

PSALM 119.41-48

psalm
God's Word 119

T. M. AND SUSIE MOORE

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

Psalm 119.41-48
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Introduction to Psalm 119.41-48

The focus turns more intensely inward in the sixth stanza of Psalm 119. The emphasis on having a heart firmly set on the Law and Word of God takes prominence here. It's perhaps because the psalmist is feeling some outside pressure that he turns his focus within, to make sure his love for God's Word is what it should be.

The psalmist wants his witness to be both lived and spoken, for he understands each of these to be crucial in walking the divine pathway. But he must reach out the Lord in love, seeking earnestly that the Lord would instruct and keep him. And, of course, He will.

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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 Law and Salvation

Pray Psalm 119.41, 42.

Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your word.
So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.41, 42.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let Your mercies come to me, Your salvation by Your Word.
From reproaches set me free, for I trust in You, O Lord.
Let my life an answer be for those who may question me.

Read Psalm 119.41-48; meditate on verse 41.

Preparation

1. What does the psalmist seek?
2. Where did he expect to find that?

Meditation

It's important to keep in mind that the Law of God is all about salvation. Not earning it, but enjoying it.

Only *after* God had delivered His people from Egypt and gathered them to Himself at Mt. Sinai did He give them His Law. Israel was not required to keep the Law to be saved from their bondage. They were saved by God's grace. Then He gave them the Law so that they could enjoy Him and His salvation to the full extent.

Here, as we begin the I (*vav*) section of Psalm 119, the psalmist expresses His great desire. To know the salvation of the Lord is to dwell within His steadfast love (Hebrew: יְדֹבָר *CHE-seb-dab*). The steadfast love of the Lord sends His Spirit to save us from sin, then surrounds and sustains us, swarms us with His goodness, strengthens us to obey Him, shapes us into His likeness, assures us of His favor and forgiveness, and sets our hearts to obey and enjoy Him forever.

No wonder the psalmist prays, "Let me have more of that great salvation, Lord!"

But we may only realize this great boon according to the Word of the Lord, beginning with His Law. The Word of God leads us into His steadfast love where we work out our salvation in fear and trembling (Phil. 2.12). We do not work *for* our salvation; rather, we work *out* the salvation God has graciously given us so that we may enjoy more of His steadfast love day by day.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.16.

The Dash. As the *Grammar Desk Reference* states, "The dash is the most dramatic punctuation mark you can deploy within the interior of a sentence. Use it sparingly." It then goes on to explain several uses of the almighty dash. The definition that fits the usage in Psalm 119.41 is: "A dash can be used between an independent clause expressing a generalization and an independent clause, a phrase, or a single word that restates, explains, or provides an example of the generalization."

Thus, the psalmist asks God to "Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—Your salvation according to Your word" (Ps. 119.41). His mercy—His salvation.

And in His Word is where we read about this mercy and salvation:

“And for their sake He remembered His covenant, and relented according to the multitude of His mercies” (Ps. 106.45).

“Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness” (Lam. 3.22, 23).

“And His mercy is on those who fear Him...” (Lk. 1.50).

“But God who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ...” (Eph. 2.4, 5).

Paul sums the whole of this thought up in his letter to Titus:

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3.4-7).

His mercy—restated, explained, and exemplified in His salvation.

Magnanimously, lavishly, and liberally used.

For reflection

1. Why is “mercy” or “steadfast love” a good way of summarizing the salvation we have from the Lord?
2. How does the mercy of God – His salvation – relate to His Law?
3. We are saved and have eternal life. But is there more to God’s salvation we have yet to receive? Explain.

There can be no doubt, that, in mentioning the mercy of God first, and afterwards his salvation, the Psalmist, according to the natural order, puts the cause before the effect. By adopting this arrangement, he acknowledges that there is no salvation for him but in the pure mercy of God. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 119.41

Pray Psalm 119.48.

Ask God to give you something from His Word to “take in hand” throughout the day, something you will actively and consistently carry out at every opportunity to express the salvation He has given you.

