

Loving and Living God's Word

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[0:00] Good morning. Oh, what a joy. What a joy. My heart is full to be with you. It is with greetings and grace and blessings that I come from your dear brothers and sisters in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

What a joy and brotherhood we all share in Jesus. Across the world, we have such a strong, sweet connection with this church, and we love this church.

And we're so grateful for your love and your prayers and for the partnership we share that starting tomorrow morning, 9 a.m., this room will not look like this. I assure you. And it will not sound like this either.

I mean, we have 119-ish, 112 children. That's a lot of children. This is not a large space, but we're going to make it work. And it's going to be amazing, the joyful noises that will come through this place.

So, very, very grateful to be here. I do come with greetings from the pastors and the people, the dear saints in Crossway. And it really has become such a happy habit to come to Bahamas in July.

[1:08] It's a happy habit to have. And I'm so grateful that you would open your hearts and your hospitality. And you would share this with us. So, on behalf of the team, on behalf of the church back at home, we're so, so thankful.

And we praise the Lord with you. So, if you want to turn in your Bibles to the book of Psalms, Cedric gave me the largest chapter of the Bible. I hope you know this.

119. Psalm 119. And I know it was not because he's afraid of preaching the longest passage of Scripture. We know that's not the case. And I hope that what our dear brother and sister were doing for the Rememory verses, that you're not going to interrupt my preaching when I make a mistake.

I mean, maybe you need to. If I jumble any of Psalm 119, I want you to be free to do that. But we're going to turn to God's Word. And we're going to seek to understand how to love God's Word, how to live God's Word.

Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, it is God's self-declaration to mankind. It is God's self-revelation. We see God through the pages and the truths of Scripture.

[2:26] Scripture, this is our window. And Paul the Apostle would tell us, though it's dimly lit, though it's a window that we don't see fully, it is a window to the divine.

God has given us a way to see Him, to know Him, and to understand how to love and honor and worship Him. And that's such a glorious truth, the Scriptures.

And we're going to learn today about loving and living God's Word. So, I want to begin our time. It's really going to be more of a survey of the book of Psalms, Psalm 119.

There's really not a possible way to preach 176 verses faithfully in 40 minutes. So, we're going to try to condense a bit and provide more of a survey. But in this survey, before we begin, I think it's important to ask the question, can someone love the Bible too much?

Can someone love the Bible too much? Is it possible that a Christian might devote too much time, too much devotion to the words and the pages of Scripture, and make the Bible actually even more important than even God Himself?

[3:35] Thus making the Bible an idol. A word was coined to describe this concern, a bibliolatry. You can recognize the word Bible and then idolatry put together, which was always used as an insult towards evangelical Christians by Catholics or by progressive Christians.

They were insulting us because of our devotion. They viewed us as being overly rigorous with the Bible, that we love the truth of Bible too much. So, they called us bibliolaters, making the Bible an idol.

So, is it possible that someone can love the Bible too much? Well, surely, we probably have either spoken with or encountered someone who is so passionate about Bible doctrine.

And they love to argue about Scripture. They love to argue about points and facets of truth and doctrine. And they argue and they handle the Bible in such a way that you're left feeling that something's wrong.

Something's off about their attitude. Something's wrong with how they're holding the Bible. I'm sure you've had one of those interactions. Or maybe that's you and you need to be corrected. But listen, I do agree that someone might become proud and puffed up in their knowledge of the Bible and doctrine, right?

[4:49] And their pride reveals, ultimately, that they're holding the Bible incorrectly. Right? Just like the Pharisees of old. Remember, Jesus condemned the Pharisees for loving and searching the Scriptures for the wrong reasons.

Their hearts were not right. And so, therefore, their holding of the Bible was wrong. Their understanding of the Scriptures and their affection for the Bible was wrong.

And so, it is possible. Yes, I want to say it is possible, very possible, that we could end up twisting the purpose and the preciousness of God's Word to selfish and to evil ends.

I mean, the chief of sinners, Satan himself, was a master at knowing the Bible and quoting Scripture. So, it is possible to take what is precious and pure, what is meant to be for our life, to twist it for our selfish and evil purposes.

So, therefore, I can return back to the question. Should bibliolatry or worshiping the Bible somehow be a concern for the believer? Should we tone down our commitment to the Scriptures so that we don't become Pharisees?

[5:57] Well, I think the pure and simple answer is no. I don't think, especially as we look and survey Psalm 119, that you could possibly conclude that. That there is this concern that we could love the Bible too much.

