

Bet | Cleanse Our Way

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Date: 11 August 2022

[0 : 0 0] Please join me in Psalm 119, looking at the second portion here in Psalm 119. Often Joe can say, come to vision for the music and stay for the preaching.

I love the music so much, but I know that's not how we feel about the Word of God. Whatever we see in the song that reminds us of the Word of God is what we really love. Whatever we would hear in a sermon that would teach us about the Word of God is where the value is.

But it's such talented musicians, and then they switch over to Spanish. It's like, you're just showing off at this point. Aren't you? I'm saying it beautifully in two languages. And if we can, Brother Stephen, I really would love to sing Hope Springs Eternal When We Leave Tonight.

I would like to sing one more time about the power to destroy sin and death. Psalm 119, 2 says, Blessed are they that keep his testimonies and that seek him with the whole heart.

Before we get to the second portion of Psalm 119, there's 22 of them. And we're getting to the second portion. And before we do, we have two more verses, verses 8 and 9 that we didn't cover last week.

[1 : 0 3] And the theme of that portion was the blessing in our lives from knowing the Word of God and from keeping it, being the keepers of these testimonies. And the young people in here that's getting ready for their intensive Bible education and Awana next week.

All you young people that have a Bible, let me see you hold it up here. Carson, help your cousin hold his Bible up. All right. Good job. You have your Bible here and you're going to need it for Awana next week when you come.

And you have it. And it's such a blessing to have the Word of God and to live by it. Not everybody in every year, all throughout history, in every language would be able to carry their own copy of the Bible.

But you have one and you should love it and you should appreciate it. And I spoke with John Allen this week, missionary in Papua New Guinea, that's working at getting the Bible to a group of people that don't have it.

And we ought to partner with more people that do that. And we should also be grateful for the fact that we have the Bible. And it's such a blessing to have one and to know the testimonies that we do not live life without guidance because we have it through God's Word.

[2 : 1 1] And so that's what verse 7 and 8 tells us. Verse 7 says, In these verses, he's anticipating that he will praise the Lord with an upright heart as he learns more about it, knowing that it provides protection.

As believers, we experience through God's decisions and obeying his statutes, his precepts, his laws, that we get to praise the Lord for his protective care.

So far, it's said it two ways. One time it says, Let me never be ashamed. And then it says, A friend of mine says, That the Word of God brings protection in our lives because it allows us to live according to God's will for us.

So as believers, we trust what God has to say. We trust him to always be right. And we've determined to live in this rightness according to his Word. And so why would the psalmist, verse 5, he would say, Oh, that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.

An exclamation. I want to live according to the Word of God. I want to kids coming back to you not only to know the Word of God, but to love the Word of God and also to serve our Lord.

[3 : 51] Why is it so important that you don't just hear in Iwana, but you live it out? That is the way in which the Word of God will transform our lives. It's where the protection is found. It's what we've been given the Word of the Do.

Let me give you three quick reasons that you should love God's Word. First of all, is its source. Psalm 19, 7 says, The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. This is the words of God. This is the source. This is the words of God.

Occasionally, Pinsley has tried to counterfeit notes left behind the house. And she'll leave something on the island. And she pretends like mom or dad wrote it.

And she gets to tell Carson or Thatcher what to do. You know, dear Thatcher, clean your sister's room. Or something like that. Well, it has no source behind it because it's quite obvious that it didn't come from that.

[4 : 49] This is the Word of God from our Creator. These are His words. And so we love it because it's its source. You're not going to find anything else like this in all of the world.

And so we ought to love the Word of God because of its source. Also, because of its substance, what we find inside of it. All that we need to live this godly life. 2 Peter 1, 3, What we need to know about God for a life of godly living is found in the Word of God.

We're not missing anything that He would have for us. It's more than just an instruction manual. How many of you men in here skip over the instruction manuals? All right? You just don't need them.

Ikea, it's just not even worth having, right? You just skip over it. It just doesn't seem to be, maybe you don't find it to be helpful. Well, this is far more than a how-to book. This is far more than a manual.

But this is an expression of the father to his children to give us guidance in life. I've shared with you before, when I lost my dad at the age of 18, the last thing that I received from him was a graduation card.

[6 : 09] And I opened up the graduation card, but he hadn't had time to fill it out yet. And that summer, I kept that in my Bible, and I would open up the graduation card, and I dealt with all kinds of emotions because I wanted some type of instruction from my father.

I wanted some type of encouragement from my father. And that empty side of the card just left me desiring something. But as that summer went on, I realized that the words that I wanted to be in that graduation card were found in the Word of God right there beside it.