Sing Psalm 119.48.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

To Your Law I lift my hands to embrace and hold it dear.
In Your truth my glad heart stands, knowing You are ever near.
I will meditate, O Lord, on Your statutes and Your Word.

2 Life as Answer

Pray Psalm 119.41, 42.

Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your word.
So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.41, 42.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let Your mercies come to me, Your salvation by Your Word.
From reproaches set me free, for I trust in You, O Lord.
Let my life an answer be for those who may question me.

Read Psalm 119.41-48; meditate on verse 42.

Preparation

1. What “answer” would the psalmist have?
2. To whom would he give that “answer”?

Meditation

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that our salvation is made known to the world, in the first instance, by our good works and love: “But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Heb. 6.9, 10).

Those who know us to be followers of Jesus Christ may taunt or reproach us from time to time. We must make sure that when they do, their denunciations can be seen to be baseless, at least as far as our lives are concerned. This is what the psalmist prayed for in verse 42. In verse 41 he called upon the Lord for lovingkindness and increased salvation, according to the Word of the Lord. He knew that, if he could show more of the Lord’s salvation to the world, his life would be the best answer to anyone who might denounce him or make light of the Lord and His salvation.

Isn’t this what we see in Jesus? Very often, when His enemies were railing against Him, He would use some good work or word of grace to leave them speechless. We may not be quite as effective as that, and those who scorn or taunt us may continue to do so. But our answer to them must never be in kind: “So’s your old man!” Rather, we must demonstrate the salvation we have in Jesus Christ by loving and doing good even to those who despise us (cf. Matt. 5.45-48), trusting the Lord and His Word to do what He thinks is best. Thus we will be like our Father, showing lovingkindness and salvation at every opportunity.

If we’re faithful in living the hope we have in Jesus, some of those in our Personal Mission Field may ask a reason for our hopeful outlook and demeanor. Once they’ve *seen* our salvation, we’ll be in a better position to *tell* it to them (1 Pet. 3.15).

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Jesus’ life was the most beautifully lived life that ever graced the face of the earth. And in His beautiful life He had many occasions to answer those who reproached Him. We see in Him the perfection of Proverbs 26.4, 5: “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.”

In Matthew 21.23-27 we read this account: As Jesus was teaching in the temple the elders confronted Him and said, “By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?” But Jesus answered them with questions of His own. He said, “I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?” And there were so many reasons they couldn’t answer this question that they finally just answered, “We do not know.” Instead of getting angry or putting them down for their rudeness and stupidity, Jesus merely asked them questions.

Mark 12.18-27 shows another way Jesus answered a reproach. The Sadducees, who don’t believe in the resurrection, came to Jesus with what they thought was a “tricky” question about the resurrection. After asking their prolonged, contrived and triangulated question Jesus merely answered them with this question: “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?”

In Mark 12.13-17 we read about the Pharisees and the Herodians trying to snare Him in a church and state question: “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” “But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me?” And then He visually solved their query by showing them a piece of money and said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And this extraordinary display of wisdom earned Him their amazement.

The New Testament is full of the love and wisdom of Jesus. He showed throughout His life how not to answer, and how to answer those who reproached Him. He always did it with grace and the Word of God.

We also see His response against the ultimate enemy, and He handled him in the same way. The devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread,” and “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down,” and then the affront of “worship me.” For each verbal assault Jesus responded with Scripture: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4.4). “You shall not tempt the LORD your God” (Matt. 4.7). “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve” (Matt. 4.10).|

We can trust in the Word of God just as Jesus did, because we have been given the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2.16).

Although Jesus’ wit and wisdom were adept and clever with those who reproached Him, that was not His aim, nor should it be ours. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (Jms. 3.17).

Good questions asked well, along with grace, love, and wisdom provide good answers to the foolish. But a life well-lived in Christ is the best response to reproach. “Life as answer.” Like Jesus.

For reflection

1. Why is a life lived for Jesus the best answer we can give anyone?
2. Should we expect to persuade all those who taunt or reproach us? Why not?
3. Asking questions of unbelievers is always a good way to help them come to the truth. Why is this so?

