

Loving and Living God's Word

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Date: 15 July 2018

[0 : 00] But if we could turn in our Bibles to the book of Psalms. We're going to be looking at Psalm 119. That you would spend even some time this Lord's Day to read through this glorious psalm.

To spend some time in the quiet place. Maybe this evening. Maybe after all the children have gone down, there's less noise in the house. That you would open God's Word and you would commit to read through this psalm in its entirety.

That you would be able to hear from the psalmist directly. Because we'll be looking at snippets here or there. We'll be looking at snapshots of this psalm. But I would really encourage you. Let's go right to the source together tonight.

At some point in the day where it's a good moment for you. Husbands and wives. Maybe reading it out loud to one another. Or even families gathering around the dinner table tonight.

Maybe fathers, take up the Word of God. Read Psalm 119 to your whole family. Whatever the case may be. I would urge you to do so. So Psalm 119.

[1 : 29] I'm going to read another poem. This is not Psalm 119. Just to be clear. Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs. Being purged of fire sparkling in lover's eyes.

Being vexed a sea nourished with lover's tears. What is it else? A madness most discreet. A choking gall. And a preserving sweet.

I have no idea what that means. That's a soliloquy from William Shakespeare. It's beautiful. It sounds beautiful. But I have no idea. Do not ask me what I just read.

But it's beautiful to hear. It's beautiful to hear. I don't understand it. However, it's considered, as many of William Shakespeare's sonnets and soliloquies, are considered to be the height of English poetry.

Right? The height of the love poems, the soliloquies. There's countless things that he's written that people cherish. And beyond that, even the topic of love. Love is a topic that we all know well about.

[2 : 34] We've heard it in so many pop songs. We've heard poems. We've heard lyrics. This is a topic that seems to be limitless in its potential in writing very floral things.

And certainly Shakespeare was caught up among many others. Well, Psalm 119 also, I'll say this, is a poem of love. It's a love poem.

It's a poem or a song would be a better way to say it. A lyric. A song of love and devotion. It's a song. It's 176 lines long. Here are the statistics.

Ready? 176 lines long. Arranged masterfully in 22 stanza. Each stanza being about eight lines each. And so stanza are chunks within the greater poem.

So you have 22 stanzas. Eight lines in each stanza. And every stanza is arranged by the Hebrew alphabet in order.

[3 : 32] So you would have the first stanza. Every line of that stanza begins with the first letter of the alphabet. So in our case, the English language, the first stanza would all be the letter A.

And then the next stanza, eight lines, would all start with the letter B. And on and on. It's an acrostic poem. You don't see that in our English translations. But this is a poem that someone took a lot of time and effort masterfully with the Hebrew language to create this love poem.

So it's in terms of form. It is one of the most beautifully written poems in all of Scripture because of how difficult it would be to pull that off.

176 lines. 22 stanzas. Each corresponding with one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. So clearly the author, he's aiming for epic proportions, right?

Where he's looking to write something under the influence of the Spirit, under the inspiring work and the power of the Holy Spirit. He is seeking to draw our attention to something that is very epic.

[4 : 39] An epic poem carrying its message in a worthy manner. And he's talking about love. And what kind of love is he describing? He is describing devotion and love for the Bible.

God's self-revelation in written words. This poem, Psalm 119, this song is looking right at the Bible.

It's the Bible gushing over the Bible. It is God himself by the Spirit inspiring the author of this psalm to wax eloquent, to show love and devotion to God's self-revelation.

What is God's self-revelation? It is the Bible. God reveals himself, certainly through creation, right? We look around. We know there is a great all-powerful being who made this order, this beauty. But we also, and more importantly, can only know the true and living God through the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Scriptures are God's self-revelation.

[5 : 45] We come to know his salvation, what he's like. We come to know his name through, only through the Scriptures. So here in Psalm 119, the psalmist is going to love, to devotion in God's words.

So let's start. Let's read just the first two stanzas. Psalm 119, verses 1 through 16. Again, we're not going to read the whole thing. That's for you to do later. But verses 1 through 16.

Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.

