

Midtown Messenger

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Issue 21

The Synonyms Of Scripture

By: Cody Westbrook

Each time you pick up your Bible, you hold within your hands something far more powerful than a nuclear weapon (Heb. 4:12), something far more valuable than the rarest diamond (Ps. 119:72), and something far more enduring than the best constructed building (1 Pet. 1:25). God's Word is a blessing which we should value greatly. It commands our utmost adoration and respect. Such an attitude is vividly on display in the 119th Psalm.

Psalm 119 is a treasure chest of passages exalting the Word of God. It is an acrostic Psalm composed of 176 verses divided into 22 sections for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The Psalm teaches us about the value and power of Scripture. It gives insight into the magnificent respect the Psalmist had for God's Word and his great desire to know and to understand its content. Among the many noteworthy items in the Psalm is the number of ways in which the writer refers to the Bible. Several synonyms for scripture are found in the Psalm and, though each one is slightly different in definition, they all combine to give us a better understanding of the nature of Scripture.

Law – The term generally refers to direction, instruction, or a written code. Most often in the Old Testament it refers to the Mosaic Law as a whole but can also be used in reference to a single command in the law. The word is used 25 times in Psalm 119. Those who “walk in the law of the Lord” are blessed (Ps. 119:1). The Psalmist desired to see God's law (Ps. 119:18). He delighted in the law (Ps. 119:70, 77, 92, 174), and promised not to turn aside from it (Ps. 119:51) or forget it (Ps. 119:61, 109, 153). The fact that “law” is a descriptive term of God's Word reminds us that revelation is about

more than knowledge—it requires obedience (cf. Jas. 1:25).

Testimony – The root of this word means “to bear witness.” It is found 23 times in the Psalm. One writer remarked, “The outspokenness of Scripture, with its high standards and frank warnings (e.g. Deut. 8:19, using this root), is implied in this expression, but so too is its dependability, as the word of the “faithful and true witness.” Those who keep His testimonies are blessed (Ps. 119:2, 24, 88, 129, 146, 157, 167-168). God's testimonies are a delight and counselor (Ps. 119:24). The Psalmist wanted to know them better (Ps. 119:36, 79, 95, 125). He spoke of them before kings (Ps. 119:46) and rejoiced in them greatly (Ps. 119:14).

Precept – This word refers to the responsibilities which God places upon people (TWOT). It is used 21 times in the Psalm. It involves regulations and instructions concerning certain actions. It also indicates that God is concerned about details. The Psalmist was determined to keep God's precepts diligently (Ps. 119:4, 69, 134, 168). He longed for them (Ps. 119:40), loved them (Ps. 119:159), and sought to understand them (Ps. 119:17, 100, 104).

Statute – Scripture is described as a statute 21 times in Psalm 119. The root of this word refers to scratching or engraving something in stone. To speak of God's Word as a statute is to speak of its permanence and binding nature as law. It is noteworthy that the Psalmist expresses his desire for Jehovah to “teach” him His statutes some 9 times in the Psalm. He purposed to keep them (Ps. 119:5, 8, 145), to meditate on them (Ps. 119:23, 48), and to observe them continually (Ps. 119:117). He loved

them so much that he even sang about them (Ps. 119:54).

Commandment – This term is found 22 times. It describes the conditions, or individual requirements of the law (TWOT). “This word emphasizes the straight authority of what is said; not merely the power to convince or persuade, but the right to give orders.” The commandments of Jehovah are faithful and right (Ps. 119:86, 138). They make one wiser than his enemies (Ps. 119:98) and those who stray from them are rebuked (Ps. 119:21). No wonder the Psalmist loved them (Ps. 119:47-48, 127), made haste to follow them (Ps. 119:60), and was determined to keep them (Ps. 119:115).

Judgment – Also translated “ordinance,” this word is found 23 times in the Psalm. It is a legal term often used in reference to government and justice. It has to do with God’s decisions about right and wrong and implies that scripture is the standard for determining right and wrong, and what is just. The Psalmist praised God when he learned of His judgments (Ps. 119:7). God’s judgments are good (Ps. 119:39), right (Ps. 119:75), upright (Ps. 119:137), and enduring (Ps. 119:160).

