

Psalm 119 - Part 1

by Robert F. Adcock

The Word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, providing guidance, strength, and comfort in our daily lives.

Duration: 40:11

Scripture: Psalm 119:1-122, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the value and importance of knowing and studying the Word of God. He compares the Word of God to a lamp that guides and illuminates our path in life. The speaker encourages listeners to devote a portion of their daily time to reading and meditating on the Word of God. He highlights how the psalmist in Psalm 119 found the Word of God to be the answer to every situation he faced, and encourages believers today to have the same experience. The speaker concludes by urging listeners to rejoice in the Word of God and not be afraid to fully commit to it.

Transcript

I'd like for us this evening to look in Psalm 119, Psalm 119, and we'll read one of these eight-verse sections, commencing with verse 105. As you know, Psalm 119 is a psalm that every verse, there's 176 verses, all of them with the exception of verse 122, makes reference in some way to the Word of God. And, of course, the importance of the Word of God is something that we like to stress because we know the value of God's Word.

It is still listed as one of the most circulated books in the world, but as someone has well said, it may be one of the most neglected books in the world. And most especially sometimes among the Lord's people. It's easy to dust the book off on the Lord's Day and pick it up and take it along to the meeting, follow along with the scripture reading and that sort of thing, and neglect it at other times during the week, have little or no time for the Word.

Well, if you neglect the Word of God, you will certainly pay a price for it. It certainly has a durable quality to it. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word endureth forever.

So when we read the Word of God, we need to be aware that the Spirit of God takes the Word of God, and he can make it very real to us. He can instruct us in the ways of righteousness. Let's read from verse 105 of Psalm 119, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous ordinances. I am afflicted very much. Revive me, O Lord, according to thy word.

Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thine ordinances. My soul is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I e'er not from thy precepts.

Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end. You just have to purpose in your heart that you're going to spend some part of every day reading the Word of God and studying the Word of God, meditation upon the Word.

Purpose of heart, I believe, could be said to be the forerunner of obedience. I think of that man, Daniel, and you read that Daniel purposed in his heart. Now, that young man determined that, come what may, he was going to maintain his integrity as far as his position and his relationship with all.

He wasn't going to compromise, no matter if he was there in Babylon, it mattered not, in captivity. He purposed in his heart. He wasn't going to defile himself with the king's danish.

He purposed in his heart, he was going to pray, and that's exactly what we have to do. It has to be purpose of heart. It goes pretty deep.

The Word of God is important to me as a believer. When we read about the Word of God, that it is sharp, it's quick, it's powerful, the dividing thunder between the bone, the marrow, the soul, the spirit, discerners of the thoughts and the intent of the heart, we're dealing with something that, indeed, has a very special quality about it. This is the Word of God.

God gave it to us for a purpose that we might read it, that we might meditate upon it. We might assimilate it, take it into our minds, take it into our hearts, and let it do for us all that God intended for it to do for us. The Spirit of God doesn't operate independent of the Word of God.

Spirit of God is sometimes, if you think of it this way, limited by our ignorance of the Word of God. If you say there's some degree of difficulty associated with the Spirit of God leading and directing me in my life, it's because of my ignorance of where He wants to lead me and direct me. If I don't know the Word of God, if I don't know what God is saying to me through His words, of course there's no excuse for ignorance.

But it does say in the Word of God that if we know to do right and we don't do it, then to us it is a sin. Most often we know a lot more about the Word of God as far as just knowing, knowledge, than sometimes we practice. So, the Spirit of God can be limited in the sense that our ignorance limits Him, and certainly we want to remedy that situation.

So, we study, we learn how to rightly divide the Word of Truth because we know the value of the Word of God. I'm reminded that the Lord Jesus, in His hour of testing in which Satan sought to discredit the Lord Jesus, discredit our God through His Son, the Lord Jesus responded, it is written. It is written.

It is written. I don't think there's any better way to respond to evil, to any of the things that oppose the truth that we have in God's Word than to respond. It is written, and be able to give from the Word of God a very clear picture of exactly what the Word of God says concerning any matter that we recognize as being something that has been introduced, perhaps by Satan himself, who doesn't mind using the Word of God.

He used it against our Lord. True, he misuses it, but that doesn't matter. Think of all the cults and the sects that are in the world today, and they so lively quote the Word of God.

They quote it out of context. They have their little way of going through the Scriptures and very loosely connect together things that really have no connection, and unless we alert, unless we are well informed from the Word of God, sometimes we can be deceived. To those who are unlearned and know nothing about the Scriptures, to them this is very impressive.

I've had people to tell me after a Jehovah's Witness or someone of that ilk comes along, they were impressed with the way they knew their Bible. It mattered not that the things that they were telling them were absolutely untrue. That didn't matter.

