

Gimel

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[0 : 00] Please join me in Psalm chapter 119. I often play that song on Sunday mornings when I come in. I love that thought that people who think God is distant could come and know Him and He would invite them with their questions.

If we would open up our lives and lay it beside an open Bible, we would find that He would welcome us with open arms. Psalm 119 verse 17. We'll be in this series for some time.

I'm going to cover as much as I can of this portion tonight. But as you know, I'm a pastor, which is a Bible word. It means shepherd. A lot of great words, ideas around the word pastor. The person who leads our water ministry is called a commander.

That is not a Bible word, all right? Which means I'll be ending close to 8 o'clock tonight, all right? Because you don't want to cross a commander out there. But we have a chance and I hope you'll continue to join us over the next five weeks as we look at some practical advice that you can know the Bible and you should want to know the Bible.

Verse 17. We're in our third section in the psalm here, divided into 22 sections, each one taking a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Verse 17.

[1 : 06] Dear bountifully with thy servant, that I may live and keep thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. I am a stranger in the earth.

Hide not thy commandments from me. My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

Remove from me reproach and contempt, for I have kept thy testimonies. Princes also did sit and speak against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselor. The way that this psalmist speaks of his love for God's word, it makes me feel uncomfortable.

His love seems so real, it's so right, it's so beautiful, but many times it is so foreign for me. On some days, this expression of just this love for the word is found here in the psalmist's heart, but is not on many days found in my heart.

[2 : 16] As the psalmist express its love, all Psalm 119, and we may be in Psalm 119 until Jesus comes back. I'm in no hurry because every Thursday night we're going to elevate the importance of the word of God.

Because it's how, when we sing about come to Jesus, he comes with open arms, it's coming to being open and honest before and holy God, which means that we will take the word of God and live according to it.

And Psalm 119, it expresses this. It says, It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy statutes.

It is good for me to experience pain and suffering in life if it presses me into the word of God. I don't feel that way. That's a beautiful way to speak about it.

It is a right way to speak about it. But I would welcome things into my life if it would cause me to go deeper into my understanding of God's word. Psalm 119, 72 says, The law of thy mouth is better unto me than the thousands of gold and silver.

[3 : 22] It says that if there was a monthly subscription to this book, I would pay it. Alright? If I had to pay for entry into reading the word, if it was going to be read somewhere, I would say, All the silver, all the gold I have, I'm all in.

Just give me the word of God. So we've looked at many, many verses. We'll look at many verses tonight. If you want to follow along, so many verses, you can't keep up with those.

If you go to visionbaptist.com, Sermon Outlines, the outline for every service is there in advance. It's also in the church app. Verse 17, Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live and keep thy word.

Lord, I want you to deal bountifully with me. Dealing bountifully with me would mean that I would live. We're going to find that the psalmist is going through a difficult time. He's being persecuted. Things are being said about him.

But he says, I want to live so that I can keep your word. That leads me to a question. Why do I want to live? What is the purpose of want to live? A quick thought would be, I want to live so I can see my kids grow up, so they can experience the joy of marriage and having children.

[4 : 31] I want to see their kids torment them as they torment me. That's one of my goals in life, alright? Is to live to see that. There's many places that I have never seen, and that I've never been gone to.

There's many books that I've not yet bought, and there's even more books that I've never read. Alright? Some of you will understand that. It means I've got more books than I've read. But what is all of this to me?

It ought to be, Lord, if you will deal bountiful with me, if you give me a tomorrow, if I see the sun come up, if you give me another day, what I want to do with that is I want to live according to your word. My definition of life is not seeing places and going places and eating certain foods.

My definition of life is living according to your word. I love it. If suffering pushes me to it, thank you for that suffering. If it came at a cost to me, I would pay the cost for it.

Experience these wonderful things of God's word. Verse 18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

[5 : 36] It's a prayer here. The open my eyes. If you see the wonders in the Bible for what they are, they will amaze you beyond anything that you could see in this world.

I've been blessed. I've seen Grand Canyon. I've traveled. I've seen natural wonder. I've seen the big redwood forest. I've seen the Great Wall of China. Just many things that was just amazing to me.

But none of them has transformed my life like a scripture of God's word. It points me to a creator, which is wonderful. But if it wasn't for God's word, I couldn't know that creator.

You could take me and show me everything, and all it would do is grow in my heart, I want to know this creator. There is certainly a creator. But if I didn't have the scriptures, then I could not know him personally.

So the most amazing things I will ever see in this world are found inside of God's word. This is where God opened my eyes. I want to behold the wondrous things, not of this world, but the wondrous things of your law.

[6 : 39] And you know the happy sheep that you are in here tonight, the happy sheep I want to program in here. You know this for yourself. You know what it's like to turn a page of scripture and God to speak to you and see the wonder of it all.

I don't know how far we get, but I'm not going to speed past showing you a few of these wonders. God hears our cries and assures us that his word will give us wisdom.

Psalm 119, 65 says, Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments.

