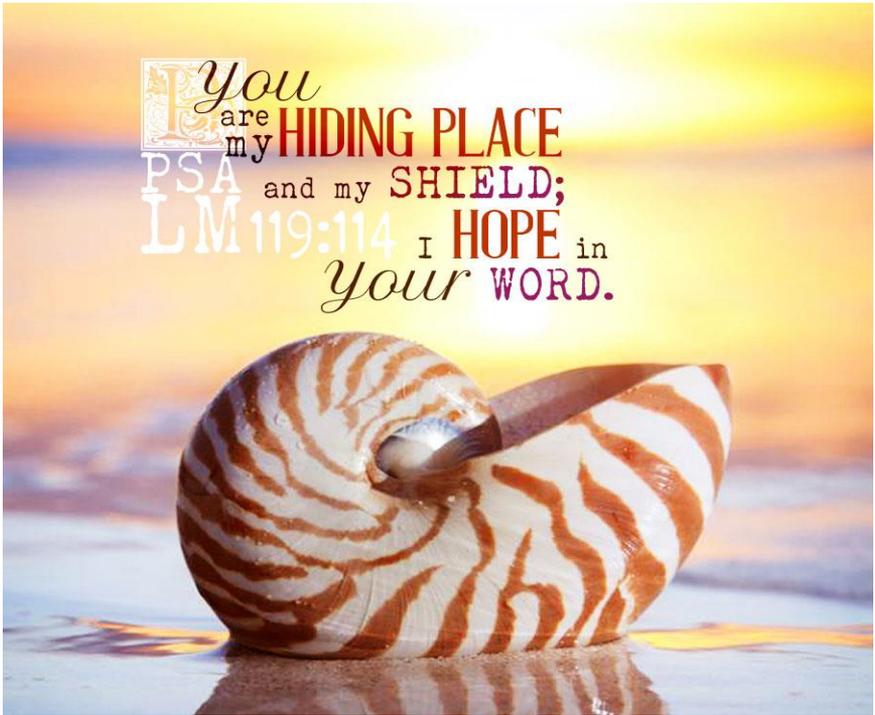


**LOVING & LONGING FOR
GOD'S WORD
PSALM 119 TO 127**



MAY 2018

Day 1

Don't over think this. What are the first 5 words or phrases that come to mind when you think of the Bible? Write them down your 5 and then go back and write next to them why you wrote that down.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Most of this month is going to be reading and studying through Psalm 119. It is 176 verses where every verse mentions something about God's word. That must mean God's word is important. It is. I pray that this month you develop an appreciation for the Word of God and how it is crucial that you read, study, meditate and share it. Ask God to prepare your heart to hear and respond to His word today.

Read Psalm 119:1-8

Look at verses 1 to 3. What does the Psalmist say we need to do in order to be blessed?

What does it look like on a daily basis for you to walk in the law of the Lord and his ways? Give 2 or 3 examples.

What is a precept? (Look it up). What has God commanded according to verse 4? What does that mean for you?

In verses 5 to 8 what does the Psalmist desire in his life?

We can praise God only when we learn his righteous rules. That means we can only truly praise God if we know His Word. Be honest here. Do you know and desire God's word? If yes, how? If not, why not?

PRAYER – Ask God to give you a desire to read, meditate and apply His word to your life.

Day 2

Think about the last week. Write down all your sins.

As you think about that list, how do you know all those were sins?

The fact that you know all the things you did that were sins shows you know truths of God's Word. You know there is a standard that God has put in place. We struggle with doing what is right because we are sinful people and we will continue to struggle with sin as long as we live on this side of heaven. If we don't spend time reading God's Word, then we do not even have a prayer of doing that which is right. We will sin every time and never know that what we did is sinful and wrong. Ask God to show you your sin as you read his word today.

Read Psalm 119:9-16

What is the Psalmist's question in verse 9?

Why is that an important question for us to ask as followers of Jesus?

Look at verses 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15. What things do we need to do with God's Word regularly if we hope to keep our ways pure?

Verse 10 –

Verse 11 –

Verse 12 –

Verse 14 –

Verse 15 –

Think about what you just wrote. Of the above things, which ones do you do regularly? How do you do them?

Which ones do you not do? Why not?

Now look at verses 13 and 16. What two important things do we need to do with God's Word? Next to each one write how.