And when the salvation of the saints is completed, it will plainly appear that it was not in vain to trust in God’s word. We need to pray that we may never be afraid or ashamed to own God’s truths and ways before men. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.41-48

Psalm 119.41-48

Pray Psalm 119.43-46.

Pray that the Lord will use your life today to show someone the reality of the Kingdom of God – righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Pray that He will give you words to speak should the opportunity arise.

Sing Psalm 119.43-46.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let my words be Your words, Lord; strengthen me to keep Your Law.

All my hope is in Your Word, and I seek Your precepts all.

I will ever keep Your Word, for I trust in You, O Lord!

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.

I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.

Let me speak Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

3 Lived and Spoken

Pray Psalm 119.43, 44.

And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
For I have hoped in Your ordinances.
So shall I keep Your law continually,
Forever and ever.

Sing Psalm 119.43-45.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.
I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.
I shall keep Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

Read Psalm 119.41-48; meditate on verses 43, 44.

Preparation

1. How will the psalmist be able to keep the Law continually?
2. What does he want God to do for him?

Meditation

As important as it is to make sure our lives bear witness to God and His Word, it is equally important that we be ready with the Word as opportunities arise. We don't need to plan out what we'll say in every case or memorize a lot of outlines or answers to objections. Jesus has promised that the Spirit will give us just the words we need in every situation (Lk. 12.12).

But for the Word to be ready on our lips, we'll need to work hard to hide it in our hearts (Ps. 119.9-11). And not just that, but to keep it faithfully in every aspect of our lives (Ps. 119.43). The more we keep what we have learned and come to delight in, the greater will be the consistency of our lived witness, and the more we will have the words we need to give others a reason for the hope that is within us (1 Pet. 3.15).

The verb "hoped" in verse 43 indicates continuous, expectant waiting. To hope in God's Law (ordinances) is thus to expect them to be true and reliable and to lead us into that state of happiness all people seek (Ps. 119.1-3). It stands to reason that the more we hope like this in the Word of God, the more we will read and study it, hide it in our heart and keep it, and the more it will be in our mouth when we need it.

God by His grace gives us the strength to keep His Law by the inward working of His Spirit (Phil. 2.13). His grace also is the means whereby we are ready witnesses with our words (Acts 1.8). Faith and hope engage that grace to work out our salvation in obedience and a readiness to live and speak for the Lord at every opportunity (Phil. 2.12; Eph. 5.15-17).

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

The psalmist is seeking grace for the path God has marked out in His Law. He knows that words fitly spoken are a precious commodity: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in setting of silver" (Prov. 25.11). A beautiful visual indeed.

He has just asked God in Psalm 119.42 for good answers for those who reproach him, and now he is doubling down on that same request by asking that God would not ever allow His words to vanish from his mouth. Ever (Ps. 119.43). The word "utterly" is dramatic, but that is the mood he is going for; "Please, Lord, do not ever let me not have Your words of truth in my heart. Because if Your words are in my heart, that is what I will speak."

Jesus talked about this very issue. He explained: “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Lk. 6.45).

And the reason the psalmist wants God’s words in his heart, coming constantly out of his mouth, is because he has found God and His way to be the biggest blessing anyone could ever experience. He hopes continually in God’s ordinances, and he wants others to hope in the same thing. He knows it is the only way to go (Ps. 119.43).

“My hope is in You” (Ps. 39.7).

“For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; You are my trust from my youth” (Ps. 71.5).

“Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our heart by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5.5).

“...we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 Jn. 3.2, 3).

Really, who wouldn’t want to live in that hope, and in the grace that God gives us for this amazing path to walk?

And to walk this path takes only two things:

1. Keep God’s Law continually, forever and ever. (Ps. 119.44)
2. Utterly! (For drama)

For reflection

1. What opportunities will you have today, as you walk God’s path for your life, to share something about Jesus? How will you prepare for these?
2. Why do we need to bear witness to our faith by both our lives and our words?
3. What do we mean by saying that faith and hope engage grace unto obedience? How can you make this a working principle in your life?

