

FAMILY TIME

SESSION 7: PSALM 139: 19-22

Before you read the passage from the Bible together, journey through these activities with your children.

That way, when you read the passage at the end, your children will understand each phrase more clearly.

TASK 1

“If only you, God would slay the wicked.”

Tell your children that they are going to have a picnic. Have a snack, like a petit filous or a cookie and a drink for each person.

Explain that we are going to have a snack together, but there’s a catch. They can’t eat any of it themselves. Someone else in the family must feed it to them.

Talk about how it felt to be fed by someone else. What was difficult about it?

Chat to your children about how hard it is to let someone else be in control, especially when we think we would do a better job by ourselves.

Talk about how important it is to let God be in control all the time and to leave things in his hands.

Are you good at letting God be in control of things?

David says to God “If only you would sort these wicked people out, God.”

Even though it’s so hard, he decides to let God be in control. Have you let God be in control of your life? Sometimes it’s hard to let someone else be in control.

When we’re babies our parents are in control of everything – where we go, what we eat, what we wear, when we have a drink. But when we get older, we like to be in charge of our own lives and sort things out by ourselves, and it gets hard to let someone else be in control. But God isn’t just anyone. He’s the maker of the universe, who knows you and wants the best for you more than anyone.

So when we are trying to deal with problems, the best thing we can do is to talk to God, tell him how you are feeling, and let him be in charge of the situation, just like David did.

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TASK 2

“They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.”

Read the following short stories together and talk about what you would do in each scenario. If it is easier, make up some alternative scenarios that are more relevant to your family. Or you could also simply ask each person in your family to share a time when someone was mean to them or to someone else.

In school, Florence lends Violet her doll to play with at lunch time. Violet plays with the doll and tells Florence that she’s put it back in her school bag. When Florence gets home, she takes her doll out of her school bag and it is covered in mud and the dress is ripped. What should Florence do?

Jack’s best mates are called Sam and Josh. They go everywhere together, but one day, another boy tells Jack that Sam and Josh are saying nasty things about him when he isn’t there. What should Jack do?

Joseph loves playing football. There is a football club near his house, and he can walk home by himself when his training is finished. Joseph also love Jesus. Some boys from his football club think following Jesus is silly and they follow him home every week, shouting things like ‘God is so stupid.’ Joseph knows they are wrong about God. What should he do?

David, who wrote Psalm 139 had a lot of enemies. Even though he really wanted to hurt those people or teach them a lesson, David understood that God knew better than him. When people are nasty to us, or bully us, it is never a good idea to just put up with it.

We should definitely talk to someone about it, but before we do anything, we should pray for our enemies and ask God to help us know what to do. If we are nasty back to them, they will never know from our behaviour that God loves them too.

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TASK 3

“I count them my enemies.”

Watch a video clip or even a whole movie together that has a notable villain, eg Scar from Lion King, Cruella De’Vil, or even Sharpay from High School Musical if your kids are a bit older.

Ask everyone who the enemy was in the movie? Chat about the times when they noticed the villain of the story planning something mean or being a bully?

So what does the Bible say about our enemies?

In Psalm 139, David has quite a lot to say. David was a great guy... he certainly made some pretty big mistakes, but God loved him lots. But David had a lot of enemies. In Psalm 139, he tells us what his enemies were like. He says they were wicked, bloodthirsty, that they said evil things about God and they hated him. So what did David do? The first thing he does is that he talks to God. He tells God all about the people and how they are making him feel.

Ask your children to think of someone they find difficult, or annoying to deal with. Explain that you want them to think of this person in their heads. Then ask them to picture that person in God’s hands. Tell them to pray quietly into themselves,

e.g. “I really hate that X does this/ says these things about me, but I’m going to place them in your hands and let you decide what happens. Amen”

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The Bible bit...

Help everyone to find the Psalm in their Bibles, and read the following verses to finish off.

Pray before one of you reads it out loud.

Ask God to speak to you all as you read and listen together.

Highlight any word or phrase that jumps out so that you can share what God is showing you personally at the end.

Psalm 139: 19-22

If only you, God, would slay the wicked!

Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!

They speak of you with evil intent;

your adversaries misuse your name.

**Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord,
and abhor those who are in rebellion against
you?**

I have nothing but hatred for them;

I count them my enemies.

Ask your family what parts of the passage God is highlighting to them?

What jumped out at them?

What was the Holy Spirit teaching them as they read?

Perhaps you could finish by playing a worship song and praying for each other.