Word – This is the most general term used to describe scripture. It is found 24 times in Psalm 119 and it refers to a spoken message. It includes all of God’s truth in every form. God’s Word is pure (Ps. 119:140), true (Ps. 119:160), and it gives light (Ps. 119:105, 130). It gives strength (Ps. 119:28) and life (Ps. 119:50). It is forever settled in Heaven (Ps. 119:89). The Psalmist hoped in God’s Word (Ps. 119:74, 81, 114, 147) and stood in awe of it (Ps. 119:161).

Though this is not an exhaustive list of synonyms found in Psalm 119, each of these offers insight into how the Psalmist viewed God’s Word. As you study each term in the Psalm, note how often the verb “keep” is used in conjunction. The inspired writer understood not only the beauty and wonder of God’s Word, but also that true blessing is found not in just knowing what God’s Word says, but in obeying it.

Forgive

When someone fades into my lane or is driv-

ing erratically with phone unashamedly in hand, I channel my inner Jeremy Clarkson with an encouraging, “Maniac!” There’s no denying that distracted driving is irresponsible and grossly negligent, but my attitude is far from where it needs to be. There’s little room for patience or grace with that mentality.

Shortly after soldiers drive stakes through his wrists and feet, Jesus says, “Father, forgive them because they don’t know what they’re doing” (Luke 23:34). Some early witnesses omit this verse, but the majority of witnesses include it. When reading these words it’s easy to think, “Jesus is so nice that He asks the Father to forgive people who are hurting Him.” It’s a nice gesture, or an example of how forgiving we need to be.

Jesus did not *ask* God to forgive those soldiers. He demanded it! Forgive is an imperative. This was so much more than a nice gesture. As one who had the power to forgive sins (Matthew 9.6), He told the Father to forgive them.

If anyone had the right to ban someone eternally, it was Jesus. We are going to be mistreated, and most can recall examples right away. How do we respond to people who mistreat us? II Corinthians 10.1 describes Jesus as gentle. That word means, “the quality of making allowances despite facts that might suggest reason for a different reaction” (Bauer).

He set the bar to maximum height. Are we willing to reach it? That mentality can only be achieved by having genuine love for everyone. “Let us continue to love each other, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God, but anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (I Jn. 4.7f).

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of May 23, 2021

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Kevin Sheeran
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering:

Communion: Ron White
Offering: Clifton Rutherford

Prayer:

A.M. Opening: Steve Randle
A.M. Closing: Clifton Rutherford
P. M. Opening: Bill York
P. M. Closing: Doug Jobs

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Kevin Sheeran
Sun. P.M.: Fred Scherffius
Wed. P.M.: Doug Jobs

Ushers: Allen Clifton

Greeters: Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Lupe Escojido

Open/Close Building: Will Burleson

Sermons are available on our website

www.midtowncoc.org

**MidTown's Bible Classes and Worship services
can be viewed livestream on YouTube. Search
MidTown church of Christ Victoria.**

Kids Summer Series "Treasures in the Book of Job" starts Wednesday, June 9 and goes through August. We are in need of individual size chips, small bottled water and box juice drinks. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Also, the new Summer quarter starts Sunday, June 7th.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Gracie Hosler, friend of Mary Saltzman, who recently lost her husband. Tim Vigil, Rieke Bass' son, who is battling medical issues.

Happy Birthday: Doug Jobs (23), Marilyn Horst (25), Angy Hutt (26), Bryant Siegel (29)

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, June 6th—Monthly fellowship meal following morning worship service with an afternoon service at 1 pm following. Please bring a potluck meal.

Sunday, June 13th—Monthly youth devotional here at the building after evening worship services.

Friday, June 25th—Monthly family fellowship night. Bring finger foods and games.

Area Events:

June 26-30th—God Cares for You (Gospel meeting, Door knocking campaign and Ladies Day) with John and Carla Moore at Natalia church of Christ. A flyer is posted on the bulletin board in the hallway.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Scott DeDear
Ken and Sandra Marie
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Dee Gilpatrick
Faye Henderson
Charlie Mabe
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

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MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Mark FitzSimmons

Ronnie Scherffius

Ron White

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius

Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:00 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Class:	7:00 PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of May 16, 2021

A.M. Bible Class.....	55
A.M. Worship.....	76
Sunday Evening Worship.....	54
Wednesday Bible Class.....	27
Offering :	\$3,231

Reading for this week:

“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony Scherffius

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