

each and every time you get so much out of the Bible reading, but still you place yourself in the pathway where God works to speak to us in a real and rich way along life's brief earthly journey. Are you delighting yourself in the Word of God read and preached, studied and taught, and making good use also of all the opportunities for being under that Word as God grants that to you? God's true people are known by this, as a general characteristic they delight in God's Word and the divine revelation it is for us. Is this something that marks your life?

Related to this I can't help but mention another mark of someone who has been gripped by God's Word and delights in it, and that is, won't you then also be **eager** for it, time and again? Listen to how the psalmist so eagerly hungered for the Word and desired to be fed and led by it. Look at the picture described in verse 131. "*I opened my mouth*" he says, "*and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.*" The picture is of one, as a certain commentator put it, "nearly exhausted by the heat of his race, and opening his mouth, and panting to take in fresh breath to renew his course." The psalmist cannot satisfy himself in his desires, no, he needs divine light and nourishment, divine guidance and food for his soul as given from out of God's holy Word. In I Peter 2:2&3 Peter speaks about Christians being "*as newborn babies [who] desire the sincere [pure] milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*" No doubt you know how little babies can so cry out for and eagerly look for their mother's milk....well even so, when it is good with us, and well with your soul, do you not then also eagerly listen to God's Word, and, as it were, pant for God's Word, feeding from it time and again as God gives you that opportunity? In a real way a true Christian just can't have enough of God's Word, and you know when your heart is not eager for it, then you are not where you ought to be and there is reason to search your heart and come before the Lord in a spirit of repentance and the cry for needed help and revival.

We will continue this study next week, learning more ways from Psalm 119 how the Christian sees the Bible as God's precious Word truthfully and practically speaking. Between now and next week, why not read through Psalm 119, and see for yourself, how the psalmist so cherish God's holy Word, and cherish it with him, won't you? Amen.

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



GODS PRECIOUS WORD [1]

This radio message is one of two about the Bible as God's holy Word and what a very special place it has and should have in the lives of God's people. Based on verses from Psalm 119, the theme for this message is, "God's precious Word, truthfully and practically speaking..."

Psalm 119 is the longest psalm and all 176 verses speak most highly of God's holy Word, the Bible. This acrostic psalm is divided in 22 eight verse stanza where in each section the psalmist uses the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in making this lengthy poem in praise of God's Word. Looking particularly at two sections of this psalm, one beginning at verse 129 and the other beginning at verse 161, consider with me some different ways a godly person or true Christian views the Bible. Following also the letters of the alphabet, notice with me the following ways, and may God apply it to each one further as is needed.

You see with me how surely the psalmist for one thing so **appreciates** God's Word. How does his appreciation for the Bible come out? "*Thy testimonies are wonderful*" he writes in verse 129. He thinks God's Word is awesome and says as much in verse 161b, '*my heart standeth in awe of thy Word.*' Do you appreciate God's Word? You may be so used to having the Bible, and the danger can be real that you have lost appreciation for this most unique and special book. The true Christian appreciates and keeps appreciating God's Word. It is one of the marks of a true believer. If the Old Testament psalmist so appreciated God's Word, how much more so even we should in the New Testament age! We may know that with the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, written in many different ways by more than 40 human authors over a time period of about 1500 years, therein is revealed the Christ, the one and only Saviour of sinners. He is made known in the way that our urgent need for Him is shown, and the wonders of Him for us in all our needs are declared, and how to belong to Him and live for Him is all revealed, and what all is promised through Him is made known too! In the Bible you find the wonderful words of life, the truth about the two ways, that narrow path that leads to eternal life and the broad way that leads to eternal death. The Bible, the psalmist knew, is an inexhaustible divinely given authoritative resource of the way of wisdom, salvation, peace, and glory! "*Thy testimonies are wonderful*" expressing so much appreciation for God's

Word. Hear him say in verse 164, *“Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments”* meaning God’s righteous Word and its fulfillments in history.

Are you appreciating God’s Word, and as you get older day by day, year by year, appreciating it more and more even? Or do you show little, if any, appreciation for God’s Word? Do you see not appreciating God’s Word as sin before God and others? You and the Bible - what is the connection - one of appreciation, or not so?

