

# PSALM 119.25-32

psalm  
God's Word 119

T. M. AND SUSIE MOORE

*A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe*

Psalm 119.25-32

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## Introduction to Psalm 119.25-32

In stanza 4 the psalmist descends into the darkness of sin. His soul, he reports “clings to the dust”, and midway through the stanza we understand why.

Following in the Lord’s ways, we are bound to come across sin in our lives from time to time. One of the functions of God’s Law is to show us our sin. The psalmist explains what we must do at such a time to return to the Lord and His Word so that we cling to Him, rather than to our sins.

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We hope you find this study of Psalm 119 instructive and helpful to equip you for your walk with and work for the Lord. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1 Dust-Prone

*Pray Psalm 119.25, 26.*

My soul clings to the dust;  
Revive me according to Your word.  
I have declared my ways, and You answered me;  
Teach me Your statutes.

*Sing Psalm 119.25, 26*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!  
My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verse 25.*

*Preparation*

1. How does the psalmist describe himself?
2. What does he want God to do?

*Meditation*

I pray this **T** (*daleth*) stanza every Monday morning before I begin my time in God's Word. As I do, I'm reminded of my favorite Peanuts™ character, Pig-Pen, or as he later came to be known, Pigpen. Dust clung to Pigpen wherever he went, even amid a winter's snow. It didn't seem to bother him, and a little dust in our soul from time to time might not bother us, either.

But God can make those particles of dust weigh like a mountain in our soul, and we should be glad He does.

Our soul is a little like Pigpen, because the law of sin still operates there (Rom. 7.21-23). We understand what the psalmist means in this word of confession. The earth – the world – was too much with him, too present and active in his soul, as it can be at times with us; so he disburdened himself of his sin before the Lord.

As we shall see, the sin weighing heavily on his soul (v. 28) was his having played fast and loose with the truth (v. 29). In stanza 3 the psalmist noted that he was a stranger in the world and that the world opposed him for his commitment to God and His Word. Sometimes it can seem easier just to go along with the ways of the world than always to be striving against them. Let your soul cling to the dust a bit. What harm can that do?

Plenty. It creates a heaviness in your soul that can only be removed by confessing your sin, repenting of it, and then clinging to the Word of God with all your soul and strength.

The psalmist leads us to examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13.5) so that the Word of God might dwell in us richly (Col. 3.16; Ps. 119.9-11) and we might continue to delight and rejoice in the Lord and His Law.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

God remembers. He remembers everything, of course; but here we are clinging to the fact that He recalls how He made us. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Gen. 2.7). And as an aside, even though women were created in a slightly different fashion (Gen. 2.21-23), I'm afraid it doesn't make us any less dusty.

But I digress. We are rejoicing because God remembers. "But He, being full of compassion, forgave their

iniquity, and did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath; for He remembered that they were but flesh, a breath that passes away and does not come again” (Ps. 78.38, 39). “For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our body clings to the ground” (Ps. 44.25). And last, but not least, “For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust” (Ps. 103.14).

Yes. God remembers. And yet, this is not where He expects us to linger because He has given us of His Spirit. In fact, “By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit” (1 Jn. 4.13).

He longs to give us new life, a revived life, through His Word, both written and worked by Jesus Christ. We pray, “Revive [us] according to Your word” (Ps. 119.25). Regardless of our dust.

For the real truth is this: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5.17).

Even our dust-prone status takes on a new beauty. The beauty of “holiness” (Ps. 29.2).

*For reflection*

1. What does it mean when we say that we are “but dust” or that our soul “clings to the dust”? Do you experience this?
2. Look at John 7.37-39. Why should we expect being filled with the Holy Spirit to cleanse the dust bowl of our soul?
3. Why is it a good thing that God remembers that we are but dust? How should you respond to that?

*While the souls of the children of this world cleave to the earth as their portion, the children of light are greatly burdened, because of the remains of carnal affection in their hearts.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Psalm 119.25*

*Pray Psalm 119.27, 28.*

Wait on the Lord in silence as you meditate on His Word. Let the Spirit reveal any “dust” in your soul. Confess and repent of it, and seek the way of the Lord for that area of your life.