We could love it the wrong way, for the wrong reasons. But we cannot love it too much. Because as we turn here, Psalm 119, this is a love song to the Bible.

The writer, most likely David, he doesn't identify himself here in the subscript, but David, most likely writing a psalm, it is a declaration of love and affection for the Scriptures, for the written Scriptures of God.

So, if you look with me, verse 48, for instance, we hear the psalmist say this. He says, I will lift up my hands towards your commandments, towards your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

So, the writer here, the psalmist is saying, I will lift up my hands. And wouldn't you think, generally when you think of raising your hands in worship and awe and reverence, that it would be to God Himself, the name of Jesus in worship, as we sing, how I love to raise my hands to the Lord.

[7:17] Yet, David, or the psalmist, is saying here, I lift up my hands to your commandments, which I love. So, and this verse is not isolated, it's not alone, there's 176 of these verses, very similarly, expressing adoration, love, awe, and worship to the words of Scripture.

So, I think it's safe to say, we must conclude, as you're going to read, as we'll survey here, Psalm 119, that so many problems in this life are not because we love the Bible too much, but because we love it too little.

And, we too easily employ it for selfish or superstitious purposes. There lies the problem. It's our holding, how we hold, how our heart relates to the truths of Scripture.

That's what creates so many problems in this life. And, we're going to find, the psalmist to be radically committed to a lifelong love and worship of God in and through the Bible, because the Bible, here in Psalm 119, is the object of his deepest affections, of his longings, of his study, of his time, his energy, and devotion.

And, this psalm is just one testimony of one man's love to Scripture. And, it is as though he would say to us, you can show me your love for God by your strong feelings, but I'm going to show you my love for God by my devotion to His Word.

[8:45] That's what he's almost challenging us, to see this, to own this. And, our goal this morning, I want to dissect the psalmist's heart with you. I want to open his heart a bit with you in the pages of Scripture, because that's what this brother has done.

His heart's on his sleeve, so we can see it. And, we will do well to understand and dissect what makes this brother's heart beat. Why does it beat for the Bible?

Why gush over Scripture? We want to ask these kind of good questions. Why is the Bible so important to this man? And, more importantly, God inspiring this psalm through the psalmist. We want to understand God's heart, because we're going to come to God's heart through the psalm, to understand what He wants us to have in our hearts. When we hold the Bible, when we hear the Bible, when we open it and read its words, and when we memorize it together, as a church, all, and in any form that we take in the Word of God, God has a heart that He wants us to have.

And, it mirrors that of what we see and hear in Psalm 119. So, we're going to read just the first two stanzas, verses 1-16. And, that will be our sampling, our sampling of Psalm 119.

[9:58] Here we are. Psalm 119, verses 1-16. Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, and 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. O, 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. 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. In the way of Your testimonies, I delight as much as in all riches.

[11:09] 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. This is the word of the Lord.

And here is what I'd like to look at. This is the theme that I would like to look at with you this morning. If you would be truly happy, if you would be truly happy, love and live by God's word. Do we long to be happy? Do we seek to be happy? Then let us love and live by God's word. And I would like to drive through this psalm quickly, a survey, and we're going to start with that God's words are treasure.

We're going to learn from the psalmist's example of his devotion and seek to understand his heart. Well, Psalm 119 is a poem. It's a song.

It's a psalm lyric meant to be sung by the people of God. It's 176 lines long. It's arranged masterfully in 22 different stanzas corresponding with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

[12:15] Now, we don't see that in the English. We don't get to see just how masterful it is to write a song, this kind of lyric that the psalmist is writing. It is amazing literature what this man has done and under the inspiration of the Spirit.

We're talking about a poem of poems, an acrostic poem that is both the largest chapter in the Bible but also the most intricate in many ways of what's going on here and through this song.

It's a song that treats the grand subject like a kaleidoscope. We're looking through many different colors, through different lenses, blending together in something that's meant to be an all-out assault on the mind and the heart of the believer.

And the grand subject, the source of this man's affection, is the Word of God. And that's what we're looking at here.

And preacher Charles Spurgeon once said of this psalm, it's the holy soul soliloquy before an open Bible. I love that. It's the holy soul soliloquy before an open Bible.

[13:21] And for many a modern mind, maybe this strikes a strange chord, an odd chord, that someone would take the time to write such a masterful and long love lyric to the Bible.