Verse 13 –

Verse 16 –

PRAYER – Confess sin; ask for strength to not sin, and be in God's Word.

Day 3

Have you ever read something and had no idea what it was saying? Describe that time. Who helped you understand what you had read?

In high school I had to read Romeo and Juliet and some other Shakespeare play. There were a whole lot of thou's and thee's and other English jargon. I had no idea what they were saying most of the time. I was lost and I was going to be tested on the material. Help! Luckily the teacher helped us in interpreting the lines of the play as well as some poetically savvy classmates. I needed someone to show me the meaning of the words. That is the way it is with God's Word. We cannot read or understand the Bible without God's help. We would be lost. Ask God to take His truths and apply them to your everyday life as you read it today.

Read Psalm 119:17-24

How do we see in verses 17 to 19 that God is the one who helps us understand and respond to His word and we cannot do it on our own?

Why do many people not like to see these truths?

What do we see about wicked and rebellious people in verses 21 to 23?

How was the Psalmist (and us) to be different from these people in verses 20 to 23?

Do you long for God's rules at all times? Why or why not?

What characterization does the Psalmist give to God's word in verse 24?
How has the Bible been your counselor? Give specific examples.

PRAYER – Thank God for how he counsels you using His word.

Day 4

Describe a time when you felt totally helpless to do anything. What happened? How did you overcome the situation? What did you learn?

In the original *Star Wars* movie Luke watches Obi Wan battle Darth Vader from a distance. He yells Ben's name and tries to go to his aid. But there was nothing he could do. Darth Vader cuts down Obi Wan right before his eyes. After escaping the Death Star Luke is upset that he could do nothing to help his friend. He was powerless to change the outcome. How did he respond? He learned the ways of the force so he could fight Darth Vader and the Empire. When can we really start being effectively used by God? It is when we are able to admit our sin and that we can do nothing on our own. It is then that God starts to do some amazing things in and through us. Ask God to convince you of these truths as you read His word today.

Read Psalm 119:25-32

Look at verses 25 to 29. What does the Psalmist tell us about the weakness of man?

Look at the same verses. What do we see about God's power, strength and love for his people? What does he do for us?

As you reflect on those verses, what are ways that encourages you in your faith and trust of the Lord?

As the Psalmist reflected on those truths, what was his reaction according to verses 30 to 32?

What are two difficult situations you have faced in your life? What truths from God's word did you or could you have clung to? Write them down.

1.

2.

PRAYER – For your situations and thank God for giving you his Word.

Day 5

What are five ways in which you can be selfish? Next to each one write down why?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

There is nothing that exposes your selfishness more than being married and having children. I thought I was a pretty selfless person when I was single and had no attachments. But the selfishness of my heart was quickly revealed when I got married. I did not like to share my desserts. I liked to sleep on a certain side of the bed. I had to play the Chipmunks Christmas the Friday after Thanksgiving as the first Christmas album of the season. These are just a few things. It was hard seeing these things. It showed me all the more my need for the grace and mercy of God. It showed me why I needed to read my Bible and pray. I was and am sinful. Ask God to reveal the attitudes of your heart as you read the Bible today.

Read Psalm 119:33-40

What does the Psalmist ask God for in verses 33 to 35?

Verse 33 –

Verse 34 –

Verse 35 –

Now look at verses 36 to 39. When you think about what the Psalmist is asking God for, what was he struggling with? Also write how you struggle with the same things in your own life.

Verse 36 –

Verse 37 –

Verse 38 –

Verse 39 –

How is verse 40 a good conclusion to what the Psalmist wrote and prayed in the previous verses? How has God given you life?

PRAYER – Give thanks for life in Christ. Pray for the struggles you wrote down in verses 36 to 39.

Day 6

What is the best news that you ever received? What did you do with that news? Who did you share it with? Give details.

One of the best news I ever had to share with people was the fact that my wife said yes when I proposed to her. After many failed relationships and wondering if I would be single forever, someone chose to have me in sickness and in health until death do us part. That is a long time. Yet my wife was up for the challenge. And I am a challenge. I told everybody, starting with family and close friends and then to the youth I worked with, the mailman and checkout lady in the grocery store. I had great news to share. God's Word is great news. It is life for those who are dead. It is a reminder of what God has done in our lives. We need to share this news with people. Are you sharing it? Ask God to convict you of his truths found in His Word today.