They were just impressed with that person and the way they handle and seem to know the Word of God. It's wonderful to have a grasp of the Word of God, and when some of these people come along, to be able to take the sword of the Spirit and use it in a skillful way in which you can disarm them. It doesn't take them long to discover perhaps that you're no dummy as far as the are concerned.

You know something about the Word of God. I daresay they won't spend too much time with you. They become eager to go their way, but the value of knowing God's Word... When I look at what we have before us this evening, the very first verse that we read said, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

The Word of God is likened unto one of those little foot lamps, perhaps, that was used in the day in which the Psalmist penned these words. A little lamp that was placed upon the foot of the traveler along that narrow pathway that he was walking gave just enough light for one step at a time, and that's really all we need because we walk by faith. Oh, I don't have to see a way off over there in the far distance away.

As far as enlightenment for my pathway, I just need to know where to step and put my foot the next step that I take, to be sure I'm putting it in a safe place. I don't worry about tomorrow. Today, and that certainty that God will provide through His Word, the direction that I need for my pathway today, there are no tomorrows.

Like a light shining amid the darkness of this world, we have the Word of God. It reveals ever so clearly, ever so accurately, exactly where my footpath should be. No matter how narrow that way may be, it may be through some place that is very precipitous.

Danger is lurking on every side, but when the Word of God is my guide, it's the light that I need for my pathway, I can be assured of one thing. I'll never be led astray. It's safe and sure to follow the Word of God.

When we're able to take the Word of God and we're able to read it when we're searching for that will of God in a specific matter, when we see that will revealed in the Word of God, I can be absolutely sure that I'm on the right course. I'll not be led astray by the Word of God. When we come to Proverbs 6, we read something that really complements this.

The commandment, of course, is likened unto the instrument itself, and then the teaching of the commandment is that which provides light for the pathway. Both the instrument and that which it's providing is the thing that I need, you need, and, of course, the Word of God provides just exactly that. And it should bother us if we neglect this wonderful book, God's Word.

It should be a part of my life. It should be a part of every day that I live, and I should purpose that at some specific time through every day I will take time to read it. For those that draw aside, sometimes they have very busy lives, and they take time to read the Word of God.

They know the value of God's Word. He says something in verse 106 that some may think. I don't think many people think this, but when I think about, I have sworn, they may think in terms of somebody cussing, cursing, saying things that are evil, things that are debasing to the individual.

Well, that's not the thought at all. When he says, I have sworn to keep God's Word, all of his righteous requirements, we're thinking in terms of taking an oath. You go into a court of law, and they'll tell you that they want you to put your hand upon the Bible, they want you to swear.

Take an oath. You'll tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God. Of course, many times after people have said that, I've been very suspicious that they turn right around and they lie.

But the psalmist is speaking in terms of his willingness to take an oath. That obedience to all of the righteous requirements that God places upon an individual that is a follower of God, he's not afraid to take an oath. He's not willing to commit himself to that position.

So often we find a reluctance when you speak of things that are decent and honorable. People draw back. They would readily commit themselves to something that would be very harmful in their lives, but when it comes to those things that relate to righteousness, such a reluctance to commit themselves to it.

Oh, I don't know, that standard's too high. Oh, I better not do that. And listen, before the Lord and with God's help, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I know within myself I have no power within myself to keep the word of God. God provides the power and the strength. It's through his enabling grace that I'm able to keep his word, and certainly there's no lack of power with God.

His arm is not shortened that he can't save. His arm is not shortened that he can't strengthen me, and he honors the commitments that we make to keep his holy word. Indeed, the psalmist takes a position that might indeed be very unpopular today.

Oh, you don't have to go that far. So often we hear this, you're taking this thing, you're taking it too seriously. I don't know of any way to take the word of God but to take it seriously, and to believe that what it says it means, and obey it.

That's how serious it really is. And, of course, verse 107 points out something that I believe many of us, if we have sought to be a true witness for our Lord Jesus Christ, and we've taken a stand for righteousness, and we have insisted that the word of God is the only safe guide as far as our conduct is concerned that it's going to bring to bear upon us affliction. But I'm reminded the Lord Jesus said, in this world you're going to have affliction.

You're going to have trial, and testing, and tribulation, but you be of good cheer. I've overcome the world. Much affliction may come your way just because you take a stand for righteousness.

I think we've heard in the course of some conversation I've had with someone here today that we should, in a sense, be incensed when we see injustice in the world. We should be. When I see all of the wrong, all

of the evil things that are imposed upon people by other people, their treatment of other people, I should be incensed by that.

I should feel a sense of anger. We talked about being angry, but sinning not. Don't let the sun go down upon your anger.

But when you take that very positive stand, you're going to find that opposition is lurking around the corner. Maybe call some names. I've heard fellows say that where they work, they had a name for them.