That strikes maybe to a modern mind some strange thoughts. But when considered by the Christian, for all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ here this morning, if you have trusted in Him, if you have turned from your sin and have received Christ, and you believe on His Word, and you love His Word, this is not an odd thing at all.

There's nothing odd about what's going on here in Psalm 119. There's nothing strange about David waxing on and on in love and lavish praise to the words of Scripture.

No, you get it. You understand in your heart of hearts just how magnificent, how wonderful, how important, how glorious is the truths found in these pages.

You know it. For God's Word has been written on your heart by the Spirit of God. And now you love Scripture. You feast on Scripture. Your hands go to Scripture like a treasure hunter's hands go into an open chest full of gold coins.

[14 : 36] So you get it. You understand there's nothing odd at all about the psalmist's devotion to Scripture. Because Psalm 119 is written by someone fully convinced that the deepest joy in this life is only to be found in the knowledge of God.

Understanding who God is and who He has revealed Himself to be. This man understands with all of his guts that that is all found in Scripture. That we can know God certainly by creation looking at mountains or oceans and waves and the beauty of things.

We can learn this much about the Lord. But the Lord has given us such depth, such a sight of Him in the pages of special revelation, in the pages of Scripture.

God gives us something so expansive, so wonderful, so deep as to reveal Himself through the Bible. And this makes the believing heart to burn.

Does your heart burn for the Bible this morning? Does your heart burn for the truths of God revealed to us in the Scriptures? for this is what the psalmist was fully convinced.

[15 : 50] It really is the unmistakable X marks the spot. This psalm helps us understand what we should do about the Bible. It shows us this is the place.

Here's the X. Dig here. And where you dig, you will find treasure. And treasure is not something to be passive about. And therefore, we can understand why this poem is so lavish in its praise of Scripture.

No one's passive about treasure. If you were to discover treasure, we would know it. Right? If you were to win the lottery, people would figure that out real quick. They would see it.

Not only by your lifestyle change, but there would be something about your own mouth and your own declarations, your own, maybe, sad, proud boasting that would come out of people when they find treasures.

But we would know it. Because you can't be passive about beautiful, glorious, treasured, precious things. Those things that you love the most you talk the loudest about. Am I right? Well, this psalmist, this psalmist, he's talking on and on and loud words in loud pictures talking about his love for the Bible.

[17 : 04] This is not only the most glorious treasure, the richest of treasures, it is also the most sweetest sustaining food that we can imagine. It makes me think of the story told by George Erdash, who was a Holocaust survivor.

This man was a child in 1944, was captive alongside his mother and his sister in a Nazi concentration camp near Hamburg, Germany. And I'm going to read his testimony.

This is what he says. He says, one rainy, cold winter day when I was tramping about the muddy grounds, I happened to come within hearing distance of the perimeter fence and I heard a sound like someone hissing.

I looked around but saw no one, no guards, no dogs, not even any of the camp kids nearby. One more hiss and a wave of the hand directed my eyes to a movement behind a bush on the outside of the fence.

The hand motioned me to come closer. I looked left and I looked right and I didn't see any guards or guard dogs. As I walked closer, I saw a bundled up woman about my mother's age in the bushes.

[18 : 06] Quickly, she passed the white package through the barbed wires and immediately disappeared. I picked up the package and without hesitation, I hid it inside my coat, 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.

This is a good sign. He said, I thought it was best to wait until my mother got back because she would know what to do with it. 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 put it in my mouth. It was cold but it was unmistakably a butter walnut noodle! [19:11] And a whole package of it! My mother divided the package into three portions and chances are hers were by far the smallest. And we devoured the walnut noodles in seconds.

No, I love this, this is what he has to say in summary, No other food has ever tasted as good in my life. And half a century later I wonder if any tasted better since.

Do you see the hunger that tuned this man's heart to receive such a gift? And Psalm 119 similarly shows us how we need to be holding our Bibles.

with a mixture of famished hunger of wonder and unspeakable joy. This is how we ought to hold our Bibles both in our hands and certainly in our hearts.

Just like that man as a child with a buttery walnut noodle sweetness he had not tasted in months.

And this Psalm becomes our prescription for hunger and devotion.

[20:14] It shows us the way. How do we get this hunger? If I'm not hungry for the Bible how do I change? How do I grow so that I might be a faithful disciple to my Jesus? How do I love and treasure God's Word just like this man in Psalm 119 showing me the way?