Read Psalm 119:41-48

Look at verses 41 and 42. For what reason does the Psalmist want to know and understand God's word?

Write down 2 non-Christians in your life that need to hear God's word.

1.

2.

In verses 43 to 45, what are the results of being in God's Word regularly?

How have you found hope in God's Word? Give a couple examples.

According to verses 46 to 48, what are we to do with the Word that God has planted in our hearts?

What are 3 practical ways that you can speak of God's word before "kings"? Write them down. Next to each one write how you can go about doing that in the near future.

1.

2.

3.

Prayer – For the people above and the ways you can share God's Word.

Day 7

What are the 3 hardest things you have had to deal with in your life? Next to each one write down why that situation was so hard.

1.

2.

3.

In the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* everything is going wrong for George Bailey. His house is drafty, his car door does not work, he has not gotten to travel the world, his brother is a war hero, his daughter is sick, his uncle misplaced thousands of dollars that will land him in jail. So he goes to a bar and prays to God for help. It is then that he gets punched by the husband of teacher he was mean to. His response is, "that is what I get for praying." George missed the point of prayer. It is not to get things. We pray and read the Bible because we are showing we can do nothing and are totally dependent on God. We see that truth as we read Psalm 119 today. Ask God to comfort and encourage you today as you read.

Read Psalm 119:49-56

What kind of situations do you think the Psalmist is thinking about as he pens these words? Read between the lines.

The Psalmist dealt with hardships. How does the Psalmist show in the following verses that he trusted in the Lord and His word?

Verse 49 –

Verses 50 –

Verse 51 –

Verse 52 –

Verse 53 –

Verse 54 –

Verse 55 –

Pick one of the verses above. How does that verse encourage you in your faith and the struggles you are facing?

Despite all the hardships, the Psalmist considers his life blessed in verse 56. How has God blessed you? Write down as many as you can.

PSALM – Give thanks for the blessings; pray for strength in the hardships.

Day 8

What are sins that you find yourself struggling with on a regular basis?
Why do you think you are struggling with those sins?

We all struggle with some kind of sin on a regular basis. Abraham loved feeling safe and lied about his wife being his sister. Samson loved his foreign women who did not love God. Solomon had many wives and concubines. Peter had a temper and cared what the Jews thought sometimes too much. This is just a few people. We all struggle with sin: anger, lust, pride, being competitive, selfish and the list can go on. Some of us just give up and say “oh well. God will forgive me.” And we go on sinning. Wrong response. We are called to be perfect. We won't be because of sin, but we try to be and when we mess up we ask for forgiveness. Ask God to help you fight this struggle by reading and studying the Bible.

Read Psalm 119:57-64

What does the Psalmist say about God in verse 57? What does that mean?

What is his reaction when he thinks about who God is in that verse?

What sins or struggles are implied in the following verses? What is the Psalmist's reaction to that struggle?

Verse 58 –

Verse 59 –

Verse 60 –

Verse 61 –

Verse 62 –

What is the Psalmist saying in verse 63? How does that challenge you when you think about your faith today?

How do you see God's steadfast love in the earth today? Write down at least 5 things.

PRAYER – Use that last question to guide your prayer time.

Day 9

Think of two hard things you have dealt with in your life in which God used it to teach you a truth from his word. Write the situation briefly and next to it the lesson you learned.

1.

2.

The craziest situation I ever dealt with was a demonic possession. I know you don't believe me but it happened. I learned in that situation in which I doubted my faith that God's truth of Christians being sealed with the Holy Spirit is true. Christians cannot be possessed by a demon. I also learned in that situation that God does indeed place a hedge of protection around our homes and our lives as we see through the life of Job in the first two chapters. That was a hard time in my life in which God used his word to encourage me and grow me in my faith. Today we will look at how God's word is used to encourage us in difficult times. Ask God to open your eyes to see His truths.

Read Psalm 119:65-72

Like verse 65 says, God does deal with us according to what he says in the Bible. How have you seen that in our world today?

Look at verses 66 to 71. What were some of the difficult situations that the Psalmist dealt with in these verses?

What important things did he learn?

Why is verse 71 a hard truth for all of us as Christians to wrestle with?
What is it saying about the importance of hardships?