You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. Oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes. Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

I will praise you with an upright heart when I learn your righteous rules. I will keep your statutes. Do not utterly forsake me.

[7 : 01] How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you. Let me not wander from your commandments.

I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Blessed are you, O Lord. Teach me your statutes. With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth.

Lord, in the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.

I will delight in your statutes. I will not forget your word. Let's pray. Lord, as it will say later in this psalm, I pray.

Lord, open your word. Reveal from it, Lord. Wonderful things. This morning.

[8 : 03] Spirit of God, come help. Help me to communicate truth. Help each of us to receive your truth. And I pray, Lord, that from this time, this gathering, we could walk away changed.

Not looking into the mirror of your word and not acting rightly, but rather, Lord, acting properly in repentance and faith and renewed love and devotion. That every soul who belongs to you would cling more closely to Jesus Christ and love your word.

And for those who do not yet belong to you, for those who have yet to confess their sin and repent before you, God, and receive Christ, we pray that this would be the day of salvation.

And that they would learn how to cherish and love the Bible and their relationship with God through Jesus. We pray all this in His name. Amen.

Amen. Well, we're going to be breaking this down into this theme. Here's the theme for this message this morning. If you would be truly happy, you must love and live in God's word.

[9 : 10] If you would be truly happy, you must love and live in God's word. And we're going to look at three different points to kind of summarize this theme. And that would be number one, God's words are treasure.

Secondly, God's words are tested. And finally, God's words must be tried. Or in other words, God's words must be put into action. We must try His words.

We must do His words. So those are the three points that we'll be taking snapshots of Psalm 119 together. So let's look at our first point this morning. God's words are treasure.

So if you later this day have the opportunity, and I pray you will, to read through this psalm, you'll quickly find that this psalmist is completely convinced, the writer of these scriptures is completely convinced that what he's handling, when he picks up the Bible, when he picks up God's law, His word, God's self-revelation, when he picks it up in his hands and reads the lettering and the syntax, and he pulls together the thoughts and the concepts that reveal the holy creator, he is convinced that this is treasure.

Here's the treasure, he says. It's almost like the proverbial X marks the spot, right? The pirates, back in the day when I would watch cartoons or you would see a cartoon strip, the pirate map always had an X on it where the treasure was.

[10 : 41] I haven't seen cartoons lately whether pirates still do that anymore, but in my day they had X's where the treasure was. In fact, some of the pirates were so foolish as to actually put the X on the ground.

And someone would inevitably stumble upon the X and, voila, I'm going to dig where that X is, and they would unearth the hidden treasure, which wasn't really well hidden if the pirate put the X on the ground.

Well, here the proverbial X marks the spot is the attitude and the devotion that we read of in this psalm. The attitude that this psalmist, the writer of this psalm is purveying to us is one of incredible love, devotion, excitement, awe, wonder, joy, delight.

These are the kind of words that you'll bump up against in Psalm 119. He'll describe the Scriptures as being better than finest gold. He will go further and say the Scriptures are sweeter than honey, even honey from the honeycomb, straight from the source.

This psalmist goes on to tell us and show us that the Word of God, where God reveals Himself to sinners through the writings of Holy Scripture, that this is better than anything we could ever put our hands upon.

[12 : 05] This is better. Better than riches, all riches, he says. Sweeter than the sweetest tastes we have on this earth. This is better. Because in it we find truth of God.

We understand now who God is and what He has done for us in Jesus Christ. So it's the X marks the spot. It's treasure. So what is the only proper response when you find that X?

It's to get a shovel or something, and you start digging. So we have been shown the X marks the spot. So for this psalmist, it reminds me of a story I read once of a Holocaust survivor by the name of George, George Erdash.

He was kept in a concentration camp by the Nazis near Hamburg, Germany. And I'm going to read his testimony. It's a couple paragraphs of his recounting a moment when he was with his sister and his brother, I'm sorry, his mother and his brother, in this concentration camp.

I'm going to read this moment for you, and it's very telling. It applies to us. And I'll read his words. Here's George speaking about this one day in the concentration camp. One rainy, cold winter day while I tramped across the muddy grounds, I happened to come within hearing distance of the perimeter fence.

