the corona virus and its impact
- display the love of Christ in tangible ways

Give our leaders strength and wisdom to ...

- stop the spread of Covid 19
- mitigate the financial and social impact of measures being taken
- lead our nation and the world to regain stability and order

Monday (Home and Sunday (Church)): Pray for Robert Brown: Ministry Support, Communications. Ask God to use him to keep people informed of opportunities to worship, learn, and serve.

Home and Family): Pray for family members and loved ones who do not know Christ. Ask God to give life to their souls and enable them to receive Christ as Savior and honor Him as Lord.

Tuesday (Job/School): Pray for the person with whom you work most closely. Pray for their salvation from sin, and that they will know the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Ask God to raise up leaders in Corona, who will model integrity and excellence in our city. Pray for the free spread of the Gospel.

Thursday (Our Nation): Ask God to raise up godly leaders in both branches of the legislative branch of our government, so our laws reflect His holy standards.

Friday (The World): Pray for the truth of Christ's death for sin to pierce hearts and bring repentance, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the work of His Church.

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Praise the Lord! He is King and rules the world with perfect justice, everlasting love, and infinite wisdom to a glorious future.

Prayer for Our Leaders

Pray for wisdom for our church leaders, as they lead us through the demands of this time.

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, Karen Sherwood, and Dani Tiqui.

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. ... Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth. –Hosea 6:1, 3