

THE WORD OF GOD, Part 3 - October 25, 2020

We are looking at different topics in the book of Psalms, and today we're finishing a series on God's word. Indeed, this is an extremely important subject. How you understand and interact with God's word is one of most important things in your life. Now we are going through Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, and it's primary focus is God's word. And going through some of the passages in Psalm 119 will help you know how you should relate to and respond to God's word.

Psalm 119:33-40. This is such a great prayer, and we need to learn from it.

- Vs. 33. This is asking God to teach us, and only God, through the Holy Spirit, can teach us God's word. The way to learn God's word is not by you trying to figure out what He is saying, but by God working in your heart. John 16:13

- But notice that it says, "*the way of Your statutes.*" This word "*way*" means that God's word is to affect the way you live your life - your lifestyle, your conduct, how you use your time, talents, and money for God. And in this prayer, you are asking God to teach you His word so that it affects and changes how you live your daily life. It says, "*shall observe it to the end*", which means that God's word is to profoundly change you, so that it affects you today, and all the days of your life on this earth.

Vs. 34. This is related to verse 33 but it uses the word understanding, which can also mean wisdom or discernment. The idea is that God wants you to know in the depth of your heart what His word means. Psalm 51:6. A superficial knowledge of God's word isn't going to help you - you need an in depth understanding. Mark 4:20

- This kind of understanding results in you not being lukewarm but instead keeping God's word, doing what He wants you to do, obeying Him with all your heart. Mark 12:30

- One more thing, it often takes time to learn what God is trying to teach you. You read God's word, or you hear a message at church, or listen to a sermon on you tube, and you may not understand it right away. That is, learning and understanding God's word may happen right away, but oftentimes it does not. It usually takes time. Psalm 119:71

Vs. 35. The NIV says, "*direct me in the path of your commands.*" The idea is that you are asking God to lead you, to guide you, to help you do what He wants you to do. Ps. 23:3

- But it's more than just that, for we read "*the path of your commands.*" And this means that obeying God is not something you just do now and then. It is to be a lifestyle, for you are to be living, walking and acting like a child of God. The word path or road or the word "*way*" is how you need to see your life. And God has a path, a road that you are to walk on, and you do this by keeping His commands, and God is the One who helps you keep His commands so that you stay on this path. Eph. 4:1

Then we read that you delight in it. That is, a key to doing what God wants you to do is to be delighted, to be excited about doing what He wants you to do, and that means you need to be delighting in the Lord Himself, i.e., you need to be loving God if you are to be obeying His word, and doing what He wants you to do. John 14:21, 23

Vs. 36. In this prayer, you are asking God to incline, to turn, to bend your heart. Obeying God's word must start in your heart, in your soul, in your spirit, and so we are asking God to do what we cannot do. Obeying God is a spiritual thing, and not just mental or emotional, and it's what God does in and through you. Phil. 2:12-13 - And there's this word dishonest gain or covetousness. And if your heart is bent on doing what God wants, then you'll be loving and obeying His word, and you won't be loving yourself and doing things that are wrong, or that result in unjust or selfish gain.

Vs 37. Here you are asking God to turn away your eyes from looking at things that are empty, vain, and worldly, and asking Him to revive you in His ways, to enable you to do what He wants so you can live in the way that He wants. In this world, there are many vain and worldly things, many temptations, and it takes God's grace, God's word, and His Spirit working in you so you can stay on the path He has for you.

Vs 38. One of the most important commands is to fear God, to reverence Him, to honor and bow down to Him. And fearing God is one of the keys to obeying God, and being holy. And God's word helps to produce this reverence in you. Prov. 2:1-5 - Vs 39. You are asking God to turn away any shame, disgrace, any reproach from your life, for if these things are in your life, then God's word won't be in your heart. Sin is bad and often results in shame and reproach, but God's word is good and results in blessing.

Vs 40. This starts with a statement, that you are to long for, to want, to really desire God's precepts, His word, His truth. There are so many things you can want in life, but you need to guard your heart so that wanting the Lord and His word is first in your life. And the conclusion is that you are to pray that God revives you, that God enables you to really live, and it's through His righteousness, and through His word.

Psalm 119:73-80. Here is another prayer of the Psalmist.

- Vs. 73. All of you are made a little different than one another, but by God's grace, you are made so you can understand and learn His word, and then do what He wants you to do.