[13 : 26] And what I heard was that of someone hissing. Psst, like that. I looked around but saw no one. No guards, no dogs, not even one of the camp kids nearby.

One more hiss and a wave of a hand directed my eyes to a movement behind a bush on the outside of the fence. The hand motioned me to come closer.

So I looked to the left and I looked to the right. I didn't see any guards or guard dogs. So I quickly walked closer and I saw a bundled up woman about my mother's age in the bushes. Quickly, she passed a white package through the barbed wires and immediately disappeared.

I picked up the package and without hesitation, I hid it inside my coat and quickly walked away from the dangerous fence zone. The woman's timing was perfect. Within seconds, I saw one of the guards walking the perimeter of the fence, but luckily not noticing anything unusual.

I walked back to my barrack and hid the unopened package under my straw pillow on my bunk bed. I thought it would be best to wait until my mother got back from work.

[14 : 35] She would know what to do with it. It's a wise, wise child. When my mother returned later, I whispered to her the story of the package. She took my little sister and me outside into the dark and in the relative privacy of the night, she opened the mysterious package.

All three of us probed the contents in the dark. I licked my finger. It was sweet. A taste sensation I had not experienced for six or eight months.

I grabbed a piece from the package and I put it in my mouth. It was cold, but it was unmistakably a buttery walnut noodle and a whole package of it.

My mother divided the package into three portions and chances are that hers were by far the smallest and we devoured the walnut noodles in seconds.

And I love this last quote. No other food ever tasted as good in my life. And half a century later, I wonder if any tasted better since.

[15 : 47] Psalm 119 similarly shows us the way we ought to hold our Bibles. Like an awestruck, hungry child.

Like an awestruck, hungry child with a mixture of awe, of joy, and hunger. We ought to hold our Bibles in such a way.

And let's face it, we need convincing. We need to be convinced of these things of Scripture, do we not? Because how quickly do we forget? How quickly do we wander from the Scriptures?

How quickly do we lay aside our Bibles? How quickly do we even nod off during sermons? How quickly do we treat God's Word without the proper awe and joy and hunger that it deserves?

So this psalm really becomes our Father, our Heavenly Father, His loving reminder. Our God is so tender and kind to seek to convince us.

[16:50] He wants to yet again convince us of the glories of His Word so that we could come again like a hungry child, seeing our impoverished condition without His Word, that we would rush to Christ in faith and to His Word.

So this psalm becomes for us, really, this psalm is a prescription. It's a prescription for us to what our own devotion should be to God's Word.

Its lines of prayer, its exclamations of praise are meant to become our own. So as we read of the psalmist, so we should go and do likewise.

So as it is with all the psalms, it's meant to become our own lyric, really. So I want to read a couple sections. Just go turn to verse 127. Let's look here together. To give you a smattering of the devotion of the psalmist, this is what he feels intensely, right?

What his devotion feels about God's self-revelation in Scripture. Verse 127, he says this, Therefore, I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold.

[18:03] So the psalmist loves Scripture above all things, above gold. Let's turn back a few verses to Psalm 119, verse 111.

Go to 111. This is what he says there, Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.

They're the joy of my heart. And then finally, turn way back to verses 47 and 48. This is what he says here. For I find my delight is in your commandments, which I love.

I will lift up my hands towards your commandments, which I love. And I will meditate on your statutes.

This level of devotion, it's revealing, isn't it? It's revealing. It is revealing. The believer, the one who truly loves God, we must love.

[19:08] We must delight in God's Word. God and His Word are inseparable, right? We commune with God. We abide in Christ. We walk by the Holy Spirit through our commitment to and our consumption of Holy Scripture.

I'm going to say that again. We commune with God. We abide in Christ. And we walk by the Spirit through our commitment to and our consumption of Holy Scripture.

God and His Word are inseparable. The value and the beauty of God's Word and the value and the beauty of God's own dear and holy presence are of equal importance for the Christian.