*Sing Psalm 119.27, 28.*

(Festal Song: *Revive The Work, O Lord*)

Make me to understand your precepts and your ways,  
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

## 2 Overcoming Sin

*Pray Psalm 119.25, 26.*

My soul clings to the dust;  
Revive me according to Your word.  
I have declared my ways, and You answered me;  
Teach me Your statutes.

*Sing Psalm 119.25, 26*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!  
My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verses 26, 27.*

*Preparation*

1. What does the psalmist say he had done?
2. What does he want God to do? What would he do then?

*Meditation*

Psalm 119 is amazing for the way it packs reams of meaning into a few words. Here, in verse 26, the psalmist said he declared his ways (as opposed to declaring God's judgments, v. 13). He means he was confessing his sin to God, disburdening his dusty, in-need-of-revival soul (v. 25). He says God "answered" him (v. 26). How? It seems that God prompted him to turn to His Word again and bring his life into line with what He would teach him there (cf. vv. 59, 60). God doesn't answer us in audible words. Sometimes He answers by sending a sense of relief and forgiveness, or of joy and renewal, or, as here, a prompt to turn to His Word.

The statutes and precepts of God reveal the way (v. 27) we ought to live. So when we have strayed from that way among the dust bins of the world, we need to turn back to our proper path. The evil of sin can be overcome through confession, repentance, and penance – taking up a way or course of action that restores us to God's path (cf. Rom. 12.21).

God teaches us not only for understanding but, through meditation and obedience, to revive our soul and redirect our course in life. Only God can teach us. Our duty is to show up in His classroom daily, ready to hear His Word and understand it. Then we can meditate on it throughout the day so that our understanding is enriched and begins to shape our soul into the likeness of Jesus (2 Cor. 3.12-18).

As that happens, we can meditate on the "wonderful works" of God as they are indicated in what He is teaching us. Here, the wonderful work the psalmist seems to have had in mind are redemption and sanctification. It's wonderful that God hears our prayers and forgives our sins. And it's wonderful that He bears with us and works tirelessly to make us more like Jesus.

And if you don't regard those as wonderful works to contemplate throughout the day, then you don't understand God's Word or your need for revival, and you may be straying on the dust-filled path of sin.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Paul explained, "I would not have known sin except through the law" (Rom. 7.7).

The psalmist is saying much the same thing: "I'm in the dustbin with sin. But I know where hope is. It is in Your law and in Your Word. There, I said it. Now, Lord, please teach me once again how to overcome sin."

“This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. ‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my [dusty] soul, ‘therefore I hope in Him!’” (Lam. 3.21-24).

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn. 1.8, 9). Vacuumed and cleaned.

When we set out to fight against our dust-prone ways we must put our full energies into it. It is not a simple thing that we are striving for, because “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6.12). The father of lies, our enemy, is an egregious foe.

But Paul makes a sensible suggestion: “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Eph. 6.13). As we must to overcome.

Here is the whole armor of God checklist. The following items and activities are readily at our disposal.

1. Gird your waist with truth. (Jn. 14.6)
2. Put on the breastplate of righteousness. (Jer. 23.5, 6)
3. Shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Rom. 1.16)
4. Take the shield of faith. (Rom. 10.17; 2 Cor. 5.7; Heb. 11.1, 6)
5. Put on the helmet of salvation. (Acts 4.12)
6. Pick up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (Heb. 4.12; Ps. 119.11) (Eph. 6.14-17)

All suited up and ready, once again, to walk in the Spirit and engage our foe.

Before we get into the fray, though, we are to be “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Eph. 6.18). Thoroughly prepared to stand and overcome sin in our Personal Mission Field.

It is hard work, but worth the effort, for a vacuumed dust-prone heart.

*For reflection*

1. Why must we always be mindful of the spiritual warfare that rages around us?
2. How should you prepare each day to enter this spiritual warfare?
3. How can believers encourage and assist one another in this spiritual warfare?