We need to pray that we may never be afraid or ashamed to own God’s truths and ways before men. And the psalmist resolves to keep God’s law, in a constant course of obedience, without backsliding. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.41-48

Pray Psalm 119.41-43.

What opportunities will you have today to encourage someone with the Word of God? How should you prepare for these?

Sing Psalm 119.41, 42.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let Your mercies come to me, Your salvation by Your Word.
From reproaches set me free, for I trust in You, O Lord.
Let my life an answer be for those who may question me.

Let my words be Your words, Lord; strengthen me to keep Your Law.
All my hope is in Your Word, and I seek Your precepts all.
I will ever keep Your Word, for I trust in You, O Lord!

4 Freedom Walk

Pray Psalm 119:45.

And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.

Sing Psalm 119:43-45.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.
I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.
I shall keep Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

Read Psalm 119:41-48; meditate on verse 45.

Preparation

1. Where does the psalmist want to walk?
2. How will he do that?

Meditation

I recall a report I read some years ago concerning a school playground that was bounded by roads on three sides. Initially, when the kids went out to play, they tended to cluster toward the middle of the yard, close to the school. But when the school put up a fence on all sides, the kids spread out to play in every square inch of the yard.

We tend to think of boundaries as restrictive. And these days, we don't want restrictions. We want to be ourselves and throw off everything we think holds us back (Ps. 2.1, 2). But clear and safe boundaries liberate us to enjoy life to the fullest. Think of your life as a journey along a clear and well-traveled pathway. Guardrails protect the path from unknown troubles lurking nearby. The one guardrail is labeled, "Love God" and the second is labeled "Love your neighbor." Between them, you're free to roam as you will.

The psalmist says that he will walk "at liberty", literally, "in a broad place", because he seeks the precepts of God. Yes, the Law of God is a boundary, but it protects you from many missteps in life, from pitfalls of lies and deceit, from the clutches of sin, and from the limitations of your own finite understanding.

The Law of God is so wise, He promised that the unbelieving peoples around us would marvel at the wisdom we demonstrate as we hold fast to His precepts (Deut. 4.5-8). James described the Law of God as "the perfect Law of liberty", and he said we should live as if we expected to be judged by this Law (Jms. 2.8-12). That means seeking the precepts of God – His Law and all His Word – day by day, moment by moment, for every aspect of our lives.

Go ahead. Stretch out into the playground of life. Just make sure you stay within the fences and guardrails in that broad, liberating place where you will be safe from all that can rob you of full and abundant life.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13:52; Psalm 119:162

Jude said the same thing and summed it up like this: "Stay always within the boundaries where God's love can reach and bless you" (Jude 21 TLB). And that would be within the boundaries of God's Law.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray that the Lord's will to be done on earth, just as it is always done in heaven. (Matt. 6.10)

For us to abide within those parameters we need to make every effort for His will to be done in our own

lives. Staying within His Law insures that.

Gloriously, this liberty to live to the fullest was one of the reasons Jesus came to earth. He came to “proclaim liberty to the captives” and to “set at liberty those who are oppressed” (Lk. 4.18). That is, us.

Jesus said, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8.31, 32) Free to live in liberty. Free to obey His Law.

The Holy Spirit was sent to guarantee our freedom. “Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Cor. 3.17). Freedom to live as the Spirit leads us—directly into God’s Law.

Paul has a word to say on this topic as well: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5.1). Free to stay away from sin, with all the liberty available to us to obey. After all, there is no law against it! (Gal. 5.23)

We will give James the final word, and his word has some good news and some bad. More like a warning: “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does” (Jms. 1.25) That’s the good news.

“So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty” (Jms. 2.12). And that’s the warning.

We have been invited to a “Freedom Walk”.

Let us boldly go forth, within our fence, to do just that, at liberty. (Ps. 119.45)

For reflection

1. Why do we need boundaries? What are our options in setting boundaries for ourselves?
2. What makes the Law of God a reliable boundary for full and abundant life?
3. How can believers help one another stay within the boundaries where God can reach and bless us?

The service of sin is slavery; the service of God is liberty. There is no full happiness, or perfect liberty, but in keeping God’s law.
Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Psalm 119.41-48*

Pray Psalm 119.48.

