

## Lesson Title

God made me

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## Text

Psalm 139:13-18

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## Big Idea

David praises God for lovingly making him and caring for his whole life.

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## Aim

To understand that every person is precious because God lovingly makes each one.

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## Leader's Study Notes

**Read Psalm 139:13-18, noting the way that David describes God's creation of him and his response.**

**Use the following notes to help you think about the passage in more detail.**

This section of the Psalm provides the basis for what has gone before. God knows us better than we know ourselves (lesson 1) and is always present with us (lesson 2) because he created us. These verses celebrate the wonder of our physical bodies, which has implications for how we view and use them.

139:13 — In this verse, David acknowledges God as his creator. The imagery of being 'knit together' emphasises the intricate and careful planning of a master craftsman creating original works of art. Humans are not like garments rolling off a production line or made using a cookie cutter; each person is carefully formed and is as unique as their fingerprints.

139:14 — David is grateful and in awe of the miraculous nature of his existence, and he responds with reverent fear. Despite bearing the consequences of the fall in our bodies, which affect some more than others, each human life still reflects God's incredible handiwork and bears his image.

139:15-16 — David explicitly states that God created his physical body and inner being (139:13). God's personal and complete knowledge of David's thoughts and actions (139:1-6) are also true of his physical body. David marvels that God's care for him began before his body was even formed. He understands that God not only gave him life but has already determined how long he will live on earth. The terms 'hidden', 'secret' and 'depths' follow David's exclamations throughout the Psalm that God's knowledge is beyond his, something he considers wonderful (139:6, 17-18).

139:17-18 — The idea that God intimately cares for David in every moment of his life is precious to him. The vastness and abundance of God's incomprehensible thoughts fill him with wonder and move him to worship. David is comforted that such knowledge and care will continue even in death and as he 'awakes' to eternal life (cf. Psalm 17:15).

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## Reflect

- How do your friends, neighbours, and colleagues view and treat their bodies?
  - Do they agree with David that they are 'fearfully and wonderfully made'? What about yourself?
  - Give thanks that God has carefully and intentionally created every part of you. Pray for his help in using your body to bring him glory.
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## Review

Review the previous lesson using the following questions:

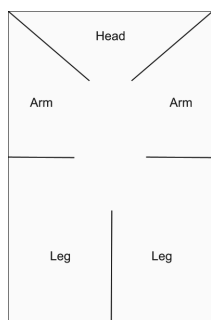
- When and where is God with David? [*Everywhere – high, low, east, west, dark, and light situations (139:7-12)*]
- Why does David like having God with him? [*Guiding and helping him (139:10)*]

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## Introductory Idea – Option 1

**For younger children** – provide each child with some playdough and ask them to make a person. You may need to demonstrate how to do this and provide a suitable surface for them to work on.

**For older children** – instead of playdough, you could provide them each with a piece of aluminium foil measuring about 10 cm x 15 cm (A6) for each child. Pre-cut each piece as shown in the diagram below. Demonstrate how to make an aluminium foil person out of the foil by scrunching the top triangle to create a head and the rest, as shown, to make arms and legs. You could also provide them with toothpicks or pencils to create the finer details like ears, nose, and mouth.



Then, ask the children:

- How they feel about the person they have made
- How much care and thought went into some details?
- How is each one unique?

In this Psalm, David is amazed by how God carefully crafted his body in his mother's womb. [Use the Bridge Questions below to create a link with the lesson.]

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## Introductory Idea – Option 2

Ask the children if they could be someone else for the day; who would it be? Give them some time to think and then invite volunteers to feedback and ask some of the following questions:

- Why would they want to be that person?
- Does the person have a special ability?

Conclude by asking if any children are happy to just be themselves. What do they like about being who they are?

In this Psalm, David is amazed at how God has created him to be who he is. [Use the Bridge Questions below to create a link with the lesson.]

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## Bridge Questions

The children must listen carefully to today's true Bible lesson to discover the answers to the following questions:

- Who made David? [*God (139:13)*]
  - When was David's life planned? [*Before he was even born (139:16)*]
  - How does David feel about his maker? [*Amazement and worship (139:17-18)*]
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# Teaching Plan

**NOTE:** This lesson includes discussion on potentially controversial issues, especially for older children. You must be wise in what you choose to discuss with your group, striking a balance between declaring biblical truth and being pastorally sensitive.

The passage can be divided into three sections, as outlined below.

- God has made each person in a special way (139:13-15)
- God rules over every life. (139:16)
- We should be amazed and want to worship God for making us (139:17-18)

Unlike the previous section of this psalm, these verses concentrate on one image – a child developing in the womb. Therefore, you could use a similar teaching plan for younger and older children. **However, with older children, be sure to have them read the verse in the Bible as you explain each aspect and adapt your language accordingly.**

Begin by asking the children to think about their bodies and what they can do with them. They can walk, run, climb and jump. Their hands are strong enough to pick up heavy things and gentle enough to pat a pet or baby softly. Our bodies are amazing. And we have brains that can think, eyes that can see, ears that can hear and mouths that can speak – we are wonderfully made.

You could use a hand-knitted jumper with a design on it as a visual aid and explain how it was made. Someone carefully planned how big it would be, what colours to use and what the pattern would be. Then, they carefully made each stitch according to their plan. David says that God has knitted us together in our mother's womb. That doesn't mean we're made of wool or that God used knitting needles! It means that God was very careful in how he made us. Show pictures of a child developing in the womb, pointing out how each part forms at different stages. Refer to the figures the children made at the beginning of the session. How did they decide to make them as they did? How much care did they take in crafting each part of the figure?