*There are not a few who make known their desires unto God, but then they would that he would yield to their extravagant passions. And, therefore, the prophet affirms that he desires nothing more than to be well instructed in God's statutes. This statement is strengthened by the next verse, in which he once more asks the knowledge of these to be communicated to him. In both passages it must be carefully observed, that with the law of God set before us, we will reap little benefit from merely perusing it, if we have not his Spirit as our internal teacher. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 119.26, 27*

*Pray Psalm 119.29-32.*

Let the Lord search your soul. If He discovers any sin there, and brings it to your mind, confess and repent of it, and determine a course of action to follow this day that is the opposite of what you have confessed, that is, that will overcome the evil of your sin with a good work pleasing to the Lord (Rom. 12.21).

*Sing Psalm 119.29-32.*

(Festal Song: *Revive The Work, O Lord*)

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.  
Your testimonies I embrace, Lord put me not to shame!

Command my course, O Lord; Your gracious truth impart.  
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.



### 3 Melting into Strength

*Pray Psalm 119.28, 29.*

My soul melts from heaviness;  
Strengthen me according to Your word.  
Remove from me the way of lying,  
And grant me Your law graciously.

*Sing Psalm 119.28, 29.*

(Festal Song: *Revive The Work, O Lord*)

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

*Read Psalm 119.17-24; meditate on verse 28.*

*Preparation*

1. What does the psalmist say about his soul?
2. What does he want God to do?

*Meditation*

Paul understood the sense of this passage. Only after pleading with God three times to lift his affliction did he hear the Lord say that His strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12.9). Our psalmist phrased this truth differently, but his insight remains the same. Only when our souls have been melted in the refining fire of God's Word can the pure strength of God be established there (Ps. 12.6; Prov. 17.3).

How does sin enter our soul? What does it do there? Sin enters the soul through temptation. Either we fail to recognize temptation for what it is, or we simply choose to give in to it. Either way, when temptation confronts us, rather than grow through it by recognizing and resisting the temptation to sin (Matt. 4.1-11; 1 Cor. 10.13), we fall through it into sin, opening our souls to evil. Having entered our soul, sin begins to infect and encrust it, so that our mind, heart, and conscience cannot perform their proper roles.

We need to have that sin burned away, and God's Word is the refining furnace for that to occur. Thus, the psalmist pleads with God to bring His Word to bear within Him, to melt the wickedness he has allowed in his soul and to allow the refined soul to be re-established.

It's interesting to note that what the psalmist really asks the Lord to do is to "cause me to arise" (Hebrew: *חַיִּי מַיְנִי*. *chayiMAYni*). Unconfessed sin can weigh on our soul, burdening us with guilt and shame, immobilizing us for any good work, and crushing us under a load of spiritual lethargy. Only God can lift that burden and return us to His Word and ways. His grace is the strength we need, and confession and repentance are the way back onto that path.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

A melted soul is the first step back into the arms of the LORD from a stint in firmed-up sin. Without the melt, we are not ready to confess and turn from whatever it is that is separating us from our heavenly Father.

We must never make the mistake of thinking that temptation is always something obvious and outlandish. A whole lot of sin takes place in our minds where only we and God can see. Basically, anything that isn't found in Philippians 4.8 is antithetical to living by God's Word and in His ways. "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things."

So, “keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Prov. 4.23). The very issues that cause our soul to melt with heaviness.

But when we come before our holy LORD, with a melted soul, He enfolds us in His arms and encourages us by and through His strength to carry on in the work that we have been called to do. He enables us to get up and get back to work in our Personal Mission Field. The quarantine time for a melted soul can be minimal.

Please hear these words of strength from our LORD and Savior: “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Ex. 34.6, 7).

In response to this proclamation of love and forgiveness, we along with Moses declare back to God, “If now I have found grace in Your sight...go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance” (Ex. 34.9). “Strengthen me according to Your Word” (Ps. 119. 28).

Yes, melted into strength.

*For reflection*

1. How does the Word of God “refine” and “melt” the soul? Why is this necessary?
2. What’s the difference between *growing* through temptation and *falling* through it? How can we make sure we make the right choice each time?
3. In this stanza, as we are seeing, the psalmist is dealing with sin in his life. Why is it important we do this? How does this relate to delighting in God and His Word?

