I have hidden Your word in my heart, that I may not sin against You

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Preacher: Steve Aiken

[0:00] And I love being here. Hopefully you won't mind me being here this morning.

Thank you. This is my first preach since I retired at the end of January. So I'm a little nervous. So hopefully you will be blessed.
For a number of weeks, I've been different times during the day. A couple of words and a verse from the Bible keeps coming to mind. And thy word I have hid in my heart that I would not sin against you.
And I thought, Lord, what's that? It just keeps, you know, when I wake up in the morning, when at night and at different times during the day over the last couple of weeks or month, your word I have hid in my heart that I would not sin against you.
Now, I memorized verse 11 or many parts of Psalm 119 and other verses when I was younger. And one of those was Psalm 119 verse 11.
[1:20] And at first it was so that I could, you know, kind of guard myself, guard my thoughts against sin, against wrong thoughts. And then when I began to teach and preach and stuff that I would often talk about this verse as well, as it's a way to guard ourselves against sin.

But then when this verse kept coming back recently, and then when Gerald called me the other day to ask me what I preached that I was praying about, what should I share today?
And then that verse came back again. And so I began to meditate on it and read it in the word. And I thought, now, what? Does the Lord have something more here?
And that's what I want to speak on this morning is your word. Your word I have treasured in my heart. Your word I have hidden in my heart that I may not sin against you.
Genesis records that God spoke and there was. The whole universe was created and is held together by the word of his power. John declares in his first verse of his gospel, in the beginning was the word.
[2:30] And the word was with God and the word was God. And then in verse 15 of John 1, it says, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Jesus is the word of God. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, John declared in Matthew 4, 4, or Jesus declared in Matthew 4, 4, it is written, man shall not live on bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
In Matthew 24, 35, he cries, heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. I pray that this week that we should pray for the Church of Scotland this week, the General Assembly, that they will remember that God's word will not pass away.
It doesn't matter what society says. What matters is the word of God. Matthew records in chapter 8 about the centurion who sent for Jesus to come and heal his dying servant.
While Jesus was on his way to sending others, he sent others to the Lord and said, Lord, I am not worthy for you to come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed.
[3:50] See, he knew the authority. All Jesus had to say was just speak the word. Just say the word.

It has authority. In Proverbs 18, 21, it says that death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat its fruit.
Words are powerful, aren't they? I can guarantee that almost every one of you still remembers a word that somebody spoke over you maybe 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago.
And it still affects you, doesn't it? I remember when I was about 21, 22, I went with a friend to see our pastor at the time. And I was going through quite a troubled time coming out of some real

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darkness at university.
And so I was a little bit discouraged. I didn't tell anybody, but I just went to see the pastor just for a social visit. And he was out in his garden and went out there.
[4:57] And his little five-year-old boy ran up, jumped into my arms and gave me a hug and said, Steve, I love you. I still am blessed by that word.

And that was, I'm not 21 anymore, so that was a long time ago. That word gave me life. That word encouraged me.
That word reminded me that I wasn't alone, that other people were with me, that God loved me.
Words are powerful.
They can create the universe, heal a broken heart, set a captive free, give direction for someone lost, raise someone from the dead, determine someone's eternal life.
Or words can steal someone's hope, lead a child astray, estrange a family, or as we know, cause a war. Your word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against you.
[6:00] King David didn't treasure God's word in his heart just so he wouldn't sin. He hid it in his heart and treasured it because he loved God. When you look at Psalm 119, I love it every once in a while, reading through that.

He says, you can just see the excitement. I love your word. I love it. Because what it did is it revealed who God is.
It revealed his nature. It revealed his will for David and for mankind. And he loved it. He treasured it, not just so he wouldn't sin against God, but because he loved God and wanted to know more about him.
The Israelites in Isaiah's time didn't quite have the same relationship with God that David did. In Isaiah 58, we find them complaining that God wasn't blessing them.
They were fasting, praying, and making all kinds of sacrifices, but not getting the acknowledgement from God they thought they should. So I want to read from Isaiah 58, God's response to Isaiah for them.
[7:09] While you're looking it up, I'll take a drink. Isaiah 58, beginning with verse 1.

