



BIG IDEA: You don't have to hide. God delights in who you are.

SCRIPTURE: *Psalm 139:1-16*

Let me start with a question. "Have you ever felt like you had to hide the real you? I think most of us have. Maybe you hid a bad grade, or pretended you were fine when you weren't, or downplayed something you liked because you were afraid people would laugh.

[Teacher's Notes: share a short story about a time you downplayed, hid, or edited a part of yourself to fit in. For example, it could be an interest you thought was "uncool," a personality trait you muted, a season where you pretended you were fine, a faith practice you kept quiet about. Keep it honest and low stakes. The goal isn't vulnerability shock, it's recognition.]

Maybe you've done something similar; hidden part of yourself because you were worried about fitting in or being accepted. Maybe it wasn't a fandom. Instead, maybe you were hiding a part of your personality, your sense of humor, your interests, or your faith.

Some of you show one version of yourself at school and another here. Others feel like you've got to put on your "church self" here so you'll be accepted. But here's the problem: when we feel like we must hide who we really are, we never get to experience truly belonging. Belonging means when we meet here together, you don't have to fake it. This is meant to be a little snapshot, a microcosm, of what God's Kingdom is like: a place where you can show up as the real you and know you're accepted and loved.

And it's not just true for this room, it's true everywhere else too. Because if the God who created you and knows you completely says, "You belong with me," then you don't have to hide; not at school, at home, nor even with yourself. You can be the real you because you are fully known and fully loved.

That sounds good, but here's the thing: we live in a world that almost encourages us to hide. Our social media is basically built on filters, highlight reels, and only showing the best version of yourself.

Scroll through Instagram, TikTok, or Snapchat and you see everyone’s “wins: the trips to the beach, the perfect selfies, the groups of friends. I think its popularity has waned a bit, but how many of you were once on BeReal? The idea behind BeReal was that you got a notification and you opened up the app to take a picture with both your front and back cameras to give a supposedly “real” snapshot of what your life was really like.

Now, confession time... how many of you on BeReal cheated a little bit? Because you didn’t really have to take the picture when you got the notification. You could wait until you were doing something cool or looked a little better to snap the pics. If that was you once or twice or all the time, there’s no judgment. We listen and we don’t judge, right?

We all probably do it. We hide parts of ourselves. We fear that if people know the real us—our mistakes, insecurities, doubts, and the stuff we keep hidden, would they still accept us?

And if that’s what we do around friends or family members, it’s easy to do that with God too. Like maybe God only wants the “Sunday” version of me; the version that doesn’t mess up, the version that does and thinks the right things, the version that looks spiritual enough.

But here’s the problem: deep down, we all want to be fully known *and* fully loved, but we’re afraid those two things can’t go together. Because if people really knew me, they wouldn’t love me. If God knew the real me, He wouldn’t want anything to do with me.

If we read through our Bibles, we can understand if David shared some of our fears. David was a shepherd boy who became Israel’s greatest king, but he wasn’t the obvious choice. His own family overlooked him. And later, he messed up in some really incredible ways. So, imagine the insecurity he must have felt at times, like, *Am I enough? Could God really accept me if He knew everything?*

That’s the heart behind Psalm 139. Instead of hiding, David leaned into the fact that God saw all and knew all about him, and still delighted in him. Let’s look at what David wrote.

Read Psalm 139:1-16 NIV



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YOU WANT STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO reflect honestly on their identity and begin to embrace God's love for their whole unfiltered selves.

INTRODUCTION

- Opening line idea: *"Have you ever felt like you had to hide the real you?"*
- Story: Share about a time you tried to hide something—maybe a bad grade, an embarrassing moment, or even a personality quirk—because you were afraid of being judged.
- Hook: Ask students to think about the parts of themselves they wish they could keep hidden from others.

TENSION

- We live in a world of filters, highlight reels, and pressure to perform.
- Many students feel like if people *really knew them*, they'd be rejected.
- If that's true with friends, parents, and teammates, then it's easy to assume it's true with God too.
- The tension: *What do we do with the parts of ourselves we'd rather hide?*

TRUTH

- Read Psalm 139:1–6.
 - God knows every thought, word, and action—even before we do.
 - David doesn't respond with fear but with awe: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me."
- Read Psalm 139:13–16.
 - God knit us together intentionally. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made."
 - God delights in His creation—including us.



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LEADER NOTE: Some students may find the idea of being fully known by God intimidating. Encourage them with the truth that God delights in their whole, unfiltered selves.

CHECK-IN

- What word would you use to describe your week?
- Do you think being fully known by someone would feel more comforting or more intimidating? Why?

BIBLE CONVERSATION

Read *Psalm 139:1-6*

- What stands out to you about how God knew David in these verses?
- How does it make you feel to think that God knows every thought and emotion you have?
- Why do you think David responded to God knowing him with wonder instead of fear?

Read *Psalm 139:13-16*

- What does this passage say about how God sees you?
- If God delights in the way He made you, why do we sometimes want to hide parts of ourselves?
- How does this passage challenge the way we think about our identity or worth?
- Is it easy or hard for you to believe God loves all of you, even the parts you wish were different? Why?
- What might it look like to live like you are fully known and fully loved?
- How could believing this change the way you treat yourself or others?

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