Well this is what he would tell us and he leads us through prescription. Psalm 119 verse 127 he says I love your commandments above fine gold.

In Psalm 119 verse 111 your testimonies are my heritage forever for they are the joy of my heart.

And verses 47 and 48 which we read earlier he says for I find my delight 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.

And the level of devotion this man has is revealing. The believer who the one who truly believes in God must delight in the Word of God.

And why is this? Why should we be so concerned about the Bible? Why should we like the psalmist lift our hands towards the commandments of the Lord?

[21:27] Why? Well because God and His Word are inseparable. You cannot separate God from His holy and sacred Word. We communion with God.

We have communion and fellowship relationship with God. Abide in Christ and we walk by the Spirit by our devotion to God's Word.

God and His Word are inseparable. And the value, the beauty of God and His Word are of equal importance for the Christian. And as we treat God's Word so we treat God Himself.

So if we are negligent or bored by the Bible that means therefore we are negligent and bored with God Himself. Do you see how serious this is?

Do you see how important and how glorious these truths really are? For as we treat God's words we treat God Himself. We dare not approach or think or consider God apart from His Word.

[22:28] We cannot make up our own thoughts about God. God has given us all that we need to understand in His thoughts for how we are to understand and seek Him. And as believers we don't hold out for something better like some better revelation or some better mode or method of revealing like we are not waiting in some doctor's office reading the reader's digest just waiting for something better to come along.

No. No. No. God's highest and God's best revelation in this world in this time is right here in our hands. It's the best the sweetest it is like life giving treasure and like sweet life sustaining food.

So I want to ask the question what do our habits reveal? What kind of relationship do we have with the Bible? Would your habit reveal that you are like a treasure hunter who has found the most glorious treasure?

His hands are in it and He's storing it and keeping it and shining it and loving it and declaring its praise. or do your habits reveal that you're like a famished child who's receiving the sweetest most life sustaining food and how you ingest it you throw it down and you eat it and you need it and you love it.

Is that how your habits is that what your habits show about your relationship to Scripture? And if any for any of us if we are becoming bored with the Bible and our disinterest leads us to neglect reading and adoring the Bible as demonstrated by God here in Psalm 119 may the Lord have mercy upon us.

[24:12] May the Lord have mercy upon us for neglecting or by being bored with the Scriptures. May the Lord forgive us and I would encourage you if you are bored with the Bible I pray and I

would urge you to repent today.

Repent to the Lord that you're yawning rather than standing with a mouth in awe of God's truth in Scripture. May the Lord help us to repent and brothers especially fathers take heed you must lead your families to the Bible.

You must lead your wives and your little ones and your grown ones back every day to the Bible.

Does your life brother demonstrate a faith that is planted and a devotion that is planted on the Word of God?

We challenge you and wherever we are weak may the Lord help us as brothers may the Lord help us all together as families may the Lord help all the people of God to gather around the bonfire of God's Word.

We live in a very cold world. We need the warmth. We need the light of Scripture. Don't we? We do. And may God give us the faith that the psalmist had.

[25 : 26] May God give us the heart that the psalmist had that delights in the Bible that warms our hands and our hearts all of us by the pages of Scripture every day as we personally open the Bible in times of devotion and quiet time as we gather here today as you are with an open heart to hear the Word of God proclaimed may your heart soar when the Scriptures are opened whenever they are opened may God give us that kind of heart for if we would truly be happy we must love and live by God's Word and this brings us to our second point in our survey of Psalm 119.

So we must love right? We must love God's Word. It's a treasure. God's words are treasure.

Secondly God's words are tested and I'd like to take you shopping for a new appliance if you've ever done this online or maybe not an appliance maybe other things and if you're a good shopper of course you're going to check references you're going to look at the reviews so if you have three options here are the three options option number one this option has zero reviews but it promises to be an appliance that changes your life forever.

Okay? So that's the first option the second option is this product has four reviews averaging a perfect five stars. Okay?

Third option this product has 14,378 reviews it averages around 4.3 stars. So which product would you purchase?

I think it's a no-brainer I would go with the third. I don't know about you I'm not going with zero reviews no one's tested it no one's tried it it doesn't even work right?

[27 : 12] I wouldn't go with the second one because there's only four reviews and four people can't all really be giving a five-star review to this thing. Option number three seems realistic. There's 14,000 some people have reviewed this thing.