Shout with a voice of trumpet blast. Shout aloud and don't be timid. Tell my people Israel of their sins.
Yet they act so pious. They come to the temple every day and seem delighted to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would never abandon the laws of God. They ask me to take action on their behalf, pretending they want to be near me.
We have fasted before you, they say. Why aren't you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves and you don't even notice. I will tell you why, the Lord responded.
It's because you're fasting to please yourselves. Even while you fast, you keep oppressing your workers. What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me.
[8:13] You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting?

Do you really think this will please the Lord? No, this is the kind of fasting I want. Free those who are wrongly imprisoned. Lighten the burden of those who work for you.
Let the oppressed go free and remove the chains that bind people. Share your food with the hungry and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them and do not hide from relatives who need your help.
Then your salvation will come like the dawn and your words will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind.
Then when you call, the Lord will answer. Yes, I am here. He will quickly reply. Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors.
[9:15] Feed the hungry and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength.

You'll be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing stream. Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities and then you'll be known as a rebuilder of walls and a restorer of homes.

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What is God saying through this? For Israel, it was correction, wasn't it? He was correcting them because they were pretending something but they weren't living it out.
But for us, I don't believe it's a correction, but I believe that God has given a word of encouragement through this to treasure His word even more, to let His word become so alive in us that it gives greater revelation of who He is, His majesty, power, love, forgiveness, and eternal commitment to us.
It's to remind us that our faith is not just about doing things, giving our tithes, going to church, obligatory prayer, or Bible reading, but about the treasured word of God flowing from us and power to honor the Lord and bless others.
[10:39] It's not just to do things, is it? It's not to be religious, go to church. I've been going to church ever since I was little, even though my family were not Christians at the time.

But I always wanted to be there. I wanted to be with other believers. I wanted to hear more about God. And then He had to remind me it's not just about doing religious things.
You know, because I'm very good. My personality tends to be legalistic, okay? So it's, I've had to, Lord had to help break me out of it because I was stuck in this religious rut.
And He says, it's not about doing religious things. It's about letting God, as we treasure His word and God within our hearts, then out of that flows.
I mean, what God, God wasn't, didn't, wasn't telling them not to fast and not to pray and not to do, you know, give sacrifices. What He was saying is, when you love me like King David did, treasuring my word within you and it becoming life, then out of that will flow so that you're actually ministering life to other people.
[11:47] That then our religion becomes life not only to us, but it becomes life to other people as well. His word also reveals who we are in Him and what He desires of us.

Not to follow a bunch of rules so we don't get in trouble, but that His word would grow, multiply, create faith and empower us by His Holy Spirit to demonstrate the reality, the authority and power and love He has given us to minister to the broken world around us.
Jesus declares in Matthew 7, 24 and 26, therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.
Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And I'm afraid there's churches in this city and this nation and around the world that are building their houses on sand.
And when the troubles come, they're going to find out that because they haven't built it on the word of God, they haven't treasured God and His word, that their building's going to fall down and they're not going to have life.
[13:01] In John 15, verse 7, the Lord promises, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

Now that probably sounds like a verse from the name it and claim it folk across the water, right? But it wasn't some of those televangelists that said it was God through Jesus that said it.
If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done. That's a promise from Jesus.
Not just to His 12 disciples, but that's a promise to you and me because we're His disciples. We're His children. Do we believe it?
Do we believe His word? Are we treasuring that in our heart? What would happen if we just meditate on that verse for the next month? Every day, just meditating on that and thinking about who God is and what He's done and that by the word of His power, He created the universe and holds it together by that same word that Jesus raised people from the dead just by speaking to a little girl that was dead.
[14:23] He went in there and said, Talitha, arise. Little girl, get up. He just spoke. Didn't fall on the floor and pray for hours. He just spoke the word.

