

Psalm 119: For The Love Of Scripture!

Psalm 119:9-16

Psalms 119:9

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

(NIV) How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

Beth. This second letter of the Hebrew alphabet is a marker for the second set of eight verses in Psalm 119, each beginning with this letter. As we noted in the previous teaching, this prefaced macro-acrostic arrangement of Scripture allows for easier visual memorization. Psalm 119 itself is a poignant reminder to remember God's Word and let it dwell in us richly:

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

This letter Beth also infers a cleansing of oneself, the specific theme of these eight verses, and the the general theme of Psalm 119. The "young man" in Psalm 119:9 may be especially naive, prone to rebel and wander, and therefore the rhetorical nature of this question would make sense. *How does a young man, prone to rebel and wander, stay on the path of purity?* In a sense, "young man" could also mean *servant* and refer to any of us seeking to serve Christ in an impure world. Then the question becomes more personalized, *How do we, who are prone to rebel and wander, stay on the path of purity?*

In reply to this question, we first have to consider who God is:

Isaiah 6:3

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

1Timothy 6:15-16

Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

And who we are:

Psalm 53:2-3

God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Thus we are presented with this uncrossable chasm, soberly recounted in this passage:

Luke 16:19-31

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Beyond calling on the name of Jesus and accepting His free gift of salvation, we still have to live in a land of adultery and idolatry and we will daily get dirty! We may even lose our way for a time. So, what is a young person to do; indeed, what are we to do?

Enter Psalm 119. By tapping into the anointed Word of God, we partake of the purity of God. By reading, remembering, and meditating upon His Word, we give our minds and hearts a much needed bath, and we find in His Word the spiritual correction needed to make our way back to the path of righteousness:

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

Proverbs 4:27 *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*

The Word of God not only washes, cleanses, corrects, comforts, and encourages - it powerfully energizes our life and ministry in Jesus:

Proverbs 6:22-23

When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

Beloved, if the Word of God is anything close to what it claims to be, we need to saturate our minds and hearts with it:

Psalm 1:2-3

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

Proverbs 6:20-21

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Ephesians 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Yes, God's Word is your offensive weapon, and God wants to teach you how to wield it effectively. Therefore, you will need to internalize it so that it is a ready sword in battle!

Psalms 119:10

(KJV) With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

(NIV) I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

God called King David a man after His own heart, an obedient man of God:

Acts 13:22

And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Mark 12:30

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Guarding our hearts so that we can seek God fully requires first that we *guard* our hearts:

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

Dear believer, you know that between the flesh, the world, and the Evil One, our hearts will be tested constantly (see 1 John 2:15-17). Oh, but remember *Jesus is coming back* for his holy bride the church:

Luke 18:7-8

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

It is not God's will that we sin, but if we do sin, we need to repent and receive God's forgiveness instantly, so as to keep short accounts with Him:

1Jn 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an

advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.

1John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So, then our objective, our true heart as His beloved children, is not to grieve Him (Ephesians 4:30), but to love Him through our obedience:

John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

We cultivate and fortify our love for Jesus by staying connected to Him in fervent and honest prayer (Matthew 6:6) and study and meditation of His Word (Psalm 1:2).

And this is how we seek Him with *all of our hearts*.

It bears repeating that God sees the depths of our hearts regardless of how much of ourselves we present to Him or try to cover up:

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.

Far better to give ourselves wholly to Him as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1), and allow His Word to do its searching work, that we can be corrected and cleansed and in right relationship with Him again:

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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.

Psalms 119:11

(KJV) *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

(NIV) *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

Beloved, I humbly direct you back to the study notes on Psalm 119:1. What good would it be to taste and see that God is good (Psalm 34:8) through His unchanging Word and then forget about it? *Hide His Word in your heart today!*

*STUDY POINT: Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-6. Write down the process outlined in these verses of winning the spiritual battle in our minds. How does memorizing Scripture fit into the battle plan?

Psalms 119:12

(KJV) Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

(NIV) Praise be to you, LORD; teach me your decrees.

How awesome that the very One who created us and gave us eyes and ears to perceive (Proverbs 20:12) and minds to comprehend (1 Corinthians 2:16) also *teaches* us His Holy Word!

John 14:26

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Psalms 119:13

(KJV) With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

(NIV) With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

More than proclaiming God's Word in the public arena - and this in itself is a thoroughly Biblical act of obedience - we each need to read God's Word aloud and proclaim it from our hearts in moments of profound praise, petition, thanksgiving, and battle.

Psalms 119:14

(KJV) I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

(NIV) I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

It is our human nature - let me say our fallen nature - to attach value and invest time and money in the things that we deem valuable. Psalm 119 is all about attributing the highest value to God's Word:

Psalms 138:2

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

Does this verse really exalt God's Word above His name? Yes! Beloved, our worship of Yahweh, and our study of God's Word are not mutually exclusive! We need to cultivate a deep respect and reverence for God's Word, to the same degree that we do for its Divine Author - our Heavenly Father!

Earthly fame and fortune is fleeting:

James 1:9-11

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a

burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

And the world we see around us is fading:

Matthew 24:35 *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

My words shall not pass away.

Dear children, here it is. Let's ascribe the highest value to God and His eternal Word. Then we will live with minds and hearts focused on things above:

Colossians 3:1-2

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What is keeping you from digging deeper into God's Word? What changes could you make in your life in order to pursue God more in devotion, prayer, and study?

Psalms 119:15

(KJV) I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

(NIV) I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

Do you see it? A wonderful summary here of Psalm 1. The psalmist meditates on the Word of God night and day (Psalm 1:2) and walks in God's ways, not the ways of the world (Psalm 1:1).

Psalms 119:16

(KJV) I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

(NIV) I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

What a glorious way to conclude this stanza of eight verses! *Delight* in God's Word. *Remember* God's Word.

Hallelujah!

- Reverend Darren McClelland