

Psalm 119: For The Love Of Scripture!

Psalm 119:33-40

Psalms 119:33

(KJV) HE. Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.

(NIV) Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.

Three strokes of a pen.

Our God of the impossible tells the story of the Gospel here in just one Hebrew letter! The letter *he* is the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet and literally means “presentation” or “here it is” or “behold.” The physical letter consists of a *dalet* (remember from our previous lesson - a vertical line connected to an horizontal line) and the *dalet* here represents the height and width of our physical world of materialism (see 1 John 2:15-17). Added to the *dalet* is a *yud*, another vertical line to the left that does not quite reach the horizontal line of the *dalet*. This line represents *God*. These three lines together describe how our holy God entered into the fallen physical world - an illustration of the Gospel:

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Do you see it, beloved? God *gave* God *sent*.

And unto us God *gives* (Jesus through the Holy Spirit).

And God *sends* (us into the world to preach the Gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit).

There it is, the Gospel expressed in the letter *hei*. And we haven't even gotten to the body of the verse!

One more thing about *hei* is how it describes methodology - all the ways we express or communicate the Gospel:

In Chassidic (scholars of the Talmud) thought, the *hei* represents thought, speech and action. Just as the form of the *hei* is made up of three lines, so do thought, speech and action make up the three garments of the soul - the means by which we can communicate the Gospel.

THOUGHT

To communicate the Gospel with power and authority, we need more than a mental tune up:

Romans 12:2

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

1Corinthians 2:16

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Nothing less than life transformation through a renewed mind - the mind of Christ!

SPEECH

We need to SPEAK the Gospel out of hearts and lives filled with the Holy Ghost - the same compassion, love, and burden for souls that Jesus has (1 John 2:6).

Luke 6:45

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.

ACTION

And finally, our expression by faith of the Gospel must be accompanied with ACTION:

James 2:14-26

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: It is good to take spiritual inventory once in awhile. Under the headings of *thought*, *speech*, and *action*, write down what intensional changes you could make in your life to be a blessing and a witness for Jesus to your sphere of influence.

Back to our verse...

Psalms 119:33

(KJV) *HE. Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.*

(NIV) *Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.*

Let me ask you a question. Who is your teacher?

Is it a celebrity teacher or preacher on T.V.?

Is it a seminary professor whom you consider a mentor?

Is it a best-selling author - new or old - who writes devotionals or commentaries?

Your pastor?

While we all appreciate God providing these many ways to learn the Bible and its application to our lives, *God Himself* desires to be your teacher:

John 14:26

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Having years ago tasted the Bible school/seminary culture, to my own disillusionment, I can only say that a person needs to be called to that world of academia, which due to its heady nature, is a mission field unto itself. Highly educated people do not own the Scriptures or have special access to insight. You see, the Bible is first and foremost a spiritual book written for the “servant of God” by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

2Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We all have fallen into varying degrees of religion and legalism, driven by the flesh and the carnal mind. In these last days deception abounds with many forms of Christianity that from the outside seem legitimate, and learned, and logical. But hear this warning:

2Timothy 3:1-5

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

By contrast, our psalmist prays for God to teach him. God is our first Teacher:

Hebrews 12:2

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

God is also our final Teacher:

Rev 22:18-21

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

He will teach us about Himself! He will instruct us in righteousness:

2Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Through His Word! This is how, by His sanctification, He will enable us to be holy as He is holy:

1Peter 1:13-16

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

The psalmist will keep the Word of God “unto the end”.

How? Through sheer discipline and willpower? Through reading more Christian books, devotionals and commentaries, listening to more preachers and teachers? NO! By simply staying connected to the Vine (John 15:1-17) by loving God, trusting God, praying, *staying* in His Word. He has called us to relationship, walking by faith with Him - one step at a time:

Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

And God’s promise?

He will take us “unto the end.”

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ

1Thessalonians 5:23-24

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

Psalms 119:34

(KJV) *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.*

(NIV) *Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.*

The psalmist is asking God to give him *bene* (bein) - the ability to parse out words of truth from His Word, to *understand* the text in the fullest way from his mind and spirit - that it would produce the fruit of obedience in his life. This is obedience *from the heart*, from a right relationship with God.

Beloved, even in your study of God’s Word, give Him all your heart!

Proverbs 4:23 *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Psalms 119:35

(KJV) *Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.*

(NIV) *Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.*

In God's Word, our psalmist finds delight!

DELIGHT, v.t.

1. To affect with great pleasure; to please highly; to give or afford high satisfaction or joy; as, a beautiful landscape delights the eye; harmony delights the ear; the good conduct of children, and especially their piety, delights their parents. I will delight myself in thy statutes. Psa 119.
2. To receive great pleasure in. I delight to do thy will. Psa 40:8.

Oh, dear Christian, that we would find - above all else that clamours for our affection - delight in God's Word.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What are the activities or things in your life that are competing against your delight in God's Word?

Psalms 119:36

(KJV) *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.*

(NIV) *Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.*

Nothing, but nothing, will quench our love for God and His Word faster than covetousness. And this is because a covetousness heart yields a carnal mind, unable to love and obey God:

Romans 8:6-7

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Before we delve into any type of reading or study of God's anointed Word, we would do well to pray:

Prayer of Agur:

Proverbs 30:7-9

"Two things I ask of you, LORD; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

And from the Psalms, pray:

Psalms 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

And heed this warning from Hebrews:

Hebrews 13:5-6

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Psalms 119:37

(KJV) Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

(NIV) Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.

The Biblical precedent here is King David:

Psalm 101:1-8 A Psalm of David.

I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

Remember Job:

Job 31:1 *I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?*

These were not perfect men. But their hearts desire was aligned with God's Word:

Psalm 119:9

BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Psalms 119:38

(KJV) Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.

(NIV) Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared.

The psalmist is actually praying, "Be faithful God to Your Word, so that I can obey You with reverential fear."

Our obedience and worship of Yahweh is a response to His grace, His goodness, and the fulfillment of His promises in the Holy Scriptures!

Psalms 119:39

(KJV) Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

(NIV) Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good.

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.

Romans 3:1-4

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

While repentance is necessary in our walk with God, it isn't comfortable coming to God over and over to say we're sorry. The Word of God, when it is hidden in our hearts and meditated upon in our minds day and night, keeps us on the path of righteousness, and saves us from the anguish of known sin in our lives.

Psalm 119:11 *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psalms 119:40

(KJV) *Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.*

(NIV) *How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life.*

Cultivating and maintaining a hunger for the Word of God means reading it, praying it, believing it, and obeying it. It is our daily food!

Matthew 4:4

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

And what is the fruit of a mind, heart, and life saturated with Scripture?

Psalm 1:3

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Hallelujah!

- Reverend Darren McClelland