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God, Know My Heart

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God, Know My Heart

Day 19

Search me, O God and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)

“Search me.” “Know my heart.” “Try me.” “Lead me.” This is David’s cry. He is asking for God to shine His light into his deepest thoughts and feelings—into the depths of his heart. There is no hiding, bargaining, or game-playing. David lays his heart—the organ of spirit and soul together— open for God to renew anything that is not right within. David is serious about letting God do His work, whatever it takes.

What enabled David to pray this prayer? What enabled him to be so honest and vulnerable before God?

David could approach the Lord like this because he understood God’s nature. He knew God would not be put off by his sins or wrong thinking. He knew God would not reject, despise or shame him. This gave David confidence to return again and again to God, in times of failure or triumph, sadness or joy.

After Samuel confronted King David about his affair with Bathsheba, David prayed, “Have mercy upon me. O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies.” “Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Psalm 51:1, 10).

King Saul wasn’t like this. When he sinned, he ran from God and hid behind excuses. When he failed to wait for Samuel and presented the offering to the Lord himself, he gave excuses. “The people were scattered ... you did not come ... the Philistines gathered” (1 Samuel 13:11).

We also see this difference between Peter and Judas. Peter denied knowing Jesus three times. But he was so eager to be with Him again that he leaped out of the fishing boat and swam to meet Jesus on the shore. Judas, on the other hand, betrayed Jesus and then went away and hung himself.

The difference between David and Saul, between Peter and Judas, was not that one sinned less than the other. Each and every one of us sins in too many ways to count. The difference was that David and Peter turned toward God even in failure, whereas Saul and Judas turned away.

After eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve hid from God and that has been the default position of the human race ever since. Our “opened” eyes do not see God as He really is. We avoid the One who wants to be with us and help us. We run from the One who forgives and restores.

Knowing that God is for us gives us the confidence to come to Him and let Him do the searching. Now we can be vulnerable and welcome Him into thoughts and feelings hidden even from ourselves. We all have distorted thinking patterns that warp our minds and twist our feelings and actions in ways of which we are unaware. God knows these things and He will bring His freeing truth to us.

When we welcome Him, the Holy Spirit will search, He will find and He will uproot what is not right. He will cleanse us of hurtful ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. When David said, “See if there be any wicked way in me,” the words wicked way actually mean way of pain, stress, brokenness, and misunderstanding. David gave God permission to look for deep-seated patterns of thoughts and their associated feelings that were causing him to be less than the man God intended.

Trusting God to have His way in us allows Him to do the work of changing us from the inside out. We come to know God as we let Him know us. As we share our thoughts and feelings with Him, we experience Him in our ups and downs, our healings and hurts, our victories and sins.

Ponder for a Moment

“Search me, O God and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Let David’s prayer be yours today.