They must. They are. For that's what this psalm shows. That's what really all of Scripture will testify. For to separate them would be the equivalent of me saying, I don't need the Bible to love and to know God.

I don't need to obey Jesus' Word in order to love Jesus. And what does Jesus say about that, right? What does Jesus say about that?

[20:17] Well, He says, those who truly love God obey God's commands. They must. For the one who says, I love God, but doesn't obey what God says, there's a breakdown there, isn't there?

We call that hypocrisy. It's empty religion. It's false. For the person who claims, I love Jesus, but they forsake God's Word, there's something very broken about that love.

Something very broken about that devotion. So, as we treat God's words, so we treat God Himself. That's what our Savior teaches. As we treat God's words, so we treat God Himself.

So, if we are ignorant of God's Word, we will be ignorant of God Himself. If we are unfeeling about God's Word, we will be unfeeling about God Himself.

If we are disobedient towards God's Word, we are disobedient before God Himself. Would you see how that works? God and His Word cannot and will not ever be separated.

[21:25] Ever. So, it is for our benefit, really, and it's for our health and wellness, it's for our very life's sake that we keep them together. Right?

That we keep these together. God and His Word. So, as believers, we do not hold out for something better. There is nothing better for us to be waiting for as though the Bible ends up being like the reader's digest that just has helpful quotes and tidbits to enjoy while we're waiting for something better.

like we're in the waiting room. Right? We're in the doctor's office where there might be a handy-dandy magazine to take up some times while the time is passing. This is not what the Scriptures are meant to be.

This is not just the placeholder, a timeholder to pass our Christian lives away. No. No. No, we are called to feast on it.

It's the difference between an end table and the dining room table. What's the difference between the end table and the dining room table? What do you do with an end table? Right? When I grew up, the end table, you put drinks on it occasionally, right?

[22 : 32] You had to have a coaster because Mama didn't want any rings from the glass on the wood table. But that was about all the functionality that end table had. In fact, there was one book we had in our house growing up.

It was a big, fat Bible. But it's not a Bible that you would read. It was a beautiful Bible. But you wouldn't have... There was illustrations. I remember as a child leafing through and looking at the illustrations.

But no one actually picked up that big, fat Bible because it would probably break both your legs if you laid it on your legs. So it sat there on the end table. It was a Bible that just sat there. And if you ever put your drink on top of that Bible, you'd get yelled at.

You don't put your drink on the... You put it on the coaster. Not on the bare wood, not on the Bible. You put it on the coaster, young man. The big Bible, the end table, it's a very different experience that God is calling us to.

God is calling a believer. It's the difference between an end table to a dining room table. What do you do at the dining table? We gather and we feast.

[23 : 39] Right? We live. Our sustenance comes at the dining room table. Your life hangs on the balance that either mom or dad for the young ones that they have prepared a meal and that that meal is sitting on that table.

So you are very interested, whether you know it or not, in a dining room table because you know your life depends on it. And certainly fellowship and joy and all manner of sweet things happen around that feast.

Right? So much joy wrapped up in a meal. That is what the Scriptures are meant to be. This is not for the end table. This is for the dining room table so that we might eat and that we might live.

This is God's Word. And this is the level of devotion that we see in this psalm. The psalmist declares again and again and again, this is my life.

Your words are my life. They are my food. They are my treasure. And he believes and teaches and shows us that the Bible is meant to be at our dining room table.

[24 : 51] So question, what do your habits reveal? What is your relationship with the Bible? If I can put it so strangely. What is your relationship with this book, this self-revelation of God?

What is your relationship? Is it casual? Occasional? Is it the kind of thing that you put down on the end table only once in a while to leaf through to check it off the list?

What's your relationship? How do you listen to sermons? That's an important place. Let me say this. Sunday mornings cannot be underestimated Or overestimated, I guess is the right word.

They cannot be overestimated to just how critical God's word coming forth to meet your heart, to change your heart, to cause you to love and follow Jesus Christ more closely.

God's word must be received with faith while the sermon is being preached. How do you listen? Are you open with your heart? Are you attentive to God's word whenever it's open?