And God's people are still doing that around the world. Maybe you read it in some of your magazines or something. They're speaking the words and the power of the Holy Spirit and raising the debt and healing the sick and setting the captives free.
His word reveals who He is. And when we treasure His word within us, it creates faith, enabling us to do greater things than we've ever imagined.

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Jesus spoke those words for us in order that we would do what He's called us to do. He said, greater works will you do than I do because I go to be the Father.
And so we sit down and think, well, maybe somebody will do it. And God says, well, why don't you do it? Well, I'm too old. Well, or I'm too young or I haven't been to Bible college.
[15:37] Well, sometimes that's a benefit not to go to Bible college because then they teach all the faith out of you. Some of them do. Not all of them, okay? If you're, because I know you have a Bible college.

So how do we do this? First, let me read from Romans chapter 10. Am I still okay? Your, your roast isn't burning? How do we do this?
First, let me read from Romans chapter 10 verses 5 to 17. So if you want to turn there while I take another drink. Romans chapter 10 5 to 17.
For Moses writes that the laws, laws way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all its commands. But faith's way of getting right with God says don't say in your heart who will go up to heaven to bring Christ down to earth.
And don't say who will go down to the place of the dead to bring Christ back to life again. In fact, it says the very, the message is very close at hand. It is on your lips and in your heart.
[16:52] And that message is a very message about faith that we preach. If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

for it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the scripture tells us, anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.
Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord who gives generously to all who call on him. For everyone who calls in the name of the Lord will be saved.
But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?
And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the scriptures say how beautiful are the feet of the messengers who bring good news. But not everyone welcomes good news.
[17:54] For Isaiah the prophet said, Lord, who has believed our message? So faith comes from hearing. That is hearing the good news about Christ.

So how do we do this? I have four things here. One is we need to treasure God's word in our heart. That every day to read the word of God.
To meditate on it. To memorize it. And it's not to, you know, they say that my wife and I and daughter watched a program on dementia the other day. And those of us that get older and, you know, we begin to forget a little bit, we get scared, don't we?
And because dementia is a terrible thing. I've seen people in my churches in the past and family members where dementia has just stolen, stolen them away.
But you know, one of the things that says when even older people learn something new, it builds new connections. connections. So if you want to help keep your mind, besides just getting more spiritual, is start memorizing scripture.
[19:06] And it may take, you know, those of us that are older, it may take a little bit longer, but pick a scripture and memorize it. Type it out and put it on your refrigerator and wherever, all over the house.

And what it will do is not only help you treasure God's word, but it'll build new connections in your brain. And save you later on. When we saturate ourselves with everything about God and his will, his nature, his promises and commands, it not only protects us from deception, but it stirs our love and admiration for God.
It builds faith. The second one is we need to believe it. You know, there's no use memorizing God's word and treasuring it in our heart if we don't believe it. I know people keep things at times that are just junk, right?
They don't like it so they treat it badly. But those that really treasure something, you know, they hide it, don't they? Protect it. So we need to believe the word.
His word is truth. It's living, active, real, and powerful. Some of it sounds unbelievable at times. You know, whatever you ask in my name believing.

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[20:21] That sounds unbelievable, doesn't it? We all think, well, maybe it's for Reinhard Bonnke or Billy Graham, but no, it's for every believer. When we treasure his word within us and it begins to create life and faith, then it becomes reality.

And I'm not talking about naming it and claiming it. Say, oh, well, you know, like Peter Pan, I do believe in fairies. I do believe in fairies. You know, I don't believe in fairies, by the way. But you know what I'm saying.
Just speaking something over and over again that isn't real doesn't make it real. You know, the liberals are telling us all kinds of things that have been, that violate the word of God and they say it over and over again and pretty soon the majority of people begin to believe a lie if you speak it enough times.
But it doesn't make it true, does it? We need to believe God's word. The third one is to confess it, to speak it out. You know, there's power in our confession.
As John, as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 10, he says, you know, that when we speak out what we believe, it creates salvation. And when we speak out our faith in Jesus, not only does it reinforce our salvation, but then it lets other people know what we believe so that they can be saved as well.
[21:45] our confession is powerful. Finally, persevere. Especially if we've had years of bad thinking or there's somebody we're ministering to that have come out of years of heartache and other things, then speaking the words of life will take time.