*He repeats the expression, according to thy word, because, apart from his word, God's power would afford us little comfort. But when he comes to our aid, even should our courage and strength fail, his promise is abundantly efficacious to fortify us. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 119.28*

*Pray Psalm 119.25-27.*

Pray that God will revive your soul so that you can see His ways, understand His will, and guide you by His strength into His wondrous works and love.

*Sing Psalm 119.25-27*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!

My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

Make me to understand your precepts and your ways,  
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

## 4 Be Specific!

*Pray Psalm 119.28, 29.*

My soul melts from heaviness;  
Strengthen me according to Your word.  
Remove from me the way of lying,  
And grant me Your law graciously.

*Sing Psalm 119.25-27.*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verse 29.*

*Preparation*

1. What sin did the psalmist confess?
2. How did he describe coming back to God's Law?

*Meditation*

Suppose you asked your surgeon just what he would be doing in your upcoming surgery, and he said, "Oh, you know, we'll just rummage around in there, make a few random cuts, stick in a stint or two, and sew it up." Yeah. No.

But isn't this the way we deal with sin in our lives? "Lord, forgive my sins, whatever they may be. Just, you know, rummage around in my soul and do whatever You think is necessary."

Not our psalmist. He knew what was weighing him down. He saw where the dust had gathered in his soul. And he declared his ways specifically: "Remove from me the way of *lying*..." Wow! A psalmist! Lying!

But our psalmist shows us two important lessons here: First, the weight of guilt, shame, spiritual lethargy, and discontent that sin brings upon us is almost always the result of specific sin, or sins. Come before the Lord. Declare your ways. Be specific. Profess your confidence in His Word to cleanse and renew you. And stay there until the dawn of forgiveness and renewal begins to brighten (vv. 30, 31).

Second, remember that, while the way of sin is weighty, dust-filled, and depleting, the way of God's Law is gracious. Get back into that path and plead with God to keep you there!

The heaviness that melts our soul is God's refining love. Step into the heat and let Him do His gracious and renewing work.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Lying. The opposite of truth. And without truth, no relationship can flourish. Trust is abolished and security is expunged. You cannot put your full weight down on something that does not exist. Lies obliterate authenticity.

God spoke to the psalmist's heart. He convicted him of this sin. And because his relationship with the Lord was good, he knew exactly what to do. He asked God to remove this terrible and destructive sin from his life. He pled with the Lord's gracious Spirit to put him back on the path of living in God's perfect Law.

Agur the son of Jakeh wrote these words in Proverbs 30.7, 8. Perhaps he, too, was convicted of lying?

*Psalm 119.25-32*

“Two things I request of You (deprive me not before I die): Remove falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches – feed me with the food allotted to me...”

Most folks who are wise with the wisdom of God know in their hearts how destructive lying is. “A righteous man hates lying, but a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame. Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless, but wickedness overthrows the sinner” (Prov. 13.5, 6).

“Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom” (Ps. 51.6).

Truth is so important to God that He promised to send us His Spirit, the Spirit of truth to guide us into all truth. (Jn. 16.13) We have been given the power to live in the truth. “The Spirit is truth” (1 Jn. 5.7).

Telling the truth is important in all relationships. So, we must plead with God to remove the way of lying from us because our word must be believable. If others do not find us authentic, how will they believe the words of life that we speak to them about Jesus?

*For reflection*

1. Why is it not difficult to believe that the psalmist might have fallen into telling lies?
2. How did the psalmist feel about his lies? What did he want to see happen with his lies? What did he do to make that happen?
3. What can you do to guard against the tendency to play fast and loose with the truth?

*The way of lying means all false ways by which men deceive themselves and others, or are deceived by Satan and his instruments. Those who know and love the law of the Lord, desire to know it more, and love it better. The way of serious godliness is the way of truth; the only true way to happiness: we must always have actual regard to it. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.25-32*

*Pray Psalm 119.30-32.*

As you pray, take time to listen for the Spirit of God to search and convict you of any specific sins (cf. Ps. 139.23, 24). As He does, confess them *specifically* and repent of them *particularly*, that is, with a specific course of action for overcoming evil with good. Thank God for His truth to guide you this day.