This product has worked at least better than average for most people. Therefore I'm going with option number three. Why? Because that's a tested option. It's proven its reliability time and again through many people's thousands tens of thousands of people's experiences whereas the first two options are untested they have no depth they're not reliable.

Now if we are unconvinced in our soul that God's words can withstand the weight of our lives of our problems of our pains of our needs of our wants if we are unconvinced then we will always seek something else.

Always. If you're not convinced and this will be revealed by the way in how we treat the Bible like we discussed in the first point our relationship to the Bible if we are unconvinced that this can hold up the weight of you and your life your problems and your needs and your wants if you don't believe that if you're not convinced by that you're always going to find something else and this explains why so many times we can be slow to pick up the Bible and to give ourselves to it like a treasure hunter because Psalm 119 not only celebrates the beauty and the worth of God's word but it also shows us and records carefully for us that all of God's words are tested they can bear the freight of you and your life and this world all over the Lord can carry it and his word has everything that we need under all conditions God's word is sufficient it is sufficient and if you look carefully at Psalm 119 you'll notice this psalmist's devotion to God's word it's not situated in a landscape of stress-free living as though the psalmist was writing in an ivory tower filled with prosperity and ease no, not at all because if you look with me verse 28 we're going to drive through this psalm and I want to show you the kind of situation this psalmist was facing verse 28 the psalmist says my soul melts away for sorrow strengthen me according to your word verse 61 if you turn a page or two verse 61 he says though the cords of the wicked ensnare me

I do not forget your law and then verse 69 he says the insolent smear me with lies but with my whole heart I keep your precepts and then verse 19 I am a sojourner or a stranger a wanderer on the earth verse 143 trouble and anguish have found me out and finally verse 176 I have gone astray like a light lost sheep so we can understand just from these just brief moments that I've captured here from these verses from Psalm 119 this man is embroiled in troubles this man is over his head in trials sufferings afflictions there's evil men out to get him he is wandering the earth trouble and anguish are gripping him by the neck he's got problems after problems and some of those problems as I read there in the last verse 176 some of those problems are his own doing he says

[31:03] I have gone astray like a sheep in other words I'm sinning so this psalmist is not only facing the afflictions that other people or situations are throwing at him he's also entering his own man-made self-made problems and consequences that come from sin this man's underwater but as though he was overwhelmed when troubles and trials came for this psalmist he didn't moan because scripture didn't change or improve his situation do you see his devotion to scripture was not because things were going well and also his devotion to scripture was not affected because things were going terribly as though the word of God was not working rather he celebrated it's interesting he celebrates at points throughout the psalm that his afflictions were from the Lord this man's crediting God for putting bad things in his life and that's precisely what happens God is Lord and King over everything he's a good day

God and there's a bad day he oversees and super attends everything there's not one molecule in your life and your problems that is somehow outside of the control of the Lord the Lord is sovereign entirely over all things and he says in verse 71 it is good for me that I was afflicted so his heart his mind has come to grips with this he has been afflicted by the Lord why so that I might learn your statutes the psalmist is benefiting by his afflictions because he sees God has done it to him so that he might learn God's truth his word and yet within our own experience it can be so tempting to lay aside God's word when troubles come it's tempting isn't it to stop reading the Bible because it doesn't seem to work to lay it aside for instance the logic of unbelief can work this way if you walk with me through a time of a season of trouble maybe the first week of my trouble I'm suffering and I need God's help so I feel the need to go to the Bible and I go and I pray and I read scripture and I ask the Lord to deliver me from my afflictions and my troubles well one week passes two weeks go by and week three I'm still suffering things haven't changed but I'm still opening the Bible because I know it's important for me I've been taught well that the Bible is important maybe week seven goes past and I'm still suffering and the Bible isn't helping me feel good at all it's not helping my troubles are still here and my soul is disquieted within me things are not well and by week 20 I've stopped reading the Bible altogether why because the Bible didn't work for me it didn't fix my problem it didn't make me feel better you see that's the logic of unbelief it's mishandling the scriptures just like the Pharisees I'm using the scriptures to do what to become an anesthesia to become a problem solver to be something that it's not designed by God to do what is scripture God's self revelation and it's only from me seeing the Lord as he reveals himself in scripture that my heart and my mind are set right before him and peace and joy will come as I see him just as we sang open the eyes of my heart Lord I want to see you I want to see you and once we slip into this Bible as a pragmatic spiritual tool for relieving our pain and making us feel better better we're going to!