To answer that question, we need to go to the next point and notice how the psalmist **behaved** in line with the Bible. He proved his appreciation for God’s Word in behaving and living in submission to it and in accordance with it. There are all too many people who say they appreciate God’s Word but don’t behave according to it. But here notice the psalmist’s testimony even in verse 129. *“Thy testimonies are wonderful”* he says, and he writes, *“therefore my soul keeps them.”* If we mean what we say that we have great respect and regard for God’s Word, it will and must show in how we live, or else we are living a lie really. You say you appreciate God’s Word, do you behave accordingly?

Notice how the psalmist behaved accordingly not only expressing his resolve to keep God’s Word, but he prays in verse 133, *“Order my steps in thy Word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”* No matter the opposition and oppression, you see, his care and resolve is to keep God’s precepts. He will do God’s commandments and keep His precepts and testimonies. Do you want your life to be in submission and agreement with all the Scriptures? Again, this is what marks a true believer, one born again of God. Then the Holy Bible is not something you only confess as wonderful but your conduct in life proves you believe it is wonderful. You say then with the psalmist in verse 163, *“I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.”*

Why does the psalmist so appreciate God’s Word and behave in line with it in his life? Well notice next, clearly the psalmist is also so **comforted** by God’s Word. God’s Word, in fact, speaks hope to him and leads him in the way of true blessing. Listen to his testimony in verse 130 where he testifies that the entrance or just the opening of God’s Word gives light in a world of darkness, and it gives understanding to the simple. With God’s Word he found true answers to real questions about life and death and eternity. God’s Word brought comfort because it reveals the truth about things that otherwise make no sense at all to us. From God’s Word the psalmist learned about God’s good creation of all and then man’s fall, and then he learned and saw how God came to bring comfort to those in need, to save the lost, to help the needy. Even the day of Adam’s fall God came in mercy with the promise of salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. The Bible tells of hope in an otherwise hopeless world, and tells of peace in otherwise a perilous world.

“Great peace have they which love thy law,” David testifies in verse 165, *“and nothing shall offend them [cause them to stumble].”*

Do you know about being comforted by God’s Word? God’s Word proclaiming Jesus Christ tells us of deliverance and full forgiveness from sin freely given us, trusting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The Saviour went to the cross to pay the punishment for sin even as He lived the holy sinless life in the place of sinners. In and with Him is full salvation rich and free, and all the Scriptures tell of Him as the God of all comfort for us in Christ Jesus. Whatever your sin or your shame, your trouble or your need, there is refuge and help and hope found with the Lord, the faithful covenant keeping God as also ultimately revealed in the promised Messiah, and He turns none away who come to Him, looking to Him for help. In all of Psalm 119 we find the psalmist speak of oppression and persecution and trials, but God’s Word and its riches and promises kept him going; that is what comforted him even in the darkest of times. All God’s true people know of this and can say something of how God’s Word brings so much real comfort at different times in life. Is this something you know too and can share with others as well?

To think of the psalmist being so comforted by God’s Word when as yet he had so little of it relatively speaking, is amazing. How it should convict us. The psalmist probably had just about half the Old Testament and nothing yet of the New Testament, yet he saw in it, by God’s Holy Spirit, so much gospel truth! We live in the day of the fullness of the gospel and after Pentecost, and what fullness of comfort there is to be found in and through the Word of God. God’s precious Word truthfully and practically speaking, when you realize it, is a book from God to us all about Christ Jesus and the need for Him, the fullness of Him as Saviour, the way to Him as Saviour, and the life with Him as Saviour and Lord. Truly the Bible is a book with the psalmist so to appreciate, and behave accordingly, and to be comforted with, indeed, above all else!

Notice next surely the psalmist also so **delighted** in God’s Word. It was such a joy for him to read God’s Word and meditate on it, and to draw from it again and again. In verse 162 we hear him say, *“I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil [treasure].”* In verse 24 of this same psalm he testifies, *“Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.”* The treasures of God’s Word in unfolding Christ to us are inexhaustible. Even when you think you know a passage so well, there may be new and fresh truths brought out from it when you approach it with a teachable humble spirit as the psalmist also did. If you delight in God’s Word you will find more and more reasons to delight in it. In this regard it is such a blessing and encouragement to see older and longtime Christians, when in their seventies and eighties, still reading through the Bible regularly and consistently at meal times and with personal devotions. No, it doesn’t mean necessarily that