It is in this word that I know that God hears my prayers and that he will give me wisdom. Without this word, I wouldn't know that. I could live my whole life praying, ringing a bell, walking around something, taking a pilgrimage.

I could do everything I could to try to amplify my prayer life, hoping that the God of heaven would hear me. Without this word, I would not know that he ever did. Thank you, God, for your word.

[7 : 45] That alone is beyond anything that you will ever be able to show me. It's beyond anything this world has. In this word, I found that if I will cry out to God, he will hear me.

God's word provides a direction into my path. Psalm 119, 105, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Guidance in my daily life on how to live out my responsibilities is found inside of this word.

Could not trust anybody else other than my creator on how to live out my life. And so I could look and I could study. I could go to any school, any place. I could ask for the greatest wisdom of the world, and I would only be guessing that they would be telling me how to live my life according to the creator.

But because of the wonder of God's book, the creator has told me how to live my life. And so I could follow steps and I could say, this is difficult, but it's what the creator has for me. This is wonderful, and I would never know it.

God's word provides hope for us. Psalm 119, 49, Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me the hope. You've just been to a place that's been hopeless.

[8 : 56] You wrestled with your questions. You felt like God was distant. Then you went to God's word. God's word, and that hope, that expectation, it wells up in your heart. And you're not going to find that in any other place.

There's no amount of goodness. There's no amount of promises that a person could tell me. I have great respect for the men and ladies inside of this room. But when you tell me that everything's going to be okay, it does not hold the weight that when God's word tells me, I've prepared a place for you.

I have, as I heard the day in the funeral, a man said when they got in the ship and they said, we will go to the other side, they could have rowed that ship with the confidence that he already said, I'm going to the other side.

The creator of the universe in his word has already told me, I'm going to the other side. And it gives me just incredible hope. And it gives me comfort and pain.

Psalm 119.50. This is my comfort and my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me. His word has made me alive. When I was unconsolable, I learned that God took the tears of mine and he bottled them.

[10 : 02] I learned that he was hearing my prayer. I learned that he cared for me. I learned that no matter what is happening in my life, that Jesus most certainly cares because he took my sin upon a cross and he died for me, removing from me the greatest penalty, removing from me the greatest hurt that this world could ever give, taking death from me.

And that it's in his word that I experienced God's steadfast love. Psalm 119.76. Let I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to thy word and to thy servant.

As we go through the scriptures, as we turn the pages, as we read the stories, as we know God from his word, we see his merciful kindness towards us and it brings comfort to know him.

Just like consistency that he doesn't change. One of the greatest privileges of my life is when I get to tell you, please open your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Luke.

Please open your Bible because I don't know what happened in your week. I don't know what's out of your control, but I know that every time I come to this word, it remains the same because it's our God who is merciful and kind to us.

[11 : 21] Psalm 119.28 tells me that my soul melteth for heaviness. Wow. This puts words to it, right? I mean, have you, if you want to express yourself, have you ever said that's what I want to say right now?

Those are the words, like I can't express how I'm feeling, but the word gives you words. My soul melteth for heaviness, then strengthen thou me according to thy word.

I go to the word and I find the strength that I need. And then lastly, lastly on my list, but most certainly not lastly of God's word, we will be filled with joy and peace that can withstand our grief.

Psalm 119.111. Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have something to rejoice in in the testimonies of his word.

I would not know him if it was not for his word. He made himself known. He has revealed himself to us in his word. And the Bible tells us that in seeing him, we are changed.

[12 : 25] That in going to the word, it changes us. 2 Corinthians 3.18. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed in the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

what we know in part right now, what we know in a limited way, we will know fully when we see him. And so we go to God's word to behold him.

We go to see him and to know him. And in seeing him and knowing him, we are changed. So the kids are soaking up the word of God. All right? Your kids memorized seven Bible verses already, okay?

That's what they do in a wand. And they can just do that because it's wonderful. And that's why I appreciate your commitment to being in here so your kids can be in their other room. But we also want to soak up the word of God because the word of God is getting hit in their heart that they may not sin against God.

That the word is changing me because as I go to it, it gives me instruction. It gives me comfort. But it also is the great protector from the thing that wants to destroy me, which is sin. And it brings me to knowing him.

[13 : 36] And so we ought to have a prayer as we come to God's word. We have a prayer. And it says this, Open thou mine eyes that I may behold the wondrous things out of thy law.

Psalm 119, 18. Why don't you say that with me? Psalm 119, 18. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Brother John said that there's been a lot of intellectual energy thrown at the Bible. A lot of turning of the page. A lot of just going to it. A lot of debating over it.

A lot of reading it. And checking off a box. If you don't want to fall into that, if you recognize that in your life, let me encourage you that the next time you open up the word of God, you will look to the God of heaven and you will say, Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

It would serve as a reminder to you that you're about to embark on a journey that is going to lead you to wondrous things. You cannot see the wonderful things of God without God helping you see them.

[14 : 44] You cannot see the wonderful things of God without God helping you see them. You come to it. That's why this is a book that is written for us as believers.

Can an unbeliever tell you the historical account of the kings of the Old Testament? Could they name the patriarchs for you quicker than I can? Could they make a connection in order of things?

Yes. But could they ever see a God that they are going to submit to and live by? Could they ever see it and apply it to their lives and really know it?

Right? That is what we're talking about. We're not talking about simply being able to read the words and understand what they say, but to have it a communication to your spirit what God is saying.

We cannot see the wonderful things of God without God helping you see them. As we've been in Luke, we have seen that and the Pharisees see him face to face and they don't see the glory of God.

[15 : 41] Face to face, they see him. They are in the room with him. They are very close to him, but they don't see the glory of God. We say that we read the Bible in a literal, historical, and a grammatical manner.

That does not mean that everything that we read we take literal or as middle schoolers like to say. They say literally all the time, right? And one out of 20 times they use it in the appropriate way.

They literally never get it right, all right? And literally, so when the Bible says one thing, if it's speaking about God's arm being reached down, do we say that's literally an arm that would come out of heaven?

No, in our literal sense there, we are taking it according to the genre that it's written. So we read the Bible. If it's poetry, we read it as poetry. If it's history, we read it as history.

And so that's why we say we read it in a literal, historical, and grammatical manner. We read the Bible as it was intended to be understood for us.

[16 : 42] And so we follow the rules of reading as you would other books. You should do that. I've shared before how I thought if I took all the letters from each book of the Bible, I told my friend he had a poster board, I turned to each book and I gave him a letter and he wrote it on the poster board and when we got done, you know what it said?

Absolutely nothing. Alright? Because that's not how you're supposed to read any book. And so we'd say with the Word of God, we follow the same rules that we're supposed to apply when we read other books, but it doesn't stop there.

Because this book is not only accurate and correct historically, unlike nothing else that has been attested, nothing else has been proven like this Word of God, but it's also supernatural.

That the Holy Spirit illuminates our mind and gives us understanding. So the Pharisees would say, we have, in Deuteronomy, let me give you one example before we end the night about what I'm speaking of.

Deuteronomy 29, 2 and 3. And Moses called unto all of Israel and said unto them, You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt on the Pharaoh and unto all his servants and unto all his land.

[17 : 51] The great temptations which thine eyes have seen the signs and those great miracles. So did they see? Yes or no? Next verse, Deuteronomy 29, 4.

Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear unto this day. That's why when Jesus many times in the parables he would say, I'd say this, say this, so that seeing they wouldn't see or hearing they wouldn't hear.

Or he would say, if you have ears to hear. Was he looking out to a bunch of people that didn't have ears? Right? I mean, was everybody like Mr. Potato Head back in the day that just took whatever off and set it down and I'm not listening to you?

Alright, I'm going to put my angry eye in and I'm going to look at you. No, that's not what's going on. He knew they had ears. He knew that they would hear audible sound from them but they weren't hearing and they weren't seeing.

And so we need the Holy Spirit to allow us to hear the Word of God. to see the wonderful works that he is doing. And so it turns the light on. Psalm 18, 28 says, For thou wilt light my candle the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

[19 : 02] When we go to the Word of God in prayer, we say, God, open up my eyes so that I may behold the wondrous things that you have for me. First rule of understanding the Bible is that this is his book and we ask for him to help give us understanding.

And knowing that it's his book when it comes into our lives, we say, yes, Lord, to it. Because as Brother John says, the way to stop listening is rebellion. When you say no to it, then you're not in a position to hear more of it.

That's why the Pharisees couldn't hear. No matter what was being said, they were not going to obey it. They were not going to listen to it because they didn't have ears to hear. Let's read one last time before I pray, before we end the night.

Psalm 119, verse 18. Will you say that with me as a piano player comes and I will pray and we'll be dismissed tonight? Psalm 119, 18. Say it with me.

Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Because your kids are going to tell you they learned the Bible verse, you need to have one ready, okay? One more time with me here.

[20 : 09] Psalm 119, 18. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Would you stand with me as we pray through this psalm together as we leave the night?

Heavenly Father, I thank you so much that you have dealt bountifully with me as your servant, Lord, that I may live and Lord, if I will live, Christ will live. If I had to live, Lord, I want to keep your word.

So I pray, Lord, that you would open up my eyes and help me see the wondrous things that are out of your law. I am a stranger in this earth and you have, you hid not your commandments from me and I thank you, Lord.

My soul break it for a longing that hath unto my judgments at all times. You rebuke the proud who won't listen to you that are cursed. They err from your commandments, Lord, but remove from me their reproach and their contempt because I have kept your testimonies.

Lord, as this is Psalm 119, 22, may that be our answer tonight, Lord, the accusations that may come to us tonight, that we would live blameless in your eyes, that we have kept your testimonies.

[21 : 16] And Lord, people in authority may sit and speak against us, but we will meditate on your word and on your statutes. And then, Father, I rejoice tonight that your word, your testimonies, your precepts, Lord, they are my delight and my counselors, that, Lord, I can sit alone with my friends, I can sit alone with the books of this word, and I can receive the wisdom that you would have for me where I find great comfort.

In Jesus' name I pray.