find it's not going to work for us and we're going to give it bad reviews right? because the Bible doesn't exist to make us feel better primarily no it reveals the Lord it truly does and when we see the greatness and the grace of our Lord it melts the heart it removes bitterness and complaint it instills courage don't you want to be courageous well the word of God will it is a double edged sword it cuts between soul and spirit it opens us up and performs surgery in the deepest ways possible to remove our unbelief to remove our lusts does all the work of God by the spirit that Jesus promised that we would receive as believers so we're not left alone so it's not up to us to change ourselves so it's not up to you to stop sinning no Jesus died and Jesus rose again and Jesus sends his holy spirit into this world and the spirit of

[35:52] God brings the word to bear it brings the word with weight and with power to change your way of thinking to inform your soul so that you would find to be at peace and be at rest in the presence of God yes even in the middle of a storm and God's word never fails to reveal God never and so may the Lord help us to do what is the psalmist in verses 25 and 28 my soul clings to the

dust give me life according to your word my soul melts away with sorrow strengthen me according to your word may that be our prayer God help us to interpret all of life as this psalmist sees it in verse 75 God has afflicted his people in faithfulness and as we come to the word of God it's tested it's true and our hearts will be renewed to embrace whatever circumstances the

Lord has placed you wherever you find yourself the word of God will give you all the concrete and steel that you need to stay put to stand!

firm to trust his name to bless his name and to know his grace in through it all because the scriptures reveal our savior and the scriptures reveal all that we need to know so if you would be truly happy love and live by God's word this brings us to our third and final point so God's words are treasure!

pure gold and beautiful sweet food that nourishes the soul secondly God's words not only need to be not only they trust where they are they tested but they must be obeyed we've got to do something about this right the Bible is not just information to be known it is something that we must act upon and we all know probably know the children's song the wise man built his house upon the rock house upon the rock do all know it house upon the rock the wise man built his house upon the rock and the rains came tumbling down yeah all right we'll stop there see I knew you knew! knew! it was in your hearts and it came out well that song as you know it's built on a wonderful parable Jesus teaches in Matthew chapter 7 during the sermon on the mount the end of the sermon in a very purposeful way Jesus wants to help the people there gathered before him he's there on the mount the crowds are listening to every word that comes off this man's mouth and they even after the sermon declared this Jesus there at the end of the sermon very very very clear he sees right into every heart and he knows that everyone there seated on that mountain before him will be tempted to think that they have arrived they're seated at the master's feet they've received!

[39:02] all that he has said and now what do they need to do? nothing they're good they've heard the master well Jesus sees right through that he prepares them and he teaches them that parable that that song wonderfully captures that the wise man built his house upon the rock because he did what Jesus told them to do you had to obey what Jesus said if you're going to be wise not just those who sit there listening carefully taking notes no it's those who do what the master told them that's the wise man that man's house crashed and how great was the sound of that crash Jesus tells us why did his house crash and what does that mean it means that the foolish man disobeys doesn't obey fails to follow through on the words that the master taught him to do that's the simple truth of that parable and someone can claim to love

God's word but should they fail to do God's word their devotion matches the foolish man who built his house on shifting sands and it's self destructive understand it is self destructive for any person who reads the Bible who does not therefore then go and do the Bible it is self destructive understand that for you to listen to what I'm saying from the word of God and for you to leave this place and to go unchanged unmoved not repenting or growing not seeking the Lord as you want not obedient to his word self destructive and if you take the time to read the full text of Psalm 119 which I would urge you to do this week read the whole song get a sense of it allow it to be that kaleidoscope that just washes over you of the word of God take time and as you do that you'll notice that this psalmist is very concerned I would say obsessed concerned that he is being obedient to the word of

God he is obsessed to understand am I following what the Lord is telling me to do am I obedient he strove with all of his might to obey the word of God because he was convinced why he was convinced that the Lord is in his word God is in his word and God is a God to be feared and loved and adored and there is no greater joy in this world I promise you there is no greater joy for a believer in this world than to live and to love and to obey what Jesus has taught us that joy there is satisfaction and it's fulfilling all the words that we read!