All the encouragement that I could ever need in this world is found in these pages. All the instruction that I could ever need in this world are found inside of these pages. And so because of the substance of this Word, we love it.

And then it's strategy, a plan for successful action, providing wisdom and preventing wondering. Providing wisdom and preventing wondering.

Psalm 119.2 said, Blessed are those that keep the statutes and that seek it with their whole heart. And so this preventing of wondering is what we move to now in this next section underneath the letter of Bet.

[7 : 21] The second letter of the Hebrew alphabet. How many of you in your Psalm 119, it isn't just ran all together, but it's divided in the little sections for you. How many of you have one where it's divided in the little sections?

Would you raise your hand? It's a comment in there. And so there's 22 sections. And all 22 of those sections are going to make much of the Word of God. And the blessings of it, as we've seen.

This thing, this portion is going to emphasize how it brings preservation from sin to us. And it's underneath that Hebrew letter, Bet. Alex Montero couldn't make the night, but him and Chase, they say the word Bet just whenever they want.

It makes no sense. Do you all know that? That's just a word. Like, yeah, Bet. Like, hey, why don't we go get tacos? Bet. Let's do that. Why do they... Greg's going to come up and explain that to us, all right, sometime.

I don't know why that word shows up with Chase and Alex, but it does. But it's a letter that we're going to look underneath here. Preserves us from sin.

[8 : 23] The psalmist affirms that devotion to the Word of God cleanses one in their way of life, prompting us the desire to learn from God more and to determine to meditate with the light in His Word.

You ever been to a place where you're sick of sin? You ever been at a place where you're just tired of the effects that it had upon your life or the effects that it had upon other people's life? If you've lived for any amount of time at all, you have been there.

And what is the great resource available to you? What will you do in your life to fight against that sin? What will you do after that sin has not prevented... Not the Word of God tried to prevent you from wondering, but you neglected it.

And in neglecting it, you wondered in the sin. And now you're dealing with the guilt and with the shame. And you're thinking, how do I find myself not back in that same position? We should turn to the Word of God.

Read with me in verse number 9 to verse number 16. Just to make sure you're with me tonight, I'm going to have you read verse number 11 when we get to it. Verse 9. Verse 11.

[9 : 38] Together. Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in the statutes.

I will not forget thy word. Some resolutions there, some rejoicing, some valuing the word of God, some identifying the purpose, and then just rejoicing and making a commitment.

I'm going to be a person that stays in the word my whole life. So the faithful learn the value of God's word to keep us safe and unspotted from this world.

Unspotted from this world. I chose that expression. It comes from James 1.27. It says, Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this.

[10 : 39] To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. You could give testimony in here. I know that all of you can at different seasons of your life where it just seems like there's just so much temptation.

How am I going to continue at this job? How am I going to make it through this school year? How am I going to make it through without getting spotted from the things of this world?

So positively, we say that our goal, our ultimate goal in life, is to glorify God and knowing Him, enjoying Him forever. But negatively, we say this, the goal of life is to not sin.

Honestly, that is a goal in life, is to not sin, because they both mean the same thing, because sinning is falling short of glorifying God by embracing other things as more enjoyable.

You've been in a position before where you had to make a decision between two different places. I can either go here with my friends or I can go and do this thing. But one thing that you know for sure is that you don't get to do both of those.

[11 : 43] Well, let me tell you that when you're embracing sin, you're not enjoying God. When you make a decision to go towards sin, that you are not knowing and loving Him as you were designed to do.

So the saying no to sin and saying yes to our Lord is the goal of our life, the purpose of our life. And so God's Word guides us, it says in verse number 9. The question is, how shall a young man, this applies to all people, young men, old men, young ladies, old ladies, all of us in here, but following Him, like with the Proverbs, fatherly advice, being reminded that we're getting instruction from our Father.

How do you cleanse your way? And the answer is taking heed according to God's Word. Some years ago, three buildings ago, nobody that was ever a member of our church or here, a mom came to me with the teenage son and told me about how all the temptations that their son was dealing with and how difficult it was to raise a son in this day and age.

And she was concerned and she was scared and she said, how can you help me keep my son safe as he's being raised? And she was looking to me possibly for help.

She was looking to a youth program. And the only thing that I would know to tell her is that you are going to have to hide your son in this Word, which is being done by hiding this inside of your son's heart, that I cannot answer that for you.

[13 : 11] I cannot keep enough youth activities. The youth ministry cannot keep enough youth activities. Awana cannot keep enough youth activities going on so there's not enough time to find yourself falling into sin.

But we can take the Word of God, hide it in our heart. So it says His ways, that refers to all activities of life. Lord, cleanse me in my ways and all my activities and then taking heed.