They called them a certain thing just because they insisted upon putting the Word of God in a very important place in their lives. That fellow that opens his lunch pail, and there he's got his New Testament, and he sits there and he quietly reads the Word of God, bows his head, and he gives thanks to God for the things that God has provided for him. Some will respect that.

It's a testimony. It's a witness to those that see that here's an individual that has enough courage, has enough purpose in heart, that as a Christian, a believer in Jesus Christ, he's not ashamed of God's Word, knows the importance of it, knows the value of it. It may bring affliction.

Verse 108 makes reference to what we can offer in the way of the freewill offerings of my mouth. And when I think about this, I thought about Psalm 19, verse 14. It says, Let the words of my mouth, the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

To have the opportunity to use our tongue, to use our mouth, to bring glory and honor to the name of God. We are peculiarly equipped. God created us that way.

We have the faculty of speech. We have language in which we can speak to God, and we need to prepare ourselves from the Word of God to offer up to God praise, offerings of my mouth I bestow from out of the depths of my heart upon my God. We worship God in spirit and in truth.

No other way to worship Him, to truly worship God except in the power of the Spirit of God and according to the truth of God. There again, it carries us right back to the Word of God. When I hear a brother offering up an offering of praise and thanksgiving to God, very soon you detect just how much depth there is in that life, in that individual's life, as far as a knowledge of the Word of God is concerned.

Our speech betrayeth us. We soon learn and know that there's some depth in that individual. He knows God in a very personal way.

It's been through his words. Now he's able to make as an offering to God those things that God from His Word has used to enrich his life. You see, the psalmist is impressing upon us the value of the Word of God.

Don't neglect it. Make it a part of your life every day. Verse 109 says something that I made reference to this morning.

It says, My soul, or my life, is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget by law. I don't know. I think I used expression this morning that that's a frightening thing to know.

God has saved us. We're already seen as seated in heavenly places in Christ. I believe in the eternal security of the soul.

I'm in God's hand. He placed me there. It's a wonderful position to be in Christ.

To know I don't have to have any worry or concern about that matter. Paul says, I am persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day. But the awesome thought is the fact that God has entrusted me with my life and what to do with it.

That's what the psalmist is saying. I have my life continually in my hand. I can't say, Lord, I don't want to do this.

I don't want to handle my life in that sense. No, the responsibility is thrust upon us. Paul says, I beseech you, I entreat you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your body a living sacrifice.

This is something that is holy and acceptable with God, and it's just our reasonable service. I think we sometimes forget that, indeed, there are many that have died modest deaths. The apostle Paul, because he was steadfast in his faith, he would not deny his God.

He had his head taken off. There have been many people there because they would not recant. All of the pressure of that horrible religious system, Roman Catholicism, you have to say it, responsible for the death, the martyrdom of literally thousands of God's dear blood-bought children because they would not deny the truth that they had seen in the Word of God, the same truth we had.

This is what I'm putting before you at this moment. Sometimes we don't think that's very important to deny the truth that's found in the Word of God. Sometimes it turned into a position we were just compromising a little.

Well, listen, if someone brought us right down to that point where they said, you deny or else, and that else may mean that I'll be in prison. Many people today that are in prison in Russia and some of those countries that have tried to bar and shut out the distribution of the Word of God, the only reason they're in those prison cells is because they've taken a stand upon the Word of God. It's the same word we had.

Does it mean that their convictions are deeper than ours? Of course, we'd have to be put to the test. We don't know. I just trust that each one of us would indeed say, yes, I'll take my stand.

I'm not going to deny the Word of God. My life, God entrusted it to me. I'll do what I believe God would have me to do with it, and I'm going to present it as a living sacrifice, not a dead sacrifice, a living sacrifice to God.

If it means imprisonment, if it means suffering for the cause of Christ, I'll take that stand. That's our responsibility. That's our privilege, and it's a little bit frightening to think that we are entrusted.

After all, we shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Each one, as he stands, he will receive reward or he will suffer loss, and this is regarding our service. What have I done with my life? There are some that will be saved, so is by fire.

There are others that indeed, well done thou good and faithful servant. You acted wisely. You acted in perfect compliance with all of the instructions that were given in my Word.

You were an obedient servant. You walked in those pathways of righteousness just as if it was important, and it is important. It is very important to obey God's Word.

And verse 110, again we can think of those that live godly lives. The enemy is ever so clever. He doesn't give up.

He's not wishy-washy like so many of us can be. He is persistent, and the snares that he sets for us, so often he does it very cleverly. And if we are not fully armed, I think about taking the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, and putting on the whole armor of God.

And in talking with a fellow believer just recently who had had quite an unpleasant experience, I think his concept of putting on the whole armor of God was that, well, you wait until you are just pressed on every side. The battle seems imminent, and then hurriedly you put on the whole armor of God. We'd better correct that thinking right quick.