*Sing Psalm 119.30-32.*

(Festal Song: *Renew Thy Work, O Lord*)

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.  
Your testimonies I embrace, Lord put me not to shame

Command my course, O Lord; Your gracious truth impart.  
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.

## 5 Settled, Seeking

*Pray Psalm 119.30-32.*

I have chosen the way of truth;  
Your judgments I have laid before me.  
I cling to Your testimonies;  
O LORD, do not put me to shame!  
I will run the course of Your commandments,  
For You shall enlarge my heart.

*Sing Psalm 119.30-32.*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.  
Your testimonies I embrace, Lord put me not to shame

Command my course, O Lord; Your gracious truth impart.  
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verse 30.*

*Preparation*

1. What choice did the psalmist make?
2. How did he follow-up that choice?

*Meditation*

The psalmist demonstrates the importance of deciding and doing as part of the process of being freed from the soul-melting burden of sin. The old Celtic monks had a saying that reflects what we're seeing here: "Contraries are by contraries improved." That is, if you discover something in your soul that is contrary to what is good and true – like lying – the way to "improve" that is to set a course of action that will help you always to tell the truth. The "contrary" behavior of lying is "improved" by a course of action "contrary" to the way of sin which is found in God's Law.

So, having confessed his sin in specific terms, the psalmist here resolved to follow the way of truth. He would tell the truth and only the truth. He would not allow his words to be used in lying ways. He had made a choice, a decision, and now he would get about the business of doing what he had decided. Decide, do. And don't go back behind that decision.

So he sought guidance from the judgments – the Law and Word – of the Lord. Just as we must do: How can I guard my tongue against lying? Ah, Ephesians 4.29, Colossians 4.6. How can I make sure that wholesome words are the only ones I speak? Oh, I see: Philippians 4.8; Romans 12.9-13. And always keep Psalm 33.13-15 in mind. Got it. Now, out into my Personal Mission Field as an agent of truth.

And that's how it works. By the way, can you feel the brightness returning here? The segue from the minor to the major key? The lifting of the darkness? Yeah. What a great feeling to be right with God and walking in His path!

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

I have decided to follow the way of truth. And here is why. First, the Law is specific about it: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20.16). And second, Jesus is the truth personified. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14.6); and then He added that if we love Him, we should "keep His commandments" (Jn. 14.15). It is a good decision, our decision to be truthful.

But how will we do this? How will we bring these “contraries” to fruition in our lives?

We will only manage this through careful and continuous study of the judgments of God. King Hezekiah set a good example of how to do this prayerfully before the Lord. He had received a troubling letter about his enemies destroying him and his people through war. So, what did he do? When Hezekiah “received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it...[he] went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD ...” (2 Kgs. 19.14, 15).

We have received the bad news about sin’s destruction in our lives. Specifically, how lying destroys our witness. “A true witness delivers souls, but a deceitful witness speaks lies” (Prov. 14.25). But we know what to do. We spread out the Law of God before the LORD and we read it. With Him. Together. And we see ourselves, repent in dust and ashes, and then we see Jesus. We claim the forgiveness to be found in Him, and out of love for Him, we seek to do His will – to be truthful and to keep His commandments.

Does anything feel more refreshing than a good shower when we are dirty? We step in filthy and emerge a cleansed person. Forgiveness offers the same refreshment.

It is when we are studying the judgments of God, spread before us, with Him, and accepting the “contraries” that will keep us on the way of truth, that we hear these words of guidance: “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1.6, 7).

The people in our Personal Mission Field need to hear the truth. Let’s choose to be truthful (Ps. 119.30), diligently spread the Word of God before us each day, and lay the words so carefully in our pathway, that we never wander from His commandments (Ps. 119.10). And perhaps through us, many others will choose the way of Jesus too.

“The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity” (Mal. 2.6).

*For reflection*

1. What does it mean for you to spread the Word of God before you each day?
2. Why is forgiveness so refreshing? Why do you think we don’t seek it any more than we do?
3. What new insights to God’s Law and all His Word are you gaining from this study of Psalm 119?