What will you be putting your hand to today? Ask God to let His Law and all His Word guide you in everything you do.

Sing Psalm 119.48.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

To Your Law I lift my hands to embrace and hold it dear.
In Your truth my glad heart stands, knowing You are ever near.
I will meditate, O Lord, on Your statutes and Your Word.

5 No Fear, No Shame

Pray Psalm 119.46, 47.

I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings,
And will not be ashamed.
And I will delight myself in Your commandments,
Which I love.

Sing Psalm 119.46, 47.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

I will speak Your Word to kings, and I will not be ashamed.
In Your Word my glad heart sings, as Your truth I have proclaimed.
In Your Law will I delight, which I love with all my might.

Read Psalm 119.41-48; meditate on verse 46.

Preparation

1. What would the psalmist not fear?
2. How would he feel about doing that?

Meditation

Sharing your faith with others can be a little scary. We're not sure we can say it just right. Are they really interested? Will they think I'm trying to "cram my religion down their throats"? Will they get angry, or break friends with me? And so on.

If the prospect of testifying about Jesus with a friend, family member, or acquaintance can be a little scary, imagine being called before the highest court of the land to declare and defend your faith? With a very aggressive and accusatory prosecutor determined to show you to be a fraud and leave you withered with shame!

There's a proven way to fortify your witness. One that will give you courage for every opportunity to testify about the Lord and His Kingdom, and which, as you live it, will prevent you from ever being shamed by the enemy of our soul. The psalmist understood that proven way: Walk in the liberty of God's Law, seek His precepts and statutes for every situation (v. 45), and open your mouth to speak at every opportunity (v. 46), confident that He will give you the words you need (Lk. 12.11, 12).

I remember once early in my ministry, I was sitting in my office, working on something, when Jim Kennedy stuck his head in the door and said, "You know, T. M., the more you evangelize, the more you evangelize." Then he left. He was exactly right. Each time we speak about God, His Law, the salvation we have in Jesus, the joy we find in reading and studying His Word, and our confidence that there is no other name given among men under heaven whereby we must be saved – the more we talk about such matters, the more we will do so at every opportunity.

And we will neither fear nor be ashamed.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

"I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed" (Ps. 119.46).

Indeed, not being ashamed of speaking God's Law is the psalmist's boast. And it should be ours as well.

Because Jesus did not take kindly to the thought of His followers and disciples being ashamed of Him. He

expressed it by saying, “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels” (Mk. 8.38).

Being one of those people is not advisable.

Happily, here is who we can be through the power of the Holy Spirit:

“To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

O my God, I trust in You; let me not be ashamed;

let not my enemies triumph over me. Indeed,

let no one who waits on You be ashamed;

let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause” (Ps. 25.1-3).

Spoiler alert. Psalm 119 deals with this same topic in verses 80 and 116:

“Let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes, that I may not be ashamed.”

“Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live; and do not let me be ashamed of my hope.”

It is clear the psalmist knows that the courage he has, and the courage he seeks to always have, is found in God’s Word. There is no other place on earth to find it, read about it, pray it through, and live it out. Even before kings. Wherever we are, whomever we are with.

As Paul declared, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (Rom. 1.16).

“For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began...” (2 Tim. 1.7-9).

And that is why we are not ashamed and are not afraid. He called us before time began to go bravely into our own Personal Mission Field to clearly speak God’s testimonies to those who are there. Waiting.

For reflection

1. Why would anyone ever be afraid or ashamed to tell the Gospel? How can we avoid that?
2. Where does the courage come from to share boldly about your faith in Christ? What can you do to make sure you’ll have that courage when you need it?
3. How can Christians encourage one another to be more consistent in their witness for the Lord?

We must never be ashamed or afraid to own our religion. The more delight we take in the service of God, the nearer we come to perfection. Not only consent to his law as good, but take pleasure in it as good for us. Let me put forth all the strength I have, to do it. Something of this mind of Christ is in every true disciple. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.41-48

Pray Psalm 119.43-45.

Pray that God will give you boldness for this day, to walk His pathway and testify of His greatness and love.

Sing Psalm 119.43-45.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.

Psalm 119:41-48

I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.
I shall keep Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

6 Lovin' It?

Pray Psalm 119:47, 48.

And I will delight myself in Your commandments,
Which I love.
My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments,
Which I love,
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

Sing Psalm 119:46-48.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

I will speak Your Word to kings, and I will not be ashamed.
In Your Word my glad heart sings, as Your truth I have proclaimed.
In Your Law will I delight, which I love with all my might.

To Your Law I lift my hands to embrace and hold it dear.
In Your truth my glad heart stands, knowing You are ever near.
I will meditate, O Lord, on Your statutes and Your Word.

Read Psalm 119:41-48; meditate on verses 47, 48.

Preparation

1. So, how does the psalmist feel about God's Law?
2. And what does this lead him to do?

Meditation

Here is a clear indicator of the degree of your love for God's Law: "I will meditate on Your statutes." The psalmist has already told us that true and complete happiness is found in delighting in and obeying the Law of God (Ps. 119:1-3). Anything that brings us true and complete happiness is something we will love, something we will reach out and grab hold of as often as we can, no?

The psalmist delights in and loves, loves the commandments of God. He lifts up his hands to receive them, eagerly and gladly. He meditates on them deeply.

Do we?

Can you feel the overflowing sense of joy and pleasure that flows from these two verses? This is how they who have known the mercy of God and live in His salvation (v. 41) feel about the love letter He has written them in His Law. They live it as their explanation to the world for why they believe (v. 42). They talk about it, hope in it, keep it faithfully, and seek to learn more of it (vv. 43-45). They are bold in declaring it to others (v. 46), and the more they do, the more their delight in and love for God and His Law increase.

Life in the Law of God – the psalmist was lovin' it. We can, too. And as we do, we'll find that we meditate on it, yea verily, throughout the day and night (Ps. 1), lifting up our hands in praise and thanks to God Who shows us the unfailing and delightful pathway of His Law.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13:52; Psalm 119:162

"...delight...love...lift up...love...meditate" (Ps. 119:47, 48).

Imagine your baby, standing in their crib, hungry, messy, most assuredly wet, and eager to see you walk

through the door. What do they do? They raise their dear little arms up to you so you will pick them up; and then tend to all their needs.

In some respects that is exactly how needy we are for God and His Word. Hopefully minus the wet? Therefore, we call out to Him because we love Him, and we know He loves us. And we lift our hands to Him, to His commandments, His Words, and His care. You picked up your eager child; He picks us up, as well. To meet our needs through His Word.

All this is possible as we meditate on His statutes.

Joshua, the mighty leader and soldier, knew his power and success were all wrapped up in God's Law. He told the children of Israel, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth (cf. Ps. 119.43), but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success" (Josh. 1.8). Meditate. Prosper. Be successful. To do according to God's Law.

David, the mighty warrior and king, knew his power was only from God and His way and Law. Here is his suggestion for success: "Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD" (Ps. 4.4, 5). Meditate. Be still. Be righteous. Trust in God.

One might expect that the pep talk from these warriors would be more about physical prowess and tactical issues. But it is not what they stressed. Meditation on God's Law and trust in Him is the winning way. As Paul said, "...if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Phil. 4.8).

If we love God and His Word;
if we are eagerly reaching up our hands to Him for guidance through His Word;
if we are meditating day and night on Him and His Laws,
then, according to the psalmist, Joshua, and David, we will find delight, success, and good Kingdom work.

For reflection

1. What does it mean for you to reach out your hands to the Lord?
2. What is it about Jesus that you especially delight to meditate on?
3. Will you see any fellow believers today? How can you encourage them to set their minds on Jesus and to reach out their hands to Him?

The more delight we take in the service of God, the nearer we come to perfection. Not only consent to his law as good, but take pleasure in it as good for us. Let me put forth all the strength I have, to do it. Something of this mind of Christ is in every true disciple. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.41-48

Pray Psalm 119.43-45.

Pray that God will keep His Word in your mind and heart throughout the day, that you will walk His path and grow in love for Him and His Word.

Sing Psalm 119.43-45.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.
I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.
I shall keep Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

7 Heart Devotion

Pray Psalm 119.41, 42.

Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—
Your salvation according to Your word.
So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.41, 42.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let Your mercies come to me, Your salvation by Your Word.
From reproaches set me free, for I trust in You, O Lord.
Let my life an answer be for those who may question me.

Read Psalm 119.41-48; meditate on verses 119.43-45.

Preparation

1. What is the psalmist's attitude toward God's Word?
2. What does that lead him to do?

Meditation

Stanza 6 of Psalm 119 continues, with sharpened focus, a theme which has threaded through most of the preceding stanzas – that of heart devotion to the Law and Word of God. It's not enough just to know the contents of the Bible. We need to let the Word saturate and shape our minds, of course, but unless the heart is devoted to the Word, no amount of Biblical information will serve us as God intends.

The heart is the seat of our affections and is thus the most important component of the soul. Note how this stanza “circles the wagons” of the heart around the Word of God, to keep and defend and secure it:

- v. 41: longing (“Let Your mercies...Your salvation...”)
- v. 42: trust
- v. 43: hope
- v. 44: resolve (“So shall I keep...”)
- v. 45: seek
- v. 46: courage (“not be ashamed”)
- v. 47: delight
- v. 47: love
- v. 48: eagerness (lifting hands for it)
- v. 48: love

Solomon exhorts us to keep our hearts with all diligence, because the great issues of life flow from our affections – what we long for, trust in, hope for, seek, delight in, reach out for, and love (Prov. 4.23). Hide the Word of God in your heart; surround it by your strongest and most devoted affections; and the Spirit of God will use the Word to shape you into the image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3.12-18). So shall your witness for the Lord be firmly established (vv. 42, 46).

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

And not only will our witness for Christ be firmly established, but it will be happening continually.

This will be done regularly; repeated frequently in the same way; without interruption; and constantly. In other words, all the time.

“So shall I keep Your law continually,” and just to make sure that we understand how continually, the psalmist adds the additional description of “forever and ever” (Ps. 119.44). That makes it all the time, perpetually and eternally.

Peter used the word *continually* to describe the disciples calling to prayer and to the ministry of the word. (Acts 6.4). He was describing and delineating their calling as opposed to the new calling of the seven men who would now hold the office of deacon.

Paul used the words *continue earnestly* to tell all believers that this is how we should pray, “being vigilant in it with thanksgiving” (Col. 4.2).

The writer of the book of Hebrews used the word *continue* to exhort Christians everywhere to let “brotherly love” be done without interruption and constantly (Heb. 13.1).

There are many things that we, as believers, are called to that need to be done regularly and repeated frequently, all the time.

But the most important thing, for our heart’s devotion, is to keep God’s law continually, forever and ever. For by so doing, we show love to our dear Savior (Jn. 14.15); full obedience to God (Ex. 20.1-11) and service to others (Ex. 20.12-17).

Being a Christian is not a half-hearted endeavor. It is a constant calling. All the time. Continually.

For reflection

1. What do we mean by saying that Christianity is a full-time calling? How should we prepare each day to take up that calling?
2. Why is it so important that we keep a close watch on our heart? How do you do that?
3. Which of the affections mentioned in this stanza do you need to improve on? How will you work on that today?

“...[the psalmist] was not so concerned about outward confession as not to give the preference to the faith of the heart; but considering that he is making his address to God, there is nothing strange in his making mention only of the former, under which, however, he includes also the latter. ‘Lord, support not only my heart by faith, lest I be overwhelmed with temptation, but grant me also freedom of speech, that I may fearlessly sound forth thy praises among men.’ We observe, when he asks to be endued with boldness of speech, that he begins with the heart.” John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Psalm 119.43-45*

Pray Psalm 119.43-48

Pray that God will increase in you love for His Word and delight in reading, studying, and obeying it. Pray also that this will enable you to become a more consistent witness for the Lord.

