

I Praise Thee Because of Thy Righteous Judgments
Psalm 119:164

At the beginning of the psalm, in **Psalm 119:7** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.” Then at the end of the psalm, in **verse 164** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.” Again in **verse 171** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.” Finally, in **verse 175** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.” In all four of these verses, the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord specifically because of His righteous judgment, that is – specifically because of the righteous wisdom of God’s Holy Word. Even so, we also should learn from the psalmist’s example in this matter of praise unto our Lord.

I. The Character of Our Praise

In **Psalm 119:7** the psalmist, this young man of God, revealed the character of his praise, saying, “I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.” Indeed, this should be the character of our praise – a praise unto our Lord that is expressed “with uprightness of heart.” Certainly, we ought to give unto our Lord the praise and glory that is due unto His name. Yet we must give this praise and glory out of a godly and upright heart.

In fact, when we express our praise unto the Lord with our mouths, but have a heart character that is far from Him in ungodliness, He will not accept our praise as pleasing in His sight. Rather, such praise with an ungodly heart is offensive unto Him. Even so, in **Isaiah 29:13-15** our Lord proclaimed His rebuke and judgment against such a practice, saying, “Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? And who knoweth us?” Our Lord views such a practice as spiritual hypocrisy and declares His woe against it. On the other hand, when we express our praise unto the Lord with godliness and uprightness of heart, then our Lord will find our praise to be beautiful and pleasing in His sight. Even so, **Psalm 33:1** declares, “Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely [or, beautifully pleasing] for the upright.”

So then, how did the psalmist come to develop the characteristic of godliness and uprightness in heart? He revealed the answer in the latter portion of **Psalm 119:7**, saying, “When I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.” The psalmist developed a heart character of godliness and uprightness as he learned to live the righteous judgments of God’s Holy Word.

The learning of which he spoke in this verse was not simply the learning of right information. Rather, it was the learning of righteous character and conduct. Even so, in **verse 9** the psalmist presented his understanding of the matter, saying, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse [or, make upright] his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” Even so, we also must learn to live, to govern our character and conduct, according to the righteous wisdom of God’s Holy Word. By so doing, we shall develop a heart character of godliness and uprightness; and with such a heart character of godliness and uprightness, we shall express praise unto our Lord that is beautifully acceptable and pleasing in His sight.

II. The Continuance of Our Praise

In **Psalm 119:164** the psalmist revealed the continuance of his praise, saying, “Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.” Herein the psalmist, this young man of God, indicated his practice of expressing praise unto the Lord consistently and constantly throughout the day. In like manner, in **Psalm 34:1** David expressed his commitment to praise the Lord continually, saying, “I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Yet again in **Psalm 35:28** expressed his commitment to praise the Lord constantly, saying, “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.” Finally, in **Psalm 71:14-15** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord consistently, saying, “But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.” Even so, we also should express our praise unto the Lord continually, constantly, and consistently, at all times, all the day long. Indeed, in **Hebrews 13:15** God’s Word gives us the instruction, saying, “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

III. The Cause for Our Praise

Yet for what specifically did the psalmist, this young man of God, express his praise unto the Lord? Certainly, there are many elements of our Lord’s greatness, gloriousness, goodness, and graciousness for which we might express our praise unto Him. Yet in **Psalm 119** the psalmist focused his praise unto the Lord for the righteous judgments (wisdom) of God’s Holy Word. In **verse 164** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.” Again in **verse 171** the psalmist expressed his commitment to praise the Lord, saying, “My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.” Herein the psalmist expressed his praise unto the Lord for two things in relation to God’s Holy Word.

In the first place, the psalmist expressed his praise unto the Lord because the wisdom of God’s Word is righteous wisdom. In **verse 7** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the righteousness of God’s Word of wisdom, saying, “I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.” In **verses 39** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the goodness of God’s Word of wisdom, saying, “Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.” In **verse 62** the psalmist expressed his thankfulness for the righteousness of God’s Word of wisdom,

saying, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments." In **verses 105-106** the psalmist expressed his commitment to follow the righteous guidance of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments." In **verses 127-128** the psalmist expressed his love and respect for the righteousness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." In **verses 137-138** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the uprightness, righteousness, and faithfulness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful." In **verse 140-142** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the truthfulness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it. I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts. Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." In **verse 144** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the everlasting righteousness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live." In **verses 151-152** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the everlasting truthfulness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever." Finally, in **verse 160** the psalmist expressed his recognition concerning the truthfulness and righteousness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." Even so, in **verse 164** the psalmist expressed his praise unto the Lord for that righteousness, truthfulness, goodness, and faithfulness of God's Word of wisdom, saying, "Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments." Yet again in **verses 171-172** the psalmist expressed his praise unto the Lord, saying, "My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness." Throughout all of this, we can observe that the psalmist was convinced in heart concerning the righteousness of God's Word of wisdom, and was moved to praise the Lord for that righteous wisdom. In like manner, we also should possess a conviction of heart concerning the righteousness, truthfulness, goodness, and faithfulness of God's Word of wisdom; and we also should be moved to praise the Lord continually for that righteous wisdom.

Second, the psalmist expressed his praise unto the Lord because the Lord had taught him the wisdom of His Word. In **verse 171** the psalmist declared, "My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes." The reason that the psalmist was so moved to praise the Lord for teaching him the righteous wisdom of His Holy Word was because that righteous wisdom was help to the psalmist throughout his daily walk. Even so, in **verse 175** the psalmist prayed, "Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me." So then, in what ways did the righteous wisdom of God's Word help the psalmist throughout his daily walk?

First, the righteous wisdom of God's Word provided the psalmist guidance in the right way. In **verse 9** the psalmist proclaimed, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Again in **verses 98-100** the psalmist

proclaimed, “Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.” Yet again in **verse 105** the psalmist proclaimed, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” And yet again in **verse 130** the psalmist proclaimed, “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

Second, the righteous wisdom of God’s Word provided the psalmist protection from the wrong way. In **verse 11** the psalmist proclaimed, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Again in **verse 104** the psalmist proclaimed, “Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.”

Third, the righteous wisdom of God’s Word provided the psalmist hope for the future way. In **verse 49** the psalmist proclaimed, “Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.” Again in **verse 81** the psalmist proclaimed, “My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.” Yet again in **verse 114** the psalmist proclaimed, “Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.” And yet again in **verses 147-148** the psalmist proclaimed, “I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word. Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.”

Fourth, the righteous wisdom of God’s Word provided the psalmist comfort in the afflicted way. In **verse 50** the psalmist proclaimed, “This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.” Again in **verse 52** the psalmist proclaimed, “I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.” Yet again in **verse 54** the psalmist proclaimed, “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.” And yet again in **verse 143** the psalmist proclaimed, “Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights.”

Fifth and finally, the righteous wisdom of God’s Word provided the psalmist strength for the daily way. In **verse 50** the psalmist proclaimed, “This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.” Again in **verses 92-93** the psalmist proclaimed, “Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.”