[25 : 58] How do you listen? And then secondly, how do you receive God's word in private when you're at home, when no one's looking? Do you? Are you drawn to God's word? Because again, a true Christian needs to be, as the psalmist, in love with God's self-revelation in Scripture.

If you are a Christian, your heart, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, your heart will burn for the truths of God in Holy Scripture.

Is that your experience? And for each of us, I'm sure each of us can raise our hand to that point and say, not right now. I want it to be. And that's the key.

That's the key. You may not have a burning heart in this moment. You may not be drawn to the Scriptures as to the dining room table for a feast. But that can change. And all by the grace and the mercy of God. Right? The key is, for true believers, we long to make God's word our dining table. We long to make it our feast.

[27 : 09] And we are quick to repent when the Lord shows us we are forsaking His word. We are allowing our heart to be drawn to other things. So what do your habits reveal? What's your relationship with the Bible?

And I would urge you to weigh in on that. Determine, with God's help, Lord, do I need to repent? Am I treating your word with ignorance?

Or am I ignoring it altogether? And repent. I would urge you in the light of God's mercies to repent of sin, of being dull-hearted, of not looking to God's word in the manner shown us in Psalm 119. Because this is what the Scriptures show our devotion needs to be. So may the Lord, especially for dads, I want to tag dads right now. Fathers, it's your responsibility.

Fathers, it is your responsibility to lead your little ones to the Bible. It is your primary responsibility. Not that mothers cannot and shall not and should not.

[28 : 10] No, of course, they should be involved as well. But dads, do you exemplify this kind of devotion to your sons? Would your sons and your daughters look at you and say, my dad loves God's word?

It starts with you, brothers. And I would urge you and granddads as well. Would your grandchildren look to you and say, my, how my grandfather loves God's word? I pray and I hope that for men, if there's any here who are cold or indifferent, that you would again repent, take up God's word and begin to feast and show an example to our little ones and lead your wives to the scriptures to prayer.

It's critical. So may the Lord help each of us, our families, all in the church to gather around the bonfire of Holy Scripture. It's a bonfire of the glory of the Lord.

It's a bonfire of revealing His great love for sinners. It shows us all we need to know about life, about damnation, about salvation in Jesus Christ, about what's to come, about what is and what was, about everything we need to know concerning godliness, concerning God, the very God we worship and love here on Sundays and the Lord's Day.

All we need to see and know, it's here. It's a bonfire of glory. It's a bonfire of love. And may the Lord draw our hearts again to come back to the scriptures.

[29 : 40] We move on. To God's words are tested. First, they are treasure. Secondly, they are tested. We'll quickly move through these points here. Let's go shopping for a few moments here.

Pretend with me we're all going together. We're looking for a kitchen appliance. Maybe your stove blew up. No one got hurt, but it blew up. It's terrible. Now you can't cook, so you can't have that dining room feast.

So you need to go to the store and you, before any good shopper buys something as big as a stove or a kitchen appliance, you're going to look into the research, right? You're going to look at the reviews. You want to understand of all the many hundreds of options, I didn't know you needed this many options for ovens, but apparently you do.

Of all those options, which is the most reliable? Which will go the longest? Which will never require replacing again? That's the goal, right?

I want to buy something that will never break ever again. That never works because we live in a fallen world, people. Your ovens will break, your cars shall stop on the side of the road and not turn on again.

[30 : 46] These things happen. But in the meantime, we want to know what is the best option to purchase? What's the best? So we go online. Maybe you go online, you look up the different options, and maybe you come down to three.

There's three different options. You've narrowed down your list of appliances, and there's three that you've come to think. Here's the top three. Option number one, this option has zero reviews. No reviews. But the product page, it promises to save your soul. It promises to change your life forever. It promises eternal glory in heaven.

That if you buy this oven, somehow you'll be the happiest person you've ever known. So that's option number one. No reviews. Okay, zero reviews. Option two, this product has 4,378 reviews, averaging four stars out of five.

It's not perfect, right? Five stars would be perfect, but four is pretty modest. It's good. It's excellent. So 4,378 reviews. People lining up by the thousands have reviewed and have tested this product. [31 : 48] All right, option number three, this product has six reviews. Six people have used it, and each of those six people gave it five out of five stars. They said it's a beautiful machine.