That's more than reading it, it's more than memorizing it, but it is putting it in your heart, to heed it into your heart, to meditate upon it.

That's the real protection. Sometimes you hear stories of a person who got shot, maybe in war, but they had a New Testament in their pocket and the Bible saved them, all right? That's a good story, but that's not the purpose of the Bible.

If it was, I'd wear 27 of them, all right? That is not the protection that the Word of God is supposed to bring, but it's supposed to be brought into our lives as it leads and it guides us through it. So prayer and devotion as a means of guarding our lives.

[14 : 13] Let me not wonder from thy commandments, it said in verse number 10. So we don't wander away. Prayer is our study of God's Word. It should lead us into devotion and we should store it up into our hearts.

Buy the truth and sell it not. Also wisdom and instruction and understanding. So letting us not wander from the commandments, we hide it, we store it up, we treasure it.

The word hiding is such a good word because we know from when we read our Bibles, what did they do with a treasure? They would have a place in their home and they would dig down and they would hide the treasure.

The man in the New Testament that found the treasure in the field, it was because it was hidden. So it shows us that it's supposed to be kept and preserved. Proverbs 23, 23 tells you to buy the truth and to sell it not.

There should be no value. There should be nothing in this world that would be of greater value than not compromising the truth. I like show my... I grew up in a flea market.

[15 : 14] My mom caught an antique store, but I didn't see a whole lot of antiques there, all right? But every now and then we'd have antiques and people would value it. But sometimes I like to watch a show about when a person comes by or you go to a yard sale and you ask what something is and the person's like, well, that's not for sale.

And they're like, well, what about this? Well, that's not for sale either. Like, and then you look at something else, they're like, no, I really don't want to get rid of any of my stuff, right? Like, why are you having a yard sale? None of your stuff that's of any value is for sale.

When it comes into our lives, the things that are the Word of God, that we've been taught through the Spirit in the Word, they just can't be for sale. When anything comes into your life, kids, and you're considering something, you have to get used to saying, that is not for sale.

I've hid the Word in my heart. I know what it is, and it's just not for sale. And it says that we should treasure it above all the riches of this world at the end of verse number 14.

So, blessed art thou is normally followed with a reason of praise. Verse number 12 says, blessed art thou. And then it might speak about some title for the name of God, or it might mention something that God has done to rescue His people.

[16 : 24] In this verse, it says, blessed art thou, Lord, O teach me thy statutes. What he's rejoicing in here is, Lord, thank you so much for the blessing of your words.

Before you can have a teachable spirit, Hamilton, before you can go into Awana, and I know you're so excited about Awana, before you can get back into Awana, and you're going to learn, and you have to be grateful for the Word of God.

If you're grateful for the Word of God, when you get in there and you learn those lessons, then you're going to receive the Word of God. And so, Awana kids, I ask you this.

Are you grateful for a chance to learn God's Word? And then Awana leaders, not volunteers, Awana leaders, right? Whitney taught us that on Sunday. You have responsibilities.

Awana leaders, I ask you tonight, are you grateful for a chance to teach God's Word? Because your gratitude for God's Word is going to affect not only how you do what you do, but it's also going to change what it is that you're teaching.

[17 : 24] Maybe you're motivated by your saying, I wish that I would have known the Word of God when I was their age, and it would have preserved me from some sin early in life, and now I get to take the Word of God and help them hide it in their hearts.

And then he says, With his lips, he is going to declare the judgments that came from God's mouth. My lips are going to declare the Word of God that has come from his mouth.

Deuteronomy 4.12 speaks about God speaking out of the fire, the voice of God's Word. The emphasis here is that these words came from the Lord.

And now above all riches, Matthew 6.33, you know it. How many of you know Matthew 6.33? How many of you have hid this in your heart? Miss Sandy knows it. Come up here. All right, we're going to say Matthew 6.33 together, all together now.

But... Very good, coach. I wish I heard you the loudest so you get the sticker of the night, okay?

[18 : 27] Let me ask you this. I didn't grow up in Awanum. I struggle memorizing Scripture. Kids that memorize Scripture in Awanum, this is the time to do it. Their brain is just sponges, right?

But if I was to ask you, if you're in here and you say, I have a hard time memorizing Scripture, I would raise my hand. Maybe others would hear. If I was to tell you the night that Ben Mize is going to give you \$500 for every verse that you memorize this week.

\$500 for every verse you memorize. Bubba Bear Bryce on the front row, if Mr. Ben back there, you know him very well. If he's going to give you \$500 for every verse you memorize, how many verses are you memorizing this week?

As many as you can. Exactly, all right? I think your dad would take you out of school. You went and sleep. That's all the family's going to do. It's going to surround Bryce and help him memorize.