in Psalm the way of your statutes he says in verses 33 to 35 and I will keep it to the end give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart lead me in the path of your commandments for I delight in it this man knows he's been taught by God himself the spirit moving on his heart to understand this is joy here it is we want to be happy that we must live in obedience and Jesus himself taught us that obedience is a primary symptom of the grace of God if you have received the grace the saving grace of Jesus Christ by the shed blood that came through the cross if you are a Christian if you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in your heart been born again well a clear symptom of that is going to be that you are obedient and you are growing in obedience

to the word of God that is pure and simple

Jesus says my sheep hear my voice that I know them and they follow me that is John 10 27 and furthermore Jesus says very plainly if you love me you will keep my commandments that is the holy expectation and command of Jesus Christ upon every Christian if we love him then we will obey what he has spoken and disciples listen you get it brothers and sisters if you belong to Jesus you understand this down to your core you love Jesus and disciples love his voice we love to hear him speak to us and more more we love to obey what he tells us to do in the scriptures this has become what we're all!

[43:41] this is why you live right now disciple this is why you belong to him so that you might live for him in obedience holy obedience this is our life and purpose as the children of God there's nothing greater nothing more noble nothing more satisfying than to know and to follow Jesus Christ through the commands of the scriptures there's nothing greater we're not waiting for something better no here it is and would we receive our gracious king and when we give our all to know him when we do this through committed obedience we are entering the joy of our master while here on the earth we are entering his joy as we are obedient to him here in this life and obedience is not a drag it is not a hindrance to our joy it is not legalistic it is not burdensome the substance of joy to live under the word of scripture to love the bible and to live in obedience to it for the glory of

Jesus Christ who shed his blood that this would be the life we live in obedience to him this is why he came and died not that we live any way we please that we would live his way in his word for his glory that's why we have been saved and our heavenly father rejoices over his obedient children much as a father rejoices to watch his children follow behind him there's nothing sweeter as I remember when my children were younger really young when I would mow the lawn they would always tote behind with their little toy mowers that shoot bubbles out you know there's something very precious about a parent turning around to see their child pushing their mower what's so sweet about that the child just wants to be like dad something pure and precious about that parents you've had that experience it's a beautiful moment moms and dads to see them right behind you on your coattails doing everything you're doing that's how much our father delights how much more does our father in heaven delight when we love his word and we obey him that we become so blessed and happiness supernaturally flow into our hearts as we receive the bible into our hearts and in our obedience and at verses 1 and 2 we'll end here 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 so I want you as I come to conclude here look where your feet are today not literally sorry if you're looking down that wasn't like a stare at your feet this is an illustration but I want you to look at your feet and I want you to look where are you standing what direction are you facing are you standing like the psalmist on the word of scripture and are you facing in the direction the scripture shows us to go to be devoted to love to obey the scriptures think upon your ways are you walking in that obedience and devotion to the Lord and if you've been careless if you've been careless with the Bible if you've been indifferent or bored by the Bible or if you're not a Christian and you're just you don't care about the Bible what's written here I would encourage you to understand we're going to have to stand before the

Lord we're going to have to give answer to God were we obedient and may the Lord soften our hearts today and especially if you're not a Christian you're here this morning that you would hear the word of God that would cut your heart that you would understand that you are under the holy judgment of God and that you need Jesus Christ to be your Savior you need the blood of Jesus to pay for your sins and the only way for you to receive that forgiveness is by calling on his name a child could do it have mercy on me Jesus save me that's all it takes so I would pray and I would urge you this morning repent turn to God in faith and for all of us that we would want more for the rest of us as believers that we would be like those disciples on the road to Emmaus that we would want more do you want more do you want more of Jesus Christ in your life do you want more of his word to dwell in your heart through faith do you want to be more obedient to your master is this what you want well then you are his disciple and his word burns in your heart and

I would pray by God's grace that we would all know and feel deeply that if we would be truly happy that we would love and live by God's word let's pray our father we thank you for your words Lord what a gift that you have given us the Bible a treasure a food a light to our path a sword that protects and defends and that cuts us open for surgery Lord you have given us your holy word and I

pray God that you would help every believer here to take the Bible closer to their hearts that you would cause us to cling to the Bible Lord like a man drowning would cling to a life preserver like a hungry man would cling to a plate full of food oh Jesus would you cause us to cling to your word in faith with devotion and then Lord cause us to be obedient to the word and cause us to repent [49 : 34] Lord wherever we are disobedient wherever we are indifferent Lord help us have mercy upon us would you bless this dear church kingdom life church would you bless every family of this church Lord that we would all gather around the Bible and we would love and serve you Jesus all the more in Jesus name we pray amen amen amen