It works perfect, but only five people. So I think it should go without saying that option really, option number two is the right one to go with. Are you with me on that? Option two, because it has 4,378 reviewers, 4,000 satisfied customers that say, this stove works.

It won't blow up in your face. All right? It will cook. It'll get the job done, and it lasts long. 4,000 people standing behind a product is something to be said. It has been tested.

We can trust, hopefully, when we click that button and purchase that stove, that when it arrives, we as well will add our voice to the other 4,378, making 4,379 satisfied stove customers.

So to be tested is a critical component to what we're going to put our trust in, right? When we're testing something, it's because we want to understand, can I rely, can I trust in God's Word?

[32 : 56] And certainly Psalm 119, there is a lot of testing going on. A lot of testing. There are so many things going on in this Psalm. One of them is the celebration of the tested quality of God's Word.

For instance, there are many parts of the Psalm that are minor key moments. There are moments in this Psalm that you're reading the Psalm and say things like in verse 28, my soul melts away with sorrow.

Then he further says in verse 61, the cords of the wicked have ensnared me. It goes even further. In verse 69, the insolent smear me with lies.

In verse 19, he talks about loneliness and he says, I am a sojourner on the earth. In verse 143, he says, trouble and anguish have found me out. And finally, in verse 176, the last verse of the whole bunch, he says, I have gone astray like a lost sheep.

So the psalmist is writing from a depth of experience. Okay? He's not simply sitting on a mountaintop clapping for God's Word when all is well and good.

[34 : 06] No, he's writing from the depth of experience and suffering and affliction. And he is saying in this psalm that through these experiences, I have come to know and have been comforted by the Holy Scriptures.

They are tested and they are found to be faithful. God's promises are true and they will act as pillars, as foundations for our souls.

So it is our experience by the grace of God for those who hold to the Scripture, who love the Bible. It is our experience as well that God is faithful to His promises.

That His Word can and must be trusted. It is our desire. It is our experience. And the challenge here, here is the challenge. Unbelief really is the great thief of the Bible.

What does unbelief do? Unbelief comes along within our hearts and sadly, it's a natural occurring thing within all of us. Unbelief. That when we come to the Word of God, unbelief is very present because of our sin nature to cloud, to shroud God's Word with mystery, with doubt, with fear, to somehow think that God will not be true to His Word.

[35 : 26] So I think, here's, I'm going to walk you through kind of several weeks of affliction. When this may happen to you, week one, the affliction hits. What do you do? You go to God's Word.

In the first week of affliction, you're saying, I am suffering. I need God's help. I'm going to run to Scripture. I need God's help. And it's a good start, right? We're going into our troubled time with a good start.

We have a good pace going. We're reading the Scripture. We're looking to the Lord. Then week three, a couple weeks later, fast forward, you're still suffering. The affliction hasn't lifted yet. And unbelief can sound like this.

I'm still suffering terribly. And God's Word, the Bible isn't doing anything yet. It's not helping me yet. But I'll keep trying since I've been taught and I believe that it's important.

It's an important thing. And fast forward even further to week seven. So seven weeks into our affliction, we're saying this. I'm still suffering terribly. The Bible hasn't helped at all.

[36 : 25] I've basically stopped reading it because I don't feel any comfort or help or joy as a result. And then finally, week 20, way ahead, fast forwarding. Unbelief will say something like this.

I've moved on. I'm not reading the Bible because it did nothing for me. It didn't work. It didn't work. It didn't work. It didn't do a thing.

It failed to help me in my affliction. I'm done. I'm done with the Bible. So once we slip into that kind of mode, it's going to be very difficult to win us out of it, to persuade us otherwise.

Because here's the problem that belies that whole issue of unbelief. Unbelief approaches the Bible as very pragmatic. It looks at the Bible and says, fix my problems.

Please. If I read you, things should go better, right? And we look at our Bibles that way. Unbelief says it. It looks to God and His Word and says, do something about my life.

