

# Nun | Thy Word is a Lamp

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[ 0 : 00 ] So as you know, in Psalm 119, each one of these sections have a different letter. But not only that, they have the same topic, which has to do with the Bible. We know it's infallible and wonderful, but what I've been pushing and encouraging us to see is how profitable it is for our lives.

So the last section had to do with the sweetness of the Bible, how special it ought to be to us. This section speaks to the confidence we ought to have in the Bible. And it's wonderful, the resource that we have in God's Word.

Thinking about taking next steps, and what I was saying earlier about taking a million steps and always decisions need to be made, I decided to look up earlier how many steps or miles that Jesus walked during His earthly ministry with the disciples.

And this is amazing. They estimate that He walked almost 21,000 miles with His disciples. It's almost walking around the world. How many of you have a kid that's always saying, are we there yet?

Is it Barry or Kristen that says that? All right, Barry, all right. Are we there yet? All the time, driving somewhere, are we there yet? Well, the disciples, they could have asked, are we there yet? And Jesus' answer would have been yes and no.

[ 1 : 08 ] All right? Why yes? Well, we're almost there, but no, because when we get there, we're going to go someplace else. There was constant movement and walking with the Lord and following after Him.

And so as we think about this and God leading, I want to encourage you that in the life that God's given you, there's constant decisions to be made. This verse speaks about this, about the decisions that we make, but we're not alone in those decisions.

We have great confidence. Pray that you'll make a decision concerning the Word of God. It'll allow you to guide your steps as you move forward in this coming year. And if you don't steep your mind in the Bible, your best hope is to simply have a weak Christian life.

You're always just going to have to be borrowing from somebody else. And it's just going to come in waves. You're going to hear something in church. But I'll tell you, as much as I enjoy teaching the Bible to you, that you ought to be receiving it yourself on a daily basis.

The Holy Spirit should be leading and guiding you along that way. And so Psalm 105 says, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

[ 2 : 18 ] I believe there's a song about that, right? A Patch the Pirate song, Zach? You want to come sing with me? No Patch the song? But there's a song about this, right? Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. How many of you know this song?

If I get two-thirds vote, we're going to try to sing it. All right. All right. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Who thinks we can do it? Come on, people. You want to do this?

What do you say, Whit Holmes? Can we sing this song? We can do it. Let's do this, okay? When I say we, I mean you guys. Because if I start it, we're not going in the right direction. Here we go. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Nice. That's enough. All right. I think that's all we know. That was very good. That's what I was thinking as well, the same song. And so that's a common passage you would know out of Psalm 119, for one of the best known out of Psalm 119.

But it's possible for us to take steps that are informed by God's word. But it's also possible for us to place our steps, move in a direction that are not informed by God's word.

[ 3 : 23 ] Verse 109 says, My soul is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget thy law. He was saying that he was in a dangerous place in life. That he was walking, you think maybe like a tightrope or something.

That his decisions he knew were quite serious. His life was in his hand. You have moments like that in your life where you know the decisions you're making are of utmost importance. Other times we don't have that seriousness about it, but we have decisions to make.

And then God gives us the privilege of having real responsibility in making decisions. And in doing that, we should not forget his law. We should not lean upon our own understanding, as it says in Proverbs 3, but acknowledge him.

And in doing that, he will direct our path. And some of the ways that it speaks about walking, it says in Ephesians that we should walk worthy of the vocation. Isaiah 57, 2 says we should have an uprightness about our walk.

1 John 1, 7 says that there's a fellowship one to another in the light as we walk. Micah 6, 8 tells us to walk humbly before the Lord. There's instructions about how we are to live out our Christian life.

[ 4 : 25 ] And how are we going to do this? If we're going to do this, we're going to need his word as a light, which is a lamp unto us. And we're going to need him to show us what the next step is to take, and that is the life.

Because Christian living is living on the word of God. So the question we ask in decision making is, trust the life-giving power of God's word. If we take the word out of the way, God becomes just of our own making.

Before, Jonathan was on the guitar and they were singing Charlotte and Jordan about knowing the Lord more, explain to me how you would do that outside of his word. Outside of God's word, then God would just be of our own making.

You might fill him up with your own dreams about what he's like, but as far as communing with him in truth, that who he is, you can't do that without his word. So briefly, let me give you seven commitments to the word of God from this passage.

It says in 106, So I'm going to give seven here, divided in three categories. It's where he guides us, he also guards us, and then he also makes us glad.

[ 5 : 35 ] And I chose glad over joy because it's another G, and Greg likes that, okay. All right, so it guides us and it guards us, but it also makes us glad. Can I say gladden? Would that be a word?

Thou preach. He says, okay, I'm going to go with gladden. Dan says no. All right? And so, first of all, guidance here. He will guide us. Thy word's a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. And so how do we show our love for the word?

Well, when our kids are little, you first try to teach them the respect of God's word just by simply knowing where it is, right? Where's your Bible? I don't know. I left it here. I left it there. So first of all, you would show respect of God's word.

Maybe as a little kid, just say, disrespecting where it's at, certainly. Reading it? Certainly. But what does the Bible say the way that you would demonstrate your love for the word? It's living it out. That is a great demonstration of the word.