Listen, you keep the armor on. You wear it all the time. You'd better sleep with it on.

The whole armor of God, the enemy that we deal with, is a formidable foe, and indeed to take him lightly is to invite disaster. And that's exactly what this dear brother did, and he's paying a terrible price for not taking seriously these snares that are set by the devil. In the psalmist's case, not even the adversity could cause this downfall, because he had an unerring, unswerving devotion to God's Word.

Someone may say, well, I didn't know that. Well, I'm sorry. I'm very sorry that you didn't know that.

But before God, that's not a legitimate excuse. I didn't know what to do. We have the Word of God.

We live in a land that has afforded us many freedoms, and the very fact that the availability of the Word of God, the time that we have, the time that is at our disposal every day, we can have time allotted for pleasure and for so many things that we like to do, and sometimes important things. But are we wise enough to be sure that a part of our time in every day is devoted to the Word of God? That unswerving devotion to the Word of God is something that we will find of great value as we live our lives in this world. And verse 111, it's akin to what we have in verse 57, where the psalmist declares, Thou art my portion, O Lord.

You know, the Word of God should be the basis for true rejoicing. If we're making choices in life and we decide, What would I like to have? What would we choose? You know, we're warned in the Word of God about imaginations, things that sometimes course through our minds, things that sometimes we're embarrassed to even think that we thought those thoughts. All of this casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Indeed, that's my portion, the psalmist says. I want the Lord and His Word to be my portion. Oh, there are many other things in this life that may be very attractive, very appealing, but when you look at them long enough, you realize that they're just the passing things of this life.

They don't have a very durable quality about them, not like the Word of God. Thy testimonies have I taken as inherited. That's what I want, Lord.

I want my life to be enriched by Your Word. I don't want just a doled-out portion. Lord, I want the floodgates to be opened.

I want my life to be enriched by Your wonderful Word. This rejoices my heart. It's wonderful to see people get excited and to rejoice about how wonderful the Lord is.

They can go to the ballgame, they can go to the sports arena, and there, if they scream their heads off, they're called fans. If we rejoice and sing hallelujah to the Lord a little too loud, they call us fanatics. We know that.

But listen, to have that wonderful experience of having our minds, our hearts, and our souls full of the Word of God, and it is indeed a wonderful resource and we should value it, and value it ever so highly in a day in which little value is placed upon it. Finally, he says, I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes. There's one thing for sure.

God knows when we're half-hearted. In Jeremiah 29, he says, When you seek me, and you seek after me, and search for me with your whole heart, that's when you'll find me. And God knows when we purpose in our hearts to do something, if it's a wholehearted conviction that we carry into that mouth.

Faintheartedness and half-heartedness, the Lord has no part of. He doesn't want any part of. I have inclined my heart.

That's the tendency. That's the way I feel in my heart, to perform the statutes of God. Always, even under the end.

And I understand that word end means the heel. It's the lowest and least noticed part. But he says, that's how far I'm going to go.

There's no limit to be imposed upon how far I will go as far as obedience to the word of God. Well, I just trust that when you read Psalm 119, and there are 176 verses, I said all with the exception of one make reference to the word of God. The psalmist speaks out of his experience.

He was a man just like you and me. He had his problems. He was faced with difficulties, but he found the word of God to have the answer for every situation he was faced with.

And, brothers and sisters in Christ, that still applies today. Let us read and study and meditate upon the wonderful word of God, and have our souls rejoice, and not be afraid to make that commitment. Lord, with your help, with your enabling and obedience to your word, I will perform.

And you will perform in a way that is acceptable to our holy and righteous God, because it will all be according to his word. May it be so, for his own namesake. Shall we pray? Our Father in Heaven, we want to thank thee tonight for the word of God.

Lord, that you would entrust us with such a wonderful, wonderful treasure. The psalmist has said he wants it to be his heritage. Lord, we have inherited from those that went on before, those that laid down their lives, that shed their blood, to give us this wonderful book, the word of God.

Many, indeed, they suffered, and they suffered horrible things in this life because they valued this wonderful, wonderful book. Help us to know with the assurance that you provide for us that we're not to take these things lightly. We are to value and treasure it.

And, O Lord, to know that it is, indeed, a safe guide, a lamp unto my pathway. The enlightenment that I need in such a dark world, where there are so many uncertainties and the pressures are so great, O Lord,

we thank thee for the guidance and direction that the Spirit of God provides for us through your word. And may your dear people avail themselves of it and be fortified and be armed in a day in which there's been so much compromise, in which error abounds, and so often those ministers of so-called righteousness are parading about, and so many falling victim to them.

O Lord, deliver us and help us to value your word. For we ask this in the precious and holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The service is over.

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