How valuable is God's word according to verse 72? Is God's Word that valuable to you? Explain.

PRAYER – Pray for hardships you and a loved one are facing. Pray that you would learn to trust God and grow in your faith through them.

Day 10

What is something that you have made in your life? Why did you make it?
How did you intend for it to be used?

As a child I remember making an ashtray for my father who smoked a lot of cigarettes. Now of course I did not have my father's health in mind as I made it, but just a place to put the butts of his cigarettes. In a way I was saying I accept your smoking and here is something cool for you to use as you slowly kill yourself. What child thinks of that. And what art teachers lets children make ashtrays. I digress. God made us in his image and he had his word written down to help us and encourage us as we live and struggle on this planet. God's word is given to us with great purpose. Ask God to show you some of those purposes as you read and think about the Word of God today.

Read Psalm 119:73-80

What should the realization of God making us cause us to do in verse 73?

If we hope in God's word, what will be the result in verse 74?

Think about verses 73 and 74. Do you do and see these things in your own life? How? If not, why not?

Look at verses 75 to 78. In what ways does the Psalmist say he has struggled in his faith?

How did God's word comfort him?

If we remain faithful to God in all situations, what do verses 79 and 80 say about opportunities we will have? Who are two people you can encourage in their faith by sharing with them God's Word this week?

PRAYER – For opportunities to encourage Christians using God's Word.

Day 11

When is a time when someone would yell, "ENOUGH!"

Think about your life, have you ever said those words? When and why?

I loved Bill Cosby's comedy sketches. I can remember the one about the children taking baths and getting ready for bed. They are fighting and arguing. The mother has had enough and yells that. He then goes on to describe how she grabs a stick and starts swinging. The children go to bed and there is peace in the house again. Maybe that story hits close to home for some of you. We often times deal with people and situations that have us wanting to say "ENOUGH.". We cannot take any more. A truth in God's word is that he does not give us any more than we can handle. Sometimes we wonder about that but it is true. Ask God to take his truths and teach them to you today.

Read Psalm 119:81-88

What salvation is the Psalmist longing for in verse 81?

How do we hope in God's Word?

What words and phrases does the Psalmist use in verses 82 to 87 to show that things have not been easy for him?

In those same verses how do we see the Psalmist dealt with all those situations with hope and faith?

How can we keep God's Word and follow it according to verse 88? How are you doing in keeping God's Word?

PRAYER – Pray for hard situations you or someone close to you are dealing with this week.

Day 12

What are some things that seem to last forever? Why do you think that they last so long?

Here is my list of things that seem to last forever. Spam, Twinkies, winters in western New York, a nice pair of jeans, a bad haircut, zits and of course the list goes on. Some of the things that SEEM to last forever are a matter of perspective and life experiences. But Twinkies, they do last forever. God has told us that he is the same yesterday as he is today. He is eternal. And his word we are told is to be heard and shared both today and tomorrow. Forever. Ask God to help you read, study and understand his word and what it means for your life.

Read Psalm 119:89-96

What is “forever” in verses 89 to 91?

What does this show you about the character of God?

Look at verses 92 to 95. How do we see from the Psalmist's words that God's word is important for salvation?

Think about the Psalmist's salvation and your salvation. If you understand your salvation what would be your attitude towards the Word of God?

What are some things that are seemingly perfect in this life that if we look closely, we see they are not perfect like is said in verse 96?

He says this to show how God's word is perfect. What does it mean to you that God's word is perfect?

PRAYER – Give thanks for God's perfect word.

Day 13

What is something you learned early in life that really has served you well? How has it set you ahead of a lot of other people your age?

When I was first in ministry I had to raise support so I could get a paycheck. I felt strongly the Lord called me into ministry and specifically Youth For Christ in Northern Delaware. In the first year of service I had a month where I did not get a pay check because supporters did not send in money. Instead of getting freaked out I just prayed, "Lord if you really want me in ministry and ministry here, then I trust in you to provide for my needs. The next week I got a lot of checks from my supporters, enough that paid all the back paychecks and the current one. I never struggled with support again in the next several years. I learned to trust the Lord to provide for my needs very early on, something that has served me well in my marriage and in ministry in the church. God does provide for our needs. Do we trust him. Good lesson to learn. Ask God to teach you his word today.