Jesus highlights that many times speaking to religious leaders that they don't know. We're told that our mind, we should live in conformity to it in Romans 12, 2. Not being conformed to the world.

[ 6 : 33 ] And the things that would conform us to the world are as great as they've ever been. I mean, the conformers to this world, the mechanisms, the way in which we are supposed to be conformed to this world, just have to be at an all-time high.

Because it's just everywhere. You can't... If you're not intentional, you're constantly going to be bombarded with something that's trying to conform you to some image in this world.

But we're told not to do that. And in not doing that, there's a renewing of our mind. And it proves what's good, acceptable, and perfect. That proving means it's discerning the will of God. That by not being conformed to this world, but reading the word and renewing our mind, then we're more aware what is good, what's acceptable, and what's perfect.

And these things are the will of God. So we have a declaration here by the psalmist. He aspires for God's word to be his role in every aspect of his life. He wants to live out God's word in all of his life.

And God's word has something the same about every area of our lives. Because in every area of our lives, there's a way in which we can do it in a way that honors Him. So that's the first thing.

[ 7 : 43 ] It will be my guide. Secondly, I will conform my life to God's word. Verse 106, I have sworn I will perform it, that I will keep the righteous judgment. Some Christians are afraid to take vows or oaths.

Matthew 5.37 says, But let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. So well-meaning Christians teach that this means you shouldn't make a commitment or to make a vow.

Do you remember Jesus' words at the Last Supper in Luke 22.18? He says, For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come. Then Paul in Acts chapter number 18, we see him following through with vows.

I pray that I would imagine that your kids in your home are watching you live out vows and commitments that you made. Vows, not A-E-I-O-N-U, that's vows. I know it sounds like the other word, but I can't say them differently, okay?

Vows, V-O-W-S. We're living out vows in our lives. So all conformity in our lives should be connected to obedience to God's word. And so I can do that.

[ 8 : 47 ] That's a resolve that I should have is that I can say, this is what the Bible says, and yes, I'm making a commitment that I'm going to live that out. And then in verse 107, I'm afflicted very much quicken, O Lord, according to my word.

And so in this commitment that we have made to conform our lives to God's word and the things that he has shown us, that during affliction, we do not get moved away from that commitment, but we live according to God's word.

Apparently, the psalmist here is facing a real challenge. It says, quicken to make alive. He must be dealing with some affliction that's greater than reading through the book of Leviticus in your Bible reading, right?

And you're like, I just got to move away. I got to move. I got to stop from this. Whatever it is in his life, it's a point of life or death for him. And he says, even though I'm in great affliction, I'm going to live according to thy word.

We should not despise afflictions. Commentary Horn, it says this, The faithful servants of God may be afflicted, and they may be very much and grievously afflicted.

[ 9 : 50 ] But let them consider that by afflictions, their corruptions are purged, their faith is tried, their patience is perfected, their brethren are edified, and their master is glorified.

In times of affliction, we should hold tighter to God's word, and we should not separate from it, and we should make trials have its effective work in our lives.

And so in summary of this point, number three, which is vow not to look away from God's word, is do not look to be rescued from anywhere but from the Lord. Do not devise a self-rescue plan that is not based on God's word.

During trials or afflictions or times of testing, don't compromise what you know to be true from God's word. Trust his word. And then this provides a guard for our lives.

Verse 108 says, Accept thy beseech thee the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments. And so our delight should be found in the worship of God. You know, a freewill offering is an offering that was brought, that was not part of the scheduled required offerings that are given.

[ 10 : 56 ] These are offerings that you offer because you want to offer them. We use that wording in here. We would say we're going to give a freewill offering to this person above your giving and your commitment submissions, above your giving to support the church here.

There's a freewill offering. So it speaks about one from your mouth that you would give the Lord. John Newton says, Many people approach the religion the way they do that you could, a cold bath.

They might think it's good for them, but they're not looking forward to it, and they're sure glad when it's over. That is no way. You may have seen somebody live out their Christian life like that.

I do not want that. Mark Hoffman, South Africa, he was convinced that you ought to start every day taking a cold shower, the discipline of it. Anybody ever done this here? I do not recommend it.

I can handle a whole lot of things in life if I have a cold shower, I mean a hot shower to start off the day. And so it's through the truth of God's word that we're able to stand in awe of God and worship Him.

[ 11 : 52 ] And can it be said of you and say, Lord, teach me your word. I really love to worship you. I delight in this. I find my joy in this. God's word provides the constant reminder that our God is worthy of our worship and whatever the next step He's leading us to.

Number five, commit not to forget God's law. My soul is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy law. When we hold our lives in our hands and refuse to forget God's word, or will we hold God's word in our hands loosely and refuse to let go of our lives?

His soul is continually in His hand, but He said, I'm not going to let go of the truth of God's word. No matter what comes our way, we stay committed to His word. A vow is simply a commitment to God's word.

I hope and pray that's what you would have already in your life. I won't forget Greg in the last building, finishing reading through the Bible for the first time. We knew when that was going to happen. How old were you? Seven.