[37 : 27] I need help. Help me. So change this. Lift this affliction. Deal with this thorn. And if I read it, this should do the trick. That somehow if I get enough nuggets of truth, that will flick a switch in my heart and everything will change.

Then I'll be able to walk on clouds again and sing with bluebirds lighting upon my shoulder. That is certainly not the way God intends us to approach His Bible, to approach His self-existence, His revealed Word.

God doesn't give us His Word and His promises so that we can feel better about ourselves or even be like an anesthesia to help numb us from our pain. This is not an anesthetic.

This is not a problem solver necessarily. It does solve our problems, but not in the way we want it to. Not in the way we want it to. We want it to finish and fix all of our problems ultimately, but that will only come when our Lord Jesus Christ returns from the sky.

Until that day, afflictions, troubles, trials, there are crosses to be carried, brothers and sisters. We've got to carry crosses. The Bible's not going to fix that problem for us.

[38 : 38] The Bible tells us to expect that. It tells us that actually God is the one who handed that to you. So we can't look to the Bible pragmatically expecting us to numb us, numb us, numb us, numb us of...

I'm speaking in tongues here this morning. We'll need an interpreter, brother. I'm so sorry. We shouldn't look to the Bible to numb us of our problems.

I got it! Woo! Thank you. All right. That is a wonder of grace that I get through any sermon speaking somewhat clearly. Thank you for bearing with me.

We need to understand we go to God's Word to see and know and treasure Jesus. That is the purpose of the Bible.

It's to see, to know, and to believe in Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God. We come to the Bible to view more sights of Christ.

[39 : 37] We come to savor Him. We come to love Him even through our afflictions. We've got to get that. This is God's self-revelation. This is not our self-help manual.

This is not our self-actualization guide. This is God's self-revelation. He reveals Himself through it. That's the answer.

That's what we need. And that's the only thing that will hold your feet down firm when the winds are blowing and when the ground is shaking. This is it. This is all we have.

It's God's self-revelation. This is all we can have. This is what God has given us. And this is enough. It is enough. And we need to believe that. We need to see that.

We need to cling to it. And we need to treat it just as the psalmist in Psalm 119. We need to devote ourselves to it. Read it inside out, upside down. We need to tear into it like a feast.

[40 : 32] And we need to give our hearts wholly unto it so that we know and see God for who He really is. So verse 25 and 28.

My soul clings to the dust. Give me life according to Your Word. My soul melts away for sorrow, but strengthen me according to Your Word.

God's words must be tested. We have to trust. We have to look to them as reliable. But the way we do so is with the right attitude. We're not going to have our feelings numbed.

We're not going there to have our problems fixed or our afflictions to be taken from us. We go so that we might have more faith and courage to face the day in Jesus Christ. That, believer, is why we go to the Bible.

To know and love Jesus. And if you want to know, Hebrews 11 is a wonderful place to go to understand what that kind of Bible-loving faith does. It presses through even the hardest things.

[41 : 33] Trusting God. Even through the hardest things. And finally, and very briefly, God's words must be tried. So God's Word must be treasure to us.

We must devote ourselves in love and affection. God's words must be tested. We must put our faith and hope. We must look to the Bible the way God intends us to read our Bibles. Looking for Christ.

And finally, God's words must be tried. Or done. That's another way of saying tried. Done. We must do God's Word. We all know the song. You know the song. The wise man built his house upon the rock.

House upon the rock. You know that song, right? You could have sung with me, but that's okay. You didn't want to. You don't want to be the only voice singing with me. And that would have been awkward for you. So thank you. So the wise man built his house upon the rock.

And what happened? We know the song. The rains came tumbling down, right? And the floods came up and all that. The moral of that story comes from Matthew chapter 7.

[42 : 31] It's a wonderful song, children's song, that goes back to the parable Jesus teaches, right? And we know that parable. The meaning of that parable is very simple. If you're going to be a wise man, and you're going to build your house upon a rock, and not like the foolish man who builds on the sand, you've got to do what God tells you to do.