Jesus wept. Got it, all right? All the verses that we need. And so when I think about this, I realize it's the fact that I have a hard time memorizing Scripture is not the great problem.

[19 : 37] The great problem is I haven't set the value of it. If you tell me I'm going to get \$500 of unrighteous mammon for memorizing a verse, then I may stay up the night and memorize it.

But if you tell me I'm going to be blessed because I know God's Word and that is going to help bring protection in my life, that should be also a great motivation for me.

And so we need to meditate upon God's Word. His precepts, verse 15, I will meditate in the precepts and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in the statutes. So two resolutions.

Meditate on the precepts and show respect to his ways. To value it, to meditate. I think, you know, that word is used in a wrong way many times when you think about emptying out your mind.

You don't want to empty out your mind. And you want to fill your mind with God's Word. Miss Yvonne, I made biscuits last night from scratch. All right? And I put seven up in them. All right?

[20 : 35] I saw this recipe and I was looking forward to it. All right? And I made a real mess of it. Okay? I had the biscuit. Okay? So maybe I didn't make it from scratch. All right?

I had biscuit. And I had seven up. And I had sour cream. And I put it in a bowl. And I poured it out on the counter. And it went everywhere. It was a mess. All right?

But then I started adding more flour and stuff to it. And started kneading and working with it. Finally, I got something that didn't go everywhere. But I was praying, help me get this done before Stephanie walks in.

Because it was everywhere. All right? I'm sure she's still finding it today. But as I was standing there, Carson, I was kneading the dough. I was folding it together. I was working with it over and over again.

That's what we should do with meditating on God's Word. Is we say it to ourselves. And then we say it a different way. And then we ask it a question. And then we apply it to our lives. And then we think about it.

[21 : 30] But we just take it continually. If you're in here and you're reading 20 chapters a day. But you're not stopping to meditate on all of it. You're going to hear something that you don't normally hear a pastor say.

Read less. Meditate more. Okay? Take in a portion that you can take and meditate upon it. And understand it. You don't have to memorize a verse a day. You don't have to memorize a verse a week.

But take something in front of you. And let's be chewing on it. For me in Kentucky, and I'm sure for many of you, what is always the picture of meditation? It's a cow with a cud that he would chew on.

That grass. He would chew on it, swallow it, bring it back up, and chew on it some more. But meditate on it. And then lastly here, I will delight in thy statutes and not forget his law.

Delighting in the statutes and not forgetting in his word. I won't forget it. It was there. Eric Elrod likes to pick on me. He says, we'll make a plan. We'll be talking.

[22 : 28] And I'll say, okay, this is what we're going to do. All right, Eric? And Eric will say, all right, well, just let me know. And I'm like, I just did. All right? But he always loves the end of conversation with, well, you just let me know what you want to do.

And it's kind of a joke because if you say that at the end, nobody can ever give you any responsibility or ever ask you anything to do. You just pretend like you weren't paying attention. Well, some of us, we come to God's word.

And when we get done, we just say, well, God, just let me know. Just tell me, you know, just write it in the sky or make it so clear. Just let me know. And God's response to it is, I did just let you know.

I wrote it to you. I gave it to you. I preserved it. You have copies of it at your house. You have groups at your church that are teaching it. You have friends inviting you to it. Get to God's word.

Because the word of God is the means on which the faithful maintain purity in life. And they desire to learn more from God and enjoy meditating in his word. Jesus' prayer for us in John 17, 17 is this.

[23 : 28] Jesus there before the disciples looks up to heaven and he says, Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. The word of God is sanctifying and it brings protection for us.

Apostle Paul goes on to say it like this. Be not hearers of the law just before God, but be doers of the law. But the doers of the law shall be justified. It's in this law that makes us aware of our sins and of those deeds and causes us to turn to him.

We are in a miserable condition without the word of God, but that is not our position. We have hope in this life. We have protection. And so not just the want of kids and just the want of leaders, but every one of us in here ought to hold tightly the word of God.

And if you feel like you're in life just adrift, you have no guidance, you're getting beat up left and right of the same sin or whatever it is, know that the great resource that God has given you is his words.

The source of it is his words and the substance and has a strategy. There's a plan in here for you. I'm going to pause for a moment and then I'm going to close on a word of prayer before we sing Hope Springs Eternal.

[24 : 35] But as we pause and I give you a moment, would you pray to the Lord? Would you thank him for the word of God? Would you make a decision when it comes to hiding in your heart the scripture, knowing that you would delight in it, that there's a value to the word of God?

And if you treat it as it's valuable, then it would have a more significant role in your life and in your ways and in your decisions.