

A Prayer for the Whole Year

*O Lord, you have searched me and known me,
You know when I sit down and when I stand up;
You know my thoughts from far away...
Search me O God, and know my heart;
Test me and know my thoughts.
See if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.*
—Psalm 139:1-2,23-24

Whether you are young or old or somewhere in between, these four verses from Psalm 139 can be a good prayer for the whole year. Its a good prayer for the whole year because it says that God has been with us in the year that has passed and will be with us in the year that is coming. When we pray this prayer we admit that God knows us inside out, our actions and our thoughts, and then we open our hearts and minds to God and ask God to show us any sin and evil in ourselves and lead us in God's way instead. And its a good prayer for the whole year, because we need to pray like this every day of the year, not just on New Year's Eve looking back over 2020 and ahead to 2021, but on January 15, looking back over January 14 and ahead to January 16, and on then again on January 17, 18, 19... every day. It would be a good prayer at the start of a new day, trusting that God will be with us as God was with us yesterday; it would be a good prayer just before going to sleep, at the end of a day, trusting that God was with us yesterday as God is with us now.

These four verses are the beginning and the ending of Psalm 139. In between, the Psalm shows us that God knows everything about us: God knows where we walk, what we are going to say even before we say it, where we sleep, where we travel; God knows us in the dark and in the bright light, God knows every part of our body, even our bones, even before we were born. God is amazing! And God is always thinking about us (verse 18)! That sure gives me hope and peace as we pray our way through 2021! And that makes me want to say the best prayer of all: Thank you, God!

Amen!