Read Psalm 119:97-104

Look at verses 97 to 100. List all the things the Psalmist says that God's word has done for Him?

He is not boasting in himself. What is at the root of why he is boasting about these things?

In verses 101 to 104, how do we see pleasing the Lord is the motivation of the Psalmist and not himself or man?

Think about verse 103. What is he saying about God's Word through this imagery?

Do you look at the Bible as sweeter than honey? Why or why not?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you desire his word like sweet honey.

Day 14

List all the places you can think of where one would use a flashlight?

Why do we use a flashlight?

Most of the time we are in the dark we want a flashlight so we can see where we are going. It is no fun groping around in the darkness, not sure of what you will find. There is a sense of terror and dread when you have to be in the darkness for a period of time. I still sleep with a nightlight in my room. Not so much because I am scared but because in the middle of the night if I wake up I don't want to trip on something. It gives just enough light to keep me from stumbling. God's word is a light for us in a very dark and crooked generation. We need it. Today we look at the Bible in this way today. Ask God to help you make time to read, study and meditate on his word today.

Read Psalm 119:105-112

Verse 105 calls the Bible a lamp and a light for our path. How is the Bible a lamp and light for us? Give specific examples.

What are some of the “dark” and “stormy” things the Psalmist says he dealt with in verses 106 to 112?

How words and phrases does he use to show his need for God’s word in those dark times in the same verses?

Look at verse 112, how long do we need to read, meditate and put into practice the word of God? What does that mean for you who have read through the Bible several times?

What is a “dark” or “stormy” situation you are dealing with in your life right now? Where do you think you can go in God’s Word for comfort?

PRAYER – For your situation and for someone else you know who is struggling.

Day 15

Who is the most powerful fictitious being you have read about or watched on TV or seen in a movie? What made them so powerful?

Superman is one of those crazy superheroes that is seemingly indestructible. It leaves you wondering how most bad guys could survive at all. They have to for a good story. He is so powerful that they have to introduce green kryptonite as his weakness. But if that is not enough they also have red, blue, yellow and other colors to affect superman in different ways. They have to try to weaken him somehow so he can be relatable. Our God is all powerful and we don't need to weaken him to make him relatable. Today we see the power of our God as it relates to the Bible. Ask God to enlarge your faith as you read His Word today.

Read Psalm 119:113-120

What do we see in all these verses about God's power over wicked men?

Why is that VERY important for us to see and understand?

What do we see in these verses about what God does for us Christians?

Why do we need to see God's power and our weakness?

How should that drive us to read and study God's Word? What does the Psalmist say?

Verse 120 is a great way to end this section. What was the Psalmist's and should be our reaction to our powerful and all-knowing God? Why?

PRAYER – Use these verses to give thanks to God for who He is.

Day 16

What is the most valuable thing you own? What makes it valuable?

My father passed away at a young age and very suddenly. Nobody really had a chance to say a proper good bye. My mother to this day has my dad's voice still on her answering machine at home. It is eerie to hear his voice knowing he has been gone for so long now. That is one of my mom's most valuable possessions. It is an opportunity for her to hear his voice and for her family to hear his voice. It is creepy on one hand if you forget what her machine message is and yet comforting on the other hand. What makes something valuable is different from person to person. God's Word is valuable. How valuable? We will look today. Pray for a heart that desires to know the Bible.

Read Psalm 119:121-128

Look at verses 121 to 126. List all the please the Psalmist makes to the Lord in the midst of his hardships.

What does this show us the Psalmist believes about himself?

What does he believe about God?

What does he say about God's word in verse 127? Think about life in the Old Testament and what was valuable. What is he really saying about God's Word?

What are ways you can practically show that you believe the Bible is that valuable to you, that it is right as he says in verse 128?

PRAYER – Praise God for 10 things about the Bible.

Day 17

What are 5 ways you have seen people disobey God's Word this week?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What thoughts and emotions are stirred up in you when you see people disobeying God's Word?

Anger. Frustration. Pity. Sadness. These are all emotions I feel when I see people going against the Bible. On one hand I ask, "How could they?" Then I answer my own question in that if they don't know Jesus they cannot do any differently. I am sad for them, sad for God and even pity them that all they can do is sin. They know no better. What an emotional roller coaster ride we can go on. Let me off. The Psalmist felt a lot of these emotions as he looked at the disobedience of the people around him. Ask God to lay on your heart people to pray for as you read.

Read Psalm 119:129-136

What is the Psalmist saying about what God's word means to him in verses 129 to 131?

What are 2 things the Bible has helped you (the simple) understand about life and most importantly Him?

1.

2.

What is the Psalmist appealing to God for in verses 132 to 135?

Why are those humbling things for Him to say?

What do we see about the Psalmist in verse 136?

Who are 5 people you should be shedding tears for because they are not obeying God's Word?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

PRAYER – Pray for those 5 people.

Day 18

What are 3 things (other than God) that you would say are good or excellent? Write why next to each one.

1.

2.

3.

Dark chocolate with caramel in the middle. The smell of a fire burning in the fire place. Paying off a major debt or bill. Those are good and excellent things. At least they are to me. There are a lot of things that we think of good and excellent. Of course it is subjective. Some look at my list of 3 and say I am crazy. I would probably say the same thing to things on their list. One thing that is always good and excellent is God. Today we look at how God is righteous (good and excellent, upstanding, etc.). We see that in His word. Ask God for a heart of understanding today.

Read Psalm 119:137-144

List all the ways that righteous or righteousness is used in this section?

Repetition is important. What is the Psalmist saying to us through his repetition?

Look at verse 140. What is the Psalmist saying about God's Word? What does that mean?

What is the Psalmist saying about himself and God's word in verse 141?

Why would it be easy to forget God's word when you feel that way about yourself?

What are ways you are feeling small and despised? What do you need to remember about God and His word when you feel that way?

PRAYER – Pray about feeling small and despised and that you would turn to God's word for truth and for comfort.

Day 19

When is a time when you were in over your head on a project, paper or a situation in your life? Describe that situation and how you dealt with it.

I love the scene in *Remember the Titans* when the team competing for the state final football championship. Yost, the coach who was demoted to Defensive Coordinator, finally is able to say to Herman Boone, the head coach in front of his players that he needed his help and could not do it alone. They two finally came together and had a united game plan and were able to come from behind and win the championship. It would never have happened if Yost could not admit he could not do alone. This is the way it is with our relationship with God. Today addresses that situation. Ask God to impact your heart with His word today.

Read Psalm 119:145-152

Look at verses 145 to 149. How do we see from these verses that the Psalmist is dealing with some hard things? List all he says.

How do we see he has hope in what God's word says in these verses?

Can you think of 3 Bible verses that encourage you and give you hope in difficult times? Write down the references and how they encourage you.

1.

2.

3.

What does the Psalmist say about wicked people in verses 150 to 152?

What does he then say about God and his word?

What are some situations you may face in your life where you will have to remember God's promises? List them.

PRAYER – Thank God for his nearness and comfort in hard times.

Day 20

Describe a time when you pleaded a cause to someone in authority? What were you hoping to accomplish? What was the outcome?

In my junior year of high school our chemistry teacher gave us a test that most of the class bombed. In class we went through test question by question. As a class we pleaded how many of the questions were unfair and did not test on the right material. Our teacher gave us most of the credit for the questions we had missed to the point that most of us ended up passing the test. We could not change the grades ourselves, but we had to make our appeal and hope the teacher would show mercy. Today we see how we appeal to God's mercy through reading his word and prayer. Ask God to show you how to apply his words to your life.

Read Psalm 119:153-160

In these verses what do we see about the character and power of God?

How do we see the Psalmist cannot change his situation in these verses?

What does the Psalmist say about those who are wicked?

What do these 3 questions show us about the importance of God's Word?

Look at verse 158. What is the Psalmist really disgusted by?

Why is it important to not be disgusted by people but by their sin?

List 3 people who are not Christians that you can pray for today. Write down how you can pray for them other than they would obey God's Word.

1.

2.

3.

PRAYER – pray for the above 3 people, their salvation, their obedience to God's Word.

Day 21

How would your relationship with someone change if they knew everything you have done, said, or thought? Why?

In *The X-Men* Professor X is able to read minds of humans and mutants alike. His best friend, the bad guy Magneto, knew this about his friend. He had a helmet developed that would keep Professor X from reading his thoughts. Otherwise all the bad things he wanted to do to humans would be exposed and ultimately thwarted by the X-Men. I think that describes all of us. We would go into defense mode to try to keep someone out of our heads. We would be more guarded and feel awkward around them. I know I would if someone knew all my thoughts. God knows all our thoughts, all our deeds, and all our words. That is creepy on one hand and incredibly comforting on another hand. Today let us look at this truth. Ask God to help you wrestle with his truths.

Read Psalm 119:161-168

Look at verses 161 to 167. What does the Psalmist say about his own attitude towards the Bible in those verses?

In the same verses, how does the attitude towards the Bible impact the actions and attitudes of the Psalmist? (Look at first part of each verse.)

Pick one of the verses that really impacts you when you think of your life. How does that verse minister to your heart and encourage you in your faith?

Look at verse 168. What is the Psalmist saying about God and why he follows God's word in that verse?

How should the fact that God knows everything about you motivate you to want to read and study God's word? If it doesn't, why?

PRAYER – Confess sin; Ask for help in following God's Word.

Day 22

Describe a time when you felt lost? How did you find your way? Who helped you find your way?

I have my share of being lost. I remember getting lost in Camden while driving through New Jersey. Not a place you want to be lost. I stopped at a gas station and asked for directions to the interstate. There was a time in my life when I felt lost in what I was supposed to be doing with my life during college. I asked people I trusted and most importantly I prayed to figure out where I was supposed to go and what I was supposed to do. We will all feel lost at times. The question is who are you going to turn to in order to find your way. I pray it is the Lord our God. Ask God to help you see what He wants to teach you through the Bible today.

Read Psalm 119:169-176

As the Psalmist cries out to the Lord in verses 169 and 170, what does he hope will happen?

What are the ways in which God has delivered you?

Why did the Psalmist praise God according to verses 171 and 172?

What are other things about God's Word should cause us to praise Him?

According to 173 to 175 what is the Psalmist asking God for?

The Psalmist admits he goes astray and rebels against God. He asks God to seek him out and says he ultimately won't forget God's commands. What are ways you have strayed like a wandering sheep away from God?

PRAYER – Ask God to help you not stray; Confess your sin before Him.

Day 23

Do you desire peace or war? Why?

Most people desire peace. We don't like fighting. We want people to get along. You can accomplish so much more when you are working together for a common good. Unfortunately, war at times is a necessary evil in order to accomplish peace. It seems some regions of the world are constantly at war and never know peace. The Psalmist had this struggle. Ask God to instruct your hearts in His truths.

Read Psalm 120

Describe the situation the Psalmist is writing in as you read verses 1 to 4.

What is his plea to the Lord in those verses?

How do you see lies and deceit all around us in our culture today?

What does the Psalmist see in the people around him in verses 6 and 7?

There are many “peace” lovers in our world today. When the Psalmist says, “I am for peace” what does he mean that is different than people in our society today?

What are 2 situations you have seen in the news that are anything but peaceful that you can pray for today?

1.

2.

PRAYER – For the situations above and opportunities to share your faith in dealing with those situations.

Day 24

What are two verses or passages you would use with someone who is going through a difficult time in their lives? Why would you use them?

1.

2.

I like to use Romans 8 where it talks about all things happen for the good of those who know Christ and that nothing will ever separate us from the Love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. I also love to share the chapter that we are studying today. They give us hope in the midst of our difficulties. They are a reminder of how much God loves us and that all the hard things we deal with are not a surprise to God. May you be encouraged in your faith as you study God's Word today.

Read Psalm 121

What is the Psalmist's question in verse 1? How does he answer his own question?

Do you believe the Lord can and will help you? How do you know?

Verses 3 to 8 are all about God and how much he loves and cares for us. List everything we are told about His love and care for us.

Pick two verses from this section. How do they encourage you in who God is and how much he cares for you? Write the verse number and then your explanation next to it.

1.

2.

Who are 2 people in your life you can encourage with these truths? What can you say to them to encourage them using these verses?

1.

2.

PRAYER – Pray this Psalm. Pray for the 2 people you wrote above.

Day 25

Would you say your church knows peace? Explain your answer.

Why do you think a lot of churches are characterized more by conflict than peace?

My father in law is a pastor. Every church he pastored was a church that did not really know peace. There was conflict. When he would go away the leadership would make decisions that would take him many hours of counseling and meetings to undo and fix. It seems like that was the kind of churches he was called to. It was emotionally draining for him and for his family. I don't know how he survived those churches. But God used him in those churches. As a church we should be characterized by peace because Jesus is the Prince of peace. Yet, we often see more conflict than organizations that are not Christian. This should not be. Today we look at David talk about conflict within God's people. Ask God to show you how you can promote peace in your church as you read.

Read Psalm 122

Look at verses 1 to 4. What reasons did the people have to go and worship at the house of the Lord?

What reasons should you go and worship at church each week?

Look at verse 5. What does judgment have to do with worship and peace?

Then David prays for peace. What are the ways the Psalmist is seeking peace in verses 6 to 9?

What are 3 ways you can pray for peace for your church?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Who are 2 people you know that are not at peace? How can you pray for them other than just salvation?

- 1.
- 2.

PRAYER – Pray for the last two questions and what you wrote down.

Day 26

Who are two people you look to for help? What ways do you look to them for help?

1.

2.

I used to look to my father for help that had anything to do with home improvement. Since his passing there is a gentleman from my church that I know I can call for big or small things. When it comes to spiritual struggles there is a small group of pastors I meet with each week that I turn to for encouragement and help. It is so important to have people we can look to and who will help us out when we are in trouble or need. Ultimately, God is the one we need to turn to. Today we look at that truth. Ask God to help you see your need to look to Him and call out to him for help in all areas of your life.

Read Psalms 123 to 124

Look at Psalm 123, verses 1 and 2. We are to look to the Lord. Why is comparing us to servant and maidservant important in this challenge?

We look to the Lord for mercy in verses 3 and 4. What are ways today in which we are looking for God to be merciful to us?

According to Psalm 124, verses 1 to 4, what would happen to us if God was not on our side?

Why is that important for us to see and understand as Christians?

What do verses 6 to 8 say that God has done for us? What does that show us about the character of God?

List all the ways that come to your mind in how God has helped you?
Take a few minutes and think and write.

PRAYER – Thank God for his help. Pray for strength to look to Him in all things. Pray for the situations you are dealing with.

Day 27

What are ways in which being surrounded can be a bad thing?

What are ways in which being surrounded can be a good thing?

In the Disney version of *The Three Musketeers*, the Musketeers had one job, to protect the king. In the movie the 3 Musketeers plus D'Artagnon stand up against Cardinal Richelieu and all his men. They are surrounded and outnumbered. Then it happens. A bunch of men then shed their shawls to reveal the Musketeer blue. They now surrounded the Cardinal's men. There was hope again. As Christians we are like the three Musketeers feeling surrounded by our enemies but knowing our God surrounds us at all times. That is hope. Ask God to remind you of that hope as you read Psalm 125 and 126 today.

Read Psalm 125 to 126

Look at Psalm 125. List all the ways that God's people have reason to have hope in a wicked society?

How do we see that non-Christians have no hope in these verses? Why is this important for us all to see as people who struggle in our faith?

What has God done for his people according to Psalm 126?

How do the people react to God's provision?

What are ways in which you have seen God provide for your needs?

PRAYER – Give thanks for specific things God has provided for you.

Day 28

What is a task you have been given in your life that you felt was in vain? Why did you feel it was in vain? What was the ultimate outcome?

Usually going to the ocean with my family means they want to build a sand castle on the beach down where the sand is wettest. At first I am hesitant because putting all that time into building a sand castle that will be wiped out by high tide or other children seems to be in vain to me. It is fun once I get into it but I wish I could make them so are permanently standing. Fat chance. When it comes to our faith, we are so quick to try and build up our own faith, our own church, our own kingdom, forgetting to call out to God to bless our efforts and to do the work of building. Today's passage challenges this attitude. Ask God to help you look at the work of your hands to see if you are building for man or for God.

Read Psalm 127

Look at verses 1 & 2. What would characterize things that we do in vain?

If you are honest, what are some things you are probably doing in vain?

Look at verses 3 to 5. What is the Psalmist saying about families?

How do we see that families are not something we build but something in which God builds and blesses?

So look at verse 4. How does God seem to say that having children is something that is really important?

Why is this a hard truth for some to read?

What is one way you can pray for the building up of your church and one way you can pray for your future family?

1. Church –

2. Family –

PRAYER – Pray for your church and family as you wrote above.