

Psalm 119:1-16

Today's lesson is devoted to the very beginning verses of Psalm 119. This chapter is the longest chapter in all of Scripture and, accordingly, it will take us several weeks to navigate. We are going to work through the text chronologically and thematically, attempting to discern the various truths God would have us know in this marvelous portion of Scripture. The main theme of the chapter is dedicated to the glorious nature and function of God's Word. Over and over again, we will read about the importance of God's Word and the way it works to guard and guide God's people in their journey before Him. Today's passage is dedicated to unpacking how we are to walk before the Lord, in the truth!

1. The main truth

- a. Psalm 119 begins with a glorious statement "blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord"
- b. Further down, in verse 9, we read a similar sentiment as the Psalm declares that young men (and by proxy everyone else) can keep their way "pure", that is unadulterated by the filth of sin and the world, by guarding his way according to the Word
- c. The point is rather simple but it bears mentioning as the Psalm is telling us that we must be convicted as to the power and wisdom of Scripture and, therefore, we must be dedicated to the study and implementation of what the Bible commands

2. The daily disciplines of Bible study and faithfulness

- a. This portion of Scripture is concerned with immensely practical outcomes
- b. The point of the text is not that we would become some theologically gifted debator, nor that we would simply grow in our intellectual comprehension of the Word
- c. Instead, the idea is that our knowledge of the Word and our faithfulness to the Word really leads to the kind of walk that God desires for us to have and this walk is a blessed walk!
- d. The motivation therefore is simple, we should internalize God's Word if we desire to walk faithfully before God
- e. But how?
- f. The text offers us three disciplines that help us to walk in the truth before God
- g. I will attempt to briefly describe each discipline and ask a question or two of application for each discipline
- h. First, we must diligently read God's Word
 - i. The Bible says I will "fix my eyes" on God's ways (v. 15)
 - ii. Some have taken this to mean that believers should somehow discern what God is doing in their own being and then follow that premonition
 - iii. But context is actually quite clear how we fix our eyes on God's ways
 - iv. How do we know God's ways? The answer is that the way of the Lord is found in walking in accordance with the law of God (v. 1) and the law of God is what has been revealed to us in Scripture

- v. So, if we are going to “fix our eyes” on God’s ways, we must fix our eyes on the Word that tells us God’s ways
- vi. Folks, this is embarrassingly simple, but it bears mentioning, we have zero hope of discerning the will of God or walking faithfully before God if we do not read the Word of God
- vii. We must not be a biblically illiterate people if we expect to be a blessed and faithful people!
- viii. Do you have an ordered, planned and dedicated time of reading the Word of God? How big of a priority is the Word to you?
- i. Second, we must memorize God’s Word
 - i. Not only are we to read the Word, we are to “store up” God’s Word in our hearts
 - ii. The idea here is simple, the true student of the Word who desires to be faithful to the teaching of the Word is told to internalize the Word and the discipline of memorizing the Word is rewarded with knowledge and desire to recognize and avoid sin!
 - iii. God has given us this message not just for momentary consumption but for unending guidance and wisdom
 - iv. The way that God’s Word gets from the page to our hearts is through... work!
 - v. We must labor to take that which is given to us as a harvest of wisdom and store it in the pantry of our minds and hearts
 - vi. This is the place that God designs His Word to filter as it is easy for the Spirit to grab whatever is necessary from the mind that is full of ingredients for faithfulness
 - vii. Do you have any of God’s Word stored in your heart? Do you have a plan to daily, and systematically, memorize the Word?
- j. Third, we must meditate on God’s Word
 - i. The idea of meditation has been, unfortunately, hijacked by eastern mystics
 - ii. The meditation that is familiar to most 21st Century Americans is, ironically, the exact opposite of what the Bible has in mind
 - iii. Meditation today is typically understood as emptying your mind of all things to achieve some sort of peace and/or tranquility
 - iv. However, biblical meditation is the inverse! We are to fill our minds with the truth of God’s Word
 - v. To meditate on Scripture is to recall what you have read and studied and ponder, deeply, what it means and how it applies
 - vi. It is the discipline of thinking about what God has said and considering it again and again
 - 1. Sometimes meditation takes place spontaneously
 - a. As situations arise, it is good and right for the Spirit to bring to your mind some truth you’ve read in order for you to

consider what it requires of you in that moment and/or how it teaches you to interpret what has happened

2. Other times, meditation is the planned discipline of sitting down to consider again the truth of what you studied
 - a. We meditate on truth as we consider what the Bible means or how we are to walk in light of the truth
 - b. Sometimes, meditation requires that we think deeply about a passage that is hard to understand, other times it means that we repeat and obvious truth from Scripture to ourselves as we struggle with obedience
 - c. When was the last time that you meditated on the truth you read? Are you the kind of Christian that reads the Bible, checks it off your list and then simply moves on with your day OR are you the kind of Christian that reads and then considers, over and over again, the ramifications and realities of the text as you go about your day?
- k. It is our conviction that the Bible is categorically true
- l. This means that there is a way to keep your way pure, to avoid sin and to walk in a way that is blessed before God but this way requires effort on our part! May we read, memorize and meditate on the Word of God and, as we do so, may we trust that the Spirit is guiding and equipping us for faithfulness in the process