

**Subject: *The Prayer of a Struggling Saint***

**Scripture: *Psalm 119:169-176***

As we have seen in this remarkable psalm, the writer is revealing his own heart and thoughts in his walk with God. It reads as a journal, and especially as a prayer journal. This final section is in the form of a prayer. It is an intense prayer (vs. 169, “cry”). He senses a desperate need for God’s Word and at the same time he delights in it.

In this last of 22 sections we find the prayer of a godly man who is struggling with his own weakness and sinfulness. This man is a saint (one separated unto God and separated from the world). This man is also a struggler (he depends on the Lord for help). The closer we walk with the Lord the more we feel our need of Him.

### **A prayer for understanding (vs. 169)**

This has been a constant theme in this psalm (vs. 18, 27, 34, 73, 99, 104, 125, 130, 144). God is gracious to us not only in giving us the light of His Word, but also in giving us eyes to see and understand it. *Psalms 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* We need for God to give us understanding in spiritual things. Thomas Watson said: “When you have profited by reading the Holy Scriptures, adore God’s distinguishing grace. Bless God that he has brought light to you so you can see. He has unlocked his hidden treasure and enriched you with saving knowledge.”

### **A prayer for deliverance (vs. 170)**

This is a request he has made throughout this psalm. We need to be delivered from enemies, from troubles, and from temptation.

### **A prayer of thanksgiving (vs. 171)**

As we learn more about God’s ways, His will, and His works revealed in the Word, we will want to praise Him. We should offer the sacrifice of praise to God for His Word.

### **A prayer of commitment (vs. 172)**

When David repented of his sin he promised God that he would share His truth with others. *Psalms 51:12-13*<sup>12</sup> *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.*<sup>13</sup> *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*

### **A prayer of confidence (vs. 173)**

He comes to God for help because he knows God will hear and help him. He comes as an obedient child who has chosen God’s precepts. *Hebrews 4:16* *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

### **A prayer of contentment (vs. 174)**

Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote this about the Bible: “Since God made man in his own image with the capacity to commune with God, it is reasonable to expect that God would communicate to man and disclose to him the truths that He wants him to know. This expectation has been fulfilled. God has disclosed truths concerning Himself and His purposes, the place of man in

the divine plan of Creation, man's relationship to God, to eternity, to time, to virtue, to sin, and to redemption. It is part of our Christian faith that God has spoken and that the Word of God, the Bible, is God's revelation to man even though communicated through human instruments." How blessed we are to have such a book! If God is satisfied with His Word, shouldn't we be satisfied with it?

### **A prayer of dependence (vs. 175)**

This entire psalm is a declaration of dependence. God's Word is the source of our hope and our help. There's a song that says, "Where could I go but to the Lord?" Where could I go but to His Word?

### **A prayer of confession (vs. 176)**

In spite of his commitment to God's Word, the writer realizes that sin has not been eliminated from his life (see Rom. 7:15-25). The closer we walk with the Lord, the more we will realize our sinful weakness. The writer confesses his tendency to stray as a sheep from God and His will (Is. 53:6), as the old hymn says: "Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above" (*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, written in 1758 by Robert Robinson).

What should we take away from our study of this psalm? We must remember what God's Word does for us and what we should do with the Word.

- God's Word gives us life, light, hope, peace, strength, stability, protection, wisdom, joy, and satisfaction.
- We should receive it, read it, respect it, remember it, rest in it, rejoice in it, resolve to obey it, repent because of it, realize our need for it, and remain in it all the days of our life.

Let's close our study of Psalm 119 with this fitting tribute to God's Holy Word:

The Bible is no ordinary book. It is the Word of God. It contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are final. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here heaven is open, and the gates of hell are disclosed.

Christ is the grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and is established forever.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its contents.