*The old adage, that man's life is as it were at the point where two ways meet, refers not simply to the general tenor of human life, but to every particular action of it. For no sooner do we undertake any thing, no matter how small, than we are grievously perplexed, and as if hurried off by a tempest, are confounded by conflicting counsels. Hence the prophet declares, that in order constantly to pursue the right path, he had resolved and fully determined not to relinquish the truth. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 119.30*

*Pray Psalm 119.25-29..*

Call on the Lord to remove any sins, doubts, fears, or discouragement from your soul, and to shine the light of His Word into your innermost being for peace and joy.

*Sing Psalm 119.25-29.*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!

*Psalm 119.25-32*

My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

Make me to understand your precepts and your ways,  
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

## 6 Back on Track

*Pray Psalm 119.30-32.*

I have chosen the way of truth;  
Your judgments I have laid *before me*.  
I cling to Your testimonies;  
O LORD, do not put me to shame!  
I will run the course of Your commandments,  
For You shall enlarge my heart.

*Sing Psalm 119.30-32.*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.  
Your testimonies I embrace, Lord put me not to shame!

Command my course, O Lord; Your gracious truth impart.  
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verses 31, 32.*

*Preparation*

1. To what does the psalmist cling now (cf. v. 25)?
2. What is he expecting God to do for him?

*Meditation*

By the grace of God, the psalmist has emerged from the darkness of sin into the freedom and light of forgiveness, repentance, and renewal. He began by telling us that his soul clung to the dust; now he joyously asserts that he is clinging to the testimonies – the Law – of God. He calls on God to lead him out of all fear of shame (v. 31) into greater exertions (“run”, v. 32) in the course of God’s commandments.

When sin worms its way into our soul, we must deal with it aggressively. The Holy Spirit will point out our sins as we wait on Him, allowing Him to search every nook and cranny of our lives (Jn. 16.8-11; Ps. 139.23, 24). When He does, we must get right on it, confessing our sin, setting a new course for our lives, and turning to the Word of God to remind and redirect us.

But all this requires the grace of God. We cannot confess, we cannot repent, we cannot take up the Lord’s course again apart from His grace. He must “enlarge” our heart (v. 32), increasing our desire for Him and our delight in His Law. But we must call out to Him continually.

It’s grace that we need, and for this grace we joyfully and expectantly plead day by day.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

We are in a competition. But instead of trying for a win on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* we are trying to succeed at *Who Wants to Run on God’s Track?* We are about to use our “lifeline” call because we are in dire need of help. Would we prefer our helper to be made of dust, or to be the most solid and trustworthy Helper known?

Our psalmist tried clinging to the dust, but found that to be a losing battle, one that left him in dire need of revival (vs. 25). Then he decided to try God’s Word, which was the winning ticket (vs. 32).



When we cling to God's wisdom, we have this promise: "When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble." Back on track. In fact, "Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life [line]" (Prov. 4.12, 13).

"But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Is. 40.31). Because we have an enlarged heart. (Ps. 119.32) And through His mercies "we are not consumed" (Lam. 3.22).

Our Lifeline is with us constantly to help us: "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." But it is for a purpose. And this purpose is that we live and speak the Word of God into our Personal Mission Field. He stands with us and strengthens us "so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all [those that God has called me to] might hear" (2 Tim. 4.17).

So, "let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus..." (Heb. 12.1, 2).

*Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, Freely bestowed on all who believe;  
All who are longing to see His face, Will you this moment His grace receive?  
Grace, grace, God's grace, Grace that will pardon and cleanse within;  
Grace, grace, God's grace, Grace that is greater than all our sin.  
(Johnston/Towner, 1911)*

God's grace puts us back on track, running the course, with an enlarged heart. Guided by the Law, the ultimate Lifeline.

*For reflection*

1. What do we mean by saying that the Law of God is our "Lifeline"?
2. If we fail to follow the course marked out by God's Law, where will we end up?
3. How can Christians help one another stay the course with God's Law and all His Word?

*Those that are going to heaven, should still press forward. God, by his Spirit, enlarges the hearts of his people when he gives them wisdom. The believer prays to be set free from sin. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.25-32*

*Pray Psalm 119.25-29.*

Thank God that He has delivered you from the guilt and shame of sin, and that He has set you on His path for righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

*Sing Psalm 119.25-29.*

(Festal Song: *Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!  
My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

Make me to understand your precepts and your ways,  
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

## 7 Clingers

*Pray Psalm 119.25, 26, 31.*

My soul clings to the dust;  
Revive me according to Your word.  
I have declared my ways, and You answered me;  
Teach me Your statutes...  
I cling to Your testimonies;  
O LORD, do not put me to shame!

*Sing Psalm 119.25, 26, 31.*

(Festal Song: : [Revive Thy Work, O Lord](#))

My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!  
My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, Lord!

Command my course, O Lord; Your gracious truth impart.  
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.

*Read Psalm 119.25-32; meditate on verses 25, 26, 31*

*Preparation*

1. How does the psalmist change over the course of this stanza?
2. To what does he cling in the end?

*Meditation*

Stanzas 1-3 of Psalm 119 are bright, hopeful, and filled with the joy of knowing God in His Word. Words like “praise” and “delight” and “longing” make us understand that the fullness of life is found in clinging to God and His Word.

But the potential for wandering (v. 10) and straying (v. 21) from God’s way is always present. Hints of darkness intrude in the light, warning us against falling through temptation into sin, where we cling to the dust rather than to our gracious God.

Stanza 4 sets forth the reality of life in a fallen world, where we all must learn to deal with the darkness of sin if we’re going to enjoy the light of life. We need to understand the lesson of these verses. Recognizing our sin (v. 25), confessing it to God (v. 26), calling on Him to revive and renew us (v. 27) and to lift the burden of guilt and shame (vv. 28, 29) – these are disciplines we must have at the ready. For only by mastering these disciplines will we find grace to choose God’s Word (v. 30) and begin clinging again to Him and His Law as our proper course in life (vv. 31, 32).

The rest of Psalm 119 will review and reinforce what these first four stanzas have taught: We’re all clingers. We will either cling to the dust of sin or the Law of life. Clinging is a daily choice and a moment-by-moment decision. Cling well.

*Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

And the only way to cling well is to cling continuously to God and His Law (Ps. 119.31).

If we need revival (Ps. 119.25) it is because there has been a near death experience. As Jesus said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Mk. 2.17). We agree with Him that our heart, when found in sin and clinging to the dust, needs repair. We are, as it were, in desperate need of resuscitation.

But the heart that needs refreshment, needs to be renewed in Jesus, and not in ourselves. Paul spelled out the healing remedy mindset: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2.20).

Jesus. Clinging to Him. That is how we cling well. He is our lifeboat, our lifeline, our floatation device, our fire-ladder, our helping hand, our beloved Savior. It is He Who enlarges our heart so that we run well the course set out for us in our Personal Mission Field. Only He makes it possible.

And after we have clung well, all the days of our life, we can say with Paul: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4.7).

To Whom and to what we cling makes all the difference!

“Cling well.”

*For reflection*

1. How would you explain the idea of “clinging well” to a new believer?
2. Why is it so important that we deal with sin immediately?
3. What can you do to improve your ability to cling consistently to God and His Word?

*While the souls of the children of this world cleave to the earth as their portion, the children of light are greatly burdened, because of the remains of carnal affection in their hearts. It is unspeakable comfort to a gracious soul, to think with what tenderness all its complaints are received by a gracious God. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.25-32*

*Pray Psalm 119.27-31.*

Pray for understanding of God’s Word. Call on Him to strengthen your soul – heart, mind, and conscience – and to guide you always by His Law and all His Word.

*Sing Psalm 119.27-31.*

(Festal Song: : [\*Revive Thy Work, O Lord\*](#))

Make me to understand your precepts and your ways,  
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O Lord!  
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.  
Your testimonies I embrace, Lord put me not to shame!

*Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. Why does it seem that this stanza is “darker” than the previous ones?
2. What do we mean by saying we’re all “clingers”?
3. What must we do when we find we aren’t clinging to God?
4. How can believers help one another to cling always and only to the Lord?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from this part of our study of Psalm 119?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.