- Vs. 74. Here the Psalmist is praying that other true believers, ones who fear God, are encouraged because they see how he is dependent on God's word. That is, you want your life to be an example to others in this area of loving God by loving His word.

Vs. 75. You need to know that God afflicts you and gives you trials because He is righteous and wants you to be righteous. You should never be mad at God when you go through a trial, but you need to know that God knows what He is doing, and that the trial you are going through is for your good, for your benefit. Psalm 119:67, 71
- Vs. 76. You all want to know and experience God's love. And one of the main ways you know God's love is by His word. When I want to be freshly encouraged by God's love, then I go to His word. And I have my favorite passages - Psalms 23, 31, 86, 145
- May God use His word in your life to personally show His love to you. Gospel, epistles

Vs. 77. This is a similar thought to the one we just saw in vs. 76, but here we read the word compassion. And we learn that the more you delight in God's law, in His word, then the more you'll know and experience the compassion, the mercy He has for you. God cares for you much more than you can ever realize, and one of the best ways to experience His compassion and mercy is by going to His word. And the Holy Spirit will use the truth of God's word to help you know and experience His love. 2 Cor. 13:14

Vs. 78. Here is the Psalmist's prayer against his enemy, the proud one, the one who is lying to him. And when you have an enemy, pray to God that He deals with them, but also meditate on His word. That is, spend your time meditating on God's word, on the truth, instead of thinking about how people spread lies about you.

Vs 79. This is similar to vs. 74, but a little different. Vs. 74 says that those who fear God are glad because they see another believer looking to God's word. Here the Psalmist prays that those who fear God, particularly those who know God's word, God's testimonies, would turn to him, would join with him. Indeed, we want to be united with Christians, especially with those who love God and love His word. Our unity as Christians must be based on the word, the truth of God.

Vs. 80. This word blameless can also mean perfect or complete, and you see that the Psalmist wants his whole life to be blameless, and that means his whole life needs to be in accordance with the truth of God's word. He wants to do everything God wants him to do. And one of his motivations is that he doesn't want to be ashamed before God. He has a heart for God, and therefore wants to do what is right and holy. Ps. 119:1, 6

Psalm 119:97-104. This section of verses is another prayer, but it's not the Psalmist asking God for something - it's mainly him telling God how He loves His word, and how he has been blessed by living according to His word.

- Vs. 97. This is simple but profound, one of the most important things for your life. You can love lots of things in life, but most importantly, you are to love God's word. And the way you know if you really love God's word is that you will be meditating, be thinking about His word, and not just a little bit, but all day long.

Vss. 98-100. Here we read three results of God's word in a person's life.

- Vs. 98. You'll be wiser, have more wisdom than your enemies, than the lost, by knowing God's commandments, by knowing they are yours, that God has given them to you.

- Vs. 99. You'll have more insight, more discernment, more wisdom, than your teachers, even those who are teaching in the church, just by meditating, by thinking about God's word instead of thinking about worldly things, about unrighteous or evil things.

- Vs. 110. If you obey God's word, if you do what He wants you to do, then you will have more understanding than the aged or the elders, those who are older than you. You'll have wisdom beyond your years. This isn't a matter of pride, or that you are smarter, but that God Himself gave you understanding. Daniel 2:20-23

Vs. 101. Now this is a very important truth, that you are to stay away from evil, from the evil way, from evil people. And you are to resist temptation, and why? So you can keep God's word, so you can be an obedient Christian, and a blessed Christian.

- Vs. 102. The Psalmist is recognizing God as his teacher, and you're to recognize God as your teacher. And once He teaches you, you want to make sure you hang on to what He has taught you; you don't want to backslide, you don't want to stop doing what He taught you.

Vs. 103. This is similar to vs. 97, which says, "*O how I love your law,*" but here we see the example about food. That is, you are to love God's word more than food.

You get time to eat, but are you getting time to read and think about God's word?

The point is that God's word is much more important than food. Matt. 4:4

- Vs. 104. In vs. 101 we saw how you need to stay away from evil so you can obey God's word. And here we see that knowing and understanding God's word will help you to hate every false way, that is, help you to hate and stay away from all evil.

- Let me say this again – you need to stay away from evil so you can obey God's word, and you need God's word so you can stay away from evil.

Well, there is so much here in Psalm 119. And I encourage you to read it yourself, and not just read it, but study it, and think about it, and see what it means, and how you can then apply it to your own life.

- Read Psalm 119:153-160