Show an ultrasound image and explain that the only way we can see a baby growing inside a woman is by using a special machine, but God doesn't need a machine. He sees each baby as it grows, and he is the one making it grow.

When David thinks about his body, he is amazed! He also knows that because God made him, God rules over him. God knows the day that he will be born and the day that he will die. And God knows everything that will happen in David's life, including every thought he ever has (lesson 1). God will also be with David every day of his life, no matter where he goes or what he does (lesson 2).

David is amazed that God should care so much about him, so David praises God and worships him.

**For older children** – It is important to teach that David knows God made both his 'inmost being' and his 'frame'. At this age, as children become more aware of their identity and begin to consider what contributes to 'who they are', they will be helped to understand the importance of the physical body God has given them.

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## Game Idea – Option 1

**For younger children.** From the Media section of this webpage, print Game Idea Option 1 (two pages) for each team. Before the lesson, cut out the cards on page 1 for each team. Divide the group into teams and have them sit at one end of the room with the template page. Place all the cards at the other end of the room. Children run in a relay to collect one card at a time and place it on the template. Very young children will need to be told by a leader which card to collect. The first team to correctly place all the cards wins.

Remind the children that God planned and made them very carefully. Each one of them is special to God because he made them.

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## Game Idea – Option 2

## Discuss and Apply

**For older children. Grand Design.** Divide the group into pairs and provide each pair with a large sheet of paper and pens/pencils. Ask them to design the ultimate being. They must consider how it moves, senses and responds to its environment. It must also be capable of the following:

- Moving in water and on land
- Strong enough to lift heavy objects
- Precise enough to conduct surgery
- Capable of repairing itself
- Capable of reproducing itself
- Able to recognise and avoid objects
- Communicate
- Follow commands
- Work independently

Allow them ten minutes to design and draw their beings before they feed back to the group and explain their designs.

- How many of them look like humans?
- How do they differ from humans?
- Which of the capabilities listed above do humans do well? Which could be improved?

Remind the children that when David thought about how wonderfully God had made him, he responded in praise and worship.

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**For younger children** – it will be sufficient to affirm that they are special to God because he made them – no child is an accident. God planned when they would be born and even planned how many days they would live. Some people live for a long time, some for a short time – this is all part of God's plan. We do not need to worry about what will happen tomorrow because God is in control.

God made each person to be different from every other person. Some people are taller; some are shorter. Some have dark, straight hair; others have light, curly hair. Some are good thinkers; others are good at sports, art, or dancing – each person is different.

Can the children share what they enjoy doing? Affirm each child's particular interest.

**For older children** – use some of the following questions to help the children think further about how they are to view themselves and others, and respond to their creator.

Think about how all your different body parts work together. How does that show how you were carefully designed with a purpose?

- Do you ever think negatively about your appearance or abilities?
- How does what you see on the internet, television, or books influence how you view yourself and others?
- How does this Psalm help you when you don't feel happy with who God made you to be?
- Think about how you are as unique as your fingerprint. How does that show you were made special?
- How does it feel to know that God carefully and lovingly created you?
- How does being made by God affect:
  - how you relate to God?
  - how you think about yourself?
  - how you treat other people, especially those who are not like you?

Older children need to begin to think about how being made by God obligates them to respond to him appropriately. Because God created us, he alone has the authority to tell us the best way to use our bodies and live our lives for our good and his glory.

**Note to leaders:** Depending on your cultural context and the maturity of the children you teach, there may also be particular issues around gender identity and the treatment of the unborn, disabled, terminally ill, and elderly, which could be discussed. You know your context and children best to discern which issues are worth discussing. Psalm 139 profoundly impacts the Christian perspective on all of these issues. Be wise and sensitive as you discuss them.

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## Prayer Idea

Ask the children to think of one thing about their body and what it can do that amazes them. Remind them that God carefully planned and made each one of them special. Encourage them to pray:

- Thank God for making them special.
  - Ask for help to always remember how precious they are to him.
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## Activity A

**For younger children**, choose either this activity or Activity B.

From the Media section of this webpage, print Activity A onto paper (one copy for each child).

Provide the children with coloured pencils, pieces of coloured wool, and other craft materials to decorate the face outline to look like them. It may be helpful to use mirrors, so the children can see their eye colour, hair colour, length, etc. As they complete the activity, discuss how they are each made special by God.

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## Activity B

For younger children, choose either this activity or Activity A.

Print Activity B from the Media section of this webpage onto paper (one copy for each child).

First, children should draw their faces onto the image with the vertical lines and Bible verse. Then, they colour both pictures of the body to look the same.

Cut along the marked lines to produce the main page with the complete body and head, and cut the second body into four horizontal strips as marked.

Help the children to weave the strips into the main image, as in the image below.



Once the strips are all in place, the body should be aligned. Use glue or sticky tape to secure the strips behind the main page, and cut off the excess ends of the strips.

Remind the children that they are carefully woven together by God.

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## Worksheets

For older children – choose either Worksheet C or Worksheet D from the Media section of this webpage. Print whichever is appropriate onto paper for each child and use it to reinforce the lesson or as a discussion starter.

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## Memory Verse

Use one of the memory verse ideas in the Series Introduction to help the children memorise the following verse:

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.* **Psalm 139:14** [NIV]

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