

Psalm 119: For The Love Of Scripture!

Psalm 119:129-136

Psalm 119:129

(KJV) PE. Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

(NIV) Your statutes are wonderful; therefore I obey them.

Opening this week's passage, letter seventeen, *pe*, quite literally opens a can of worms, as its literal meaning is "mouth" and so points to every reference in the Bible relating to the power of the tongue for good or evil. Just a few verses here.

On the side of evil:

James 3:1-12

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

On the side of good:

Leviticus 23:21

And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

2Timothy 4:1-5

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Today, the power of words, through languages, is a force that yields evil under the influence of the sin nature. How much more evil was produced when humankind had *one* language and plotted evil most effectively, to God's certain indignation:

Genesis 11:1-9

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

The idea of *gang mentality* has its roots, first in hearts that devise wicked imaginations (Proverbs 6:18a) and then in feet that are swift in running into mischief (Proverbs 6:18b). Then the plotting, the planning of evil, of course, is communicated by the tongue!

Proverbs 1:10-19

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse: My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

Praise God that when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, and His Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts, we no longer have to succumb to the gangs of this world that propagate ungodliness and worldly lusts - and spew out inevitable, deadly words of hatred.

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

We can be transformed now as God renews our minds (Romans 12:2) through His Word, and as He creates in us new hearts (Psalm 51:10) which overflow with words of life:

Luke 6:43-45

For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Our psalmist loves God's Word. Have you noticed? In Psalm 119:129, he calls His Word "wonderful." And because he regards Holy Scripture so highly, he is more apt to obey it.

We live what we love!

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Ask God to investigate your heart and the overflow of your heart that speaks. As He brings into the light those areas that need His correction and grace, humbly ask Him to forgive you and to restore the right heart that he has redeemed through Jesus. (Psalm 19:14)

Psalm 119:130

(KJV) The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

(NIV) The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Perhaps this verse comes to mind also:

Psalm 119:105 *NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

The moment you open your Bible, and you open your heart to receive its light, you are in the presence and will of almighty God! There is a tenderness and deep humility that the Holy Ghost honours and will take even deeper when we approach God and His Word this way. All of your secret faults and presumptuous sins will be fully illuminated, not so that God can point His finger at you and condemn you, but so that you can clearly see your simple ways and ask God to forgive you and set you back upon the path of righteousness, thereby making your relationship with Him right again. Hallelujah!

Here is a Scriptural prayer that gives God permission to shine light on our sin, from the perspective of a humble servant with a heart to please their Master:

Psalm 19:12-14

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Be sure, beloved, that God will answer such a prayer, prayed according to His will with a right heart.

1John 5:14-15

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Psalm 119:131

(KJV) I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

(NIV) I open my mouth and pant, longing for your commands.

The psalmist here is like the deer that pants for water in a dry land.

Psalm 63:1 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

Psalm 42:1 For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

It is enough that in the world the psalmist walks, and in our world today, that idolatry in our pagan land has dried up the flow of spiritual drink. We simply won't find a supply of Living Water apart from seeking Jesus and His thirst-quenching Word, from our waking hour until bedtime when our eyes close in sleep.

Psalm 119:132

(KJV) Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

(NIV) Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name.

Be sure of this: God desires for each of us to know His grace and mercy more and more through His Word. *As you always do to those who love your name.* While the Word of God is not mentioned specifically in this verse, we know that the psalmist, who delights in God's Word, has learned about God's mercy through His Word; through God's faithfulness to His Word toward the nation of Israel; and ultimately in the psalmist's own life. Oh, beloved, that we may invest our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength (Luke 10:27) into this eternal relationship with God our Father - through His Word!

Psalm 119:133

(KJV) Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

(NIV) Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.

There is a specific order to the steps that God teaches us to ensure our victory over sin. God's assumes that we are meditating in His Word day and night, as the psalmist in Psalm 1. He assumes that we are hiding His Word in our hearts that we might not sin against Him (Psalm 119:11). It is only under these spiritual conditions that he can *order* (*kun* in Hebrew - to stand straight) our steps - that is, guide, lead, and direct us by His Spirit. We do not study and meditate on God's Word out of religious duty, but out our love for God and to position ourselves to be able to hear His clear instruction - and with right hearts, to obey it. It is then we will find the chokehold of sin in our lives released, to God's eternal glory!

Psalm 19:13

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Psalm 119:134

(KJV) Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

(NIV) Redeem me from human oppression, that I may obey your precepts.

We have observed that at some point in many of these stanzas of Scripture, the psalmist cries out to God regarding his attackers and mockers. The Christian walk, beloved, is rife with land mines and snares which usually take the form of worldly distractions and upheaval of all kinds. And the evil objective of our enemy's surprise attacks is to divert our attention from God's will, that we might disobey Him. However, we are not unaware of the Devil's schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11) and God has equipped us with His full armour so we are suited for battle and equipped for victory in the evil day!

Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Psalm 119:135

(KJV) Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

(NIV) Make your face shine on your servant and teach me your decrees.

Could there be any greater honour than having the favour of Almighty God?

Solomon, who may be our Biblical version of Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos, took to the extremes of the lust of his eyes, and the lust of his flesh, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). In other words, he spent the wealth God bestowed upon him to investigate how far a man could go to appease his appetites for lust, possessions, knowledge, and power. But God's will was for him to care for God's people with the supernatural wisdom he asked of God, which God granted him.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

Not only was the Teacher wise, but he also imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true. The words of the wise are like goads, their

collected sayings like firmly embedded nails—given by one shepherd. Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them. Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body. Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Now Solomon's conclusions, after exhausting all that wealth could buy and a favoured life could give, is telling. But in the end, Solomon had strayed from the will of God for his life and for God's people. How tragic.

1Kings 11:1-8

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done. On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

I have often spoken to my own heart throughout my walk with Jesus: *If my walk with God is not right, nothing is right.* By saying that, I have to prioritize my walk with God, keep short accounts with Him, and guard my heart. (Proverbs 4:23)

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What priority have you placed on your relationship with God? What adjustments in your lifestyle could you make today to place Him first?

*STUDY POINT: Survey Psalm 119 and find ten character qualities of the psalmist that stand out, and that cause him to seek God the way that he does.

So beloved, let our relationship with God ring true and resonate His truth. And let each of us cherish and seek to preserve God's goodness and favour over our lives.

Numbers 6:22-27

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.

Psalms 119:136

*(KJV) Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.
(NIV) Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed.*

This is the heart of God, grieving as He surveys the whole of the earth, and His fallen masterwork - man, woman, and child.

2Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

Proverbs 15:3 *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

Hebrews 4:13

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Oh God in heaven, may we shed tears, along with the psalmist here, over the turning way of your creation from your love and grace. And may this burden not leave us while we are on this earth, that we would make known your Saviour Son Jesus, and proclaim Him as we should, that all would come to be reconciled with You for all eternity, to Your great glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland