

The question “Are you a clean youth?” is asked of a believer who knows what a regenerated life is like. Psalm 119 speaks of believers who come to God and exalt Him. The first step to this is to be in Christ, i.e. to be regenerated. After salvation, we continue to live in a sinful world, and we are still influenced by it. Despite the world’s influence, believers must seek to remain pure, and to influence others for Christ.

How are we to be clean? We can be clean by taking heed to God’s Word (Ps 119:9). God’s Word is a guardian, a hedge against sin and evil influences. God’s Word gives us counsel to keep our ways from sin, to avoid the appearance of evil. Without the Word being used by the Spirit of God to remind and warn us, we will be hardened in our sins and become dull of hearing. We must seek God with our whole heart, praying that we will not wander from God’s commandments (Ps 119:10). We will know if we are wandering if we are reading God’s Word. Otherwise, we will be numb to our sins, drifting towards the world and increasing steadily in our involvement with sin and the world. Most importantly, we must hide God’s Word in our heart (Ps 119:11), applying it to our lives so that we do not sin against God.

The point of cleanliness is not to be pure for the sake of it, but so that we can be witnesses for Christ. God’s Word is not just a guard; it is also meant to be a guide for life. We are not meant to be cloistered away from the world, but pure so we have the basis to share Christ without hypocrisy. The psalmist asked God to teach him (Ps 119:12), so that he could declare God’s truth (Ps 119:13). When we are too busy serving without taking time to address sin and meditate on God’s Word, the light we shine is ineffectual, like a lightbulb thickly coated in dust. The word “*rejoiced*” in verse 14 speaks of a cheerful, joyful attitude towards God. When we share Christ, it is with rejoicing, with life, because of what God has done in our lives, because of the hope that is within us! We need to “*meditate*” (Ps 119:15), i.e. ponder, on God’s Word. This is how the Spirit guides us and grants us understanding. We must “*have respect*” (Ps 119:15) unto God’s ways, i.e. we esteem God’s way highly, placing it over the words and ideas of man (Ps 119:15). Without this esteem and right view of God as omniscient and omnipotent, we will despise God’s Word and go our own ways. Instead, we like be the psalmist, delighting ourselves in God’s statutes (Ps 119:16).

Take time, really, to look into God’s Word! If we are not guided by His Word, we will easily stray. We are so easily distracted, at times even by “things of God” when done at the expense of proper meditation on God’s Word. Pray and ask the LORD to make the study of, and love for, His Word the goal of our life, to keep us from forgetting, from straying away from Him. If you want to be an effective testimony for Christ and wonder why your witness does not seem to affect others, remember the dirty light bulb. Be cleansed by His Word first!

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