He was seven years old. Unbelievable. All right? Reading. I don't know. He was young and he's still taller than me, but he was quite young when he did it. But it was a neat moment for all of us to see somebody who was barely a teenager follow through with that commitment that he had made to God's word.

[ 13 : 08 ] Thomas Kramer recanted. This is actually a little tougher than what you did, Greg. Thomas Kramer recanted after he watched, he had recanted of his beliefs in the gospel and he had told the Catholic Church that he would teach Catholic doctrine.

But then he watched two of his friends die at the stake. And then when he saw his friends die at the stake, he says, I'd like you to bring that statement that I signed back to me because I'd like to tear it up.

Watching his friends of, watching friends of his in resolve be willing to die for the truth, strengthen his own resolve. And as they lit the flames, he stuck his right hand into the flame first and said, you betrayed me, you burn first.

It's pretty wild, isn't it? His commitment to that, commitment to obeying God's word, that he did not have a choice whether life or death, he was going to stay committed to God's word.

So even when the commitment will cost you, do not forget his word. Verse 110, The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have erred not from thy precepts. And so what is the snare that is set for them?

[ 14 : 15 ] I think about being a kid, you dig a hole, you put some leaves over it, you think you're going to catch a big animal. Then when you're older, I remember going to my grandparents and seeing that hole that I dug that I just knew was five feet deep and it wasn't a foot deep, you know, it wasn't going to catch anything.

It wasn't deep enough for a squirrel. But you think about these snares and the verse shares with you what the snare is. The snare is that it would be something that would cause you to not live according to the precepts of the Bible.

And so when these opportunities come, these temptations come, we need to make a commitment. God's word needs to be hid in our hearts and on our journey. There are often decisions or steps we must take that are unexpected.

And when they come, the word of God should be hid in, that we would live a principal life and we would not err from it. This gets us to the point of producing a gladness in our heart. 111.

Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are rejoicing of my hope. God's word should be treasured more than anything in this world. William Plummer says, At the end of life, we don't want to have everything but Christ.

[ 15 : 27 ] We would rather have nothing but Christ. And all the things that you gather in life, how many of them are of any value to you when death comes? There was a man that always told, my father-in-law always told him, you won't have your hearse, right?

Hearse won't be pulling a U-Haul. That's what my father-in-law said for years, nearly 45 years out of church. He said, you never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul. So one guy who was a joker thought it was funny, got his, they hooked up a U-Haul to his hearse when he died, just to prove my father-in-law wrong.

That's a real commitment to a joke, isn't it? And so what are the things you treasure at the end of your life? You don't have everything, but you have Christ? Or do you have nothing but Christ?

The answer is certainly we'd rather have nothing but having Christ. And so it should be the great desires of our lives. We've already seen in Psalm 119.18, Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

If you see the wonders of the Bible and what they are, they will amaze you beyond anything you can see in this world. And so we cannot neglect reading God's Word. You'd think, well, of course we don't neglect reading.

[ 16 : 36 ] But it seemed to be a real problem in Jesus' day. Remember in Matthew 19, the Pharisees said, Is it lawful for this man to divorce for any cause? And Jesus says, Haven't you read Genesis 1.27?

Genesis 2.24? Matthew 21, the scribes complained, Why are these children shouting, Hosanna, son of David? Jesus said, Have you not read? Psalms 8. Jesus tells the Jewish leaders the parable of the tenants and kills the son owner to get the farm for themselves.

And again, in Matthew 21, he'd ask them, Have you not read? And that would be Psalm 118. The Sadducees make mockery in Matthew 22 about the resurrection. And Jesus says to them, Have you not read?

Exodus 3.6. And so it's constantly, Jesus is asking them, Have you not read? And so when the joy and gladness have been lost in our lives, there's always a question that a friend can ask us this, Have you not read?

Is a question that you could always ask yourself because there's something that the Bible addresses about whatever temptation has brought you to the place in your life that you're just not glad and joyful.

[ 17 : 38 ] And so verse 112, where are we in the night, is that this should be a commitment for all of our days. I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.

So taking those seven things, this is a paragraph that I wrote out, and I would encourage you to look at this passage of Scripture. In a moment, I'm going to take a moment. I'm going to ask you to look down at the verses of Psalm 105 through 112 and to look at it again and then pray.

And this is after reading that portion of Scripture, thinking about what my commitment should be about the Word of God, about how necessary that it is to be a light to guide me as I follow Him, to know that I don't get the stop.

I'm not done making decisions. It's just because I know where I'm living and I know where I'm married to and I've made all the decisions that I thought were big decisions when I was a kid have been made for me. What I realize is that now that I'm here, there's still decisions to be made.

And I don't want to make those decisions apart from God's leading and guiding in my life. And so I need to have a strong commitment to God's Word. And so this passage calls on a strong commitment. And so this is how I said it after reading those seven verses.

[ 19 : 10 ] That's my prayer. And that should be my commitment that I would make according to God's Word.

And can I encourage you in our last service together in this year to look at that verse and to not make, I doubt, a new commitment to you, but a renewed commitment according to God's Word as it's there in your hand.

So if you're not going to make, I'm going to make a difference.