In a simple way of saying, obey God's word and all will be well, where well really counts. Right? Not in health and wealth, but well in the sense that your faith is well, that your devotion to Jesus Christ is well, that your feet are upon him.

And this is exactly what God's word leads us to. It leads us to obedience. In Psalm 119, so often, turn with me to verses 33 and 35.

Turn with me there. Psalm 119, verses 33, 35. This will be our last text. Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I will keep it.

I will keep it to the end. I will do it. I will keep it. I will obey it to the end. Give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart, with sincerity, with devotion, with wholeness of affection.

[43 : 50] I will keep it with all of my being, with who I am, all of me. Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it. So to hear and then to obey God's word is our incredible purpose as the children of God.

That is your reason for existing. Do you realize that? Your reason for having life in your veins is that you might live to obey and know and love Jesus Christ.

As a believer, you have been given the Holy Spirit who empowers obedience, who grants us faith to hear God's word and to respond with faith rather than unbelief. You have been given the Spirit.

You have been given the Spirit. You have been given faith. Why? So that you might go forth in obedience to God's word. That's why we're alive.

That's why I'm here on this planet is to obey, to love my Lord and my Savior, my King and my Master. We are here to serve and obey Jesus.

[44 : 52] That's why you're living and breathing this moment. And if we are not loving and obeying Jesus, it is only because of God's mercy that we remain alive. And I would appeal to any here this morning who are not Christian or you're unaware or you're not sure if you're a Christian, let me have your heart for a moment.

Jesus came to earth to deliver us from our sins. You have a problem. That problem is grave. It is deep.

It is dark. It is going to end in your misery. It is your sin. God, our Holy Creator, punishes sin. He is returning.

Jesus is coming. And with Him, He brings, as was read in Isaiah 40, He brings with Him recompense. His recompense goes before Him. His reward is with Him.

In other words, when Jesus returns, He is going to pay back every account. Whatever is owed. For those who believe in Him, they will receive eternal life and glory with Him.

[45 : 58] For those who do not believe in Christ, who have not repented of sin, they will receive God's just wrath. And you will deserve every moment of it. Just as I would deserve every moment of God's wrath.

But because God is merciful, He sent Jesus to be our Savior. So I would appeal to you, if you are not a believer, that you would consider. And then you would obey the Gospel. What does obedience to the Gospel look like?

It looks like you repent of your sin. You recognize you're a sinner before God. And then secondly, that you put your faith in Jesus. You say, Jesus saved me. I mean, a child can understand what I'm saying here.

A child can understand they need Jesus, and they need to repent, and only Jesus can save them. It's not a complicated thing to obey the Gospel.
No, repent, and then believe. And be saved. That's my appeal to you. For the rest of us, let us know this, holiness is not a drag. True holiness is not a drag.
[46 : 59] In other words, it's not dead weight. It's not unjoyful. It's not miserable. It's not whipping ourselves and just saying, no, no, no, you can't have pleasure. You can't do this.
No, no, no, no, no. Like a nagging grandmother. Don't put your cup on the board. It'll make a ring. Or whatever your grandmother would yell at you for. It's not.
This is not what joy, and faith, and obedience, and holiness is about. Holiness is knowing Jesus for who He really is. And being set free to obey and love Him forever.
That's holiness. Becoming more and more like Jesus. And to be more like Jesus means we have more joy, more fruit, more love, more peace. But for those who disobey, for those who are uncaring about Christ or about God's Word, peace and joy will be like a nervous bird.
You ever get around a nervous bird? They fly away. They fly right away if you get nearby. If you treat God's Word with lightness rather than sobriety, if you treat Christ with a passing thought, peace and joy will be like that nervous bird for you.
[48 : 08] You will not have peace. You will not have joy. It will fly away quickly. But in Christ, with Christ, and in His Word, there is peace, there is joy.
And I close with this, verses 1 and 2. Blessed or happy. Happy. Here is something to be said. Happy. Do you want to be happy? Do you want to have joy?
Blessed are those, or happy are those, whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed or happy are those who keep His testimonies, who seek God with their whole heart.
Let's pray. Yes. Thank you.