So we just keep speaking life. We keep speaking hope. We meet a, we had a foster boy for a year and because of different circumstances, he wasn't able to stay with us.
But one of the things that we told him, he says, we'll never forget you and as long as you want contact with us, then we want that. So every four weeks we see him. Yesterday we took him to Inchcombe Island and he was all over the place trying to avoid the birds attacking.
And, and we, we've, over the, you know, when we first came, when he first came to us, his, his desire of a future was to sit and drink beer in front of the television.
And, and we kept speaking life into him. I said, you're so creative. And he is, he's very intelligent and very creative. He's a lovely little boy and just turned 12.
[23:04] And we kept speaking life into him. We keep telling him about the, the good things that we saw in his life. We kept telling him, we're never going to forget you.

But we pray for you every day, which I do several times a day. And he's changed. Now, it's taken a while. He's come out of a difficult family background.
But when we speak the words of life, when we speak the truth into somebody, when we let, you know, treasure God's word in our hearts and then we speak it into other people's lives, they begin to transform.
It may take a while because especially if they're, you know, they're so hard from being hurt so many times. So we persevere. the Holy Spirit wants to do an incredible work in our lives, doesn't he?
And I, I love you people. I feel good every time I come here. I'm blessed. blessed. And you're honored to have such a, a good worship team as well. You, I've been around different places and, and not every place has such a, a quality worship team.
[24:14] Not just technically, but anointed. It's anointed. It's not the technical ability, it's the anointing. And you have an anointed worship guy here and team.

So thank God for them, pray for them. But as we treasure God's word in our hearts, that he wants to do a new work, a deeper work.
I know you love this community, you love one another, but there's so much more that God has for us. When we treasure him in our hearts and let his word go out, that there's going to be greater life. Broken people are going to be healed and transformed and, and drawn in. And then when they're drawn in, and I keep telling folk, I said, look, you know, they might be upset with some person that really bugs them and really irritating.
I said, well, when they're changed, then you have access to their whole family. Sometimes you have access to a whole community by one person, by speaking the word, the treasured word of God into their lives.
[25:23] God knew how powerful words were, so he told his, the priest, in number six, to bless the people. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. And when we treasure God's word in our heart, then speak them out

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into impossible situations, broken hearts, troubled marriages, et cetera, they create life, stir faith, bring peace, and release hope.
God's word then stands powerfully against the forces of darkness, like Jesus' words did against Satan in the wilderness. when we treasure God and his word in our heart, we release the Holy Spirit to create life, hope, joy, peace, and much more for ourselves and others.
I know you already do it, but as Peter says in one of his epistles, I want you to excel more. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you for this people.
I thank you for their love for you. Lord, I am blessed by these people. I thank you for the work they're already doing, for their Bible school, for their outreaches to this community, for their work with children and young people, for their prayers for this community and beyond, Lord.
[26:48] I thank you. They've been a light in this community for so many years, and I believe you have far greater fruitfulness for them than they ever imagined. Lord, I pray that this word would stir within them a greater hunger for you and your word to excel yet more.

Yes, they're walking in the truth, but to excel yet more for those broken lives that desperately need to hear the good news about you. Lord, help them to do it.
Help each of us to treasure you and your word in our hearts, not just so we don't sin against you, but that your life will come out in everything that we say and do.
And Lord, we thank you for this in that wonderful and powerful and blessed name of your son, Jesus. Amen. Let's finish with the final song.
Where is it now? There is hope that burns in my heart. That one? Okay. Whatever comes up, we're going to sing. There is hope to thank you Spot for everything.
[27:55] Thank you. There is hope to the final song. Here we are. Welcome to the host. I would bear a■ of■ andkr rewards in over the return of the pros.

There is hope that burns in everything as long as happens. It is time you to be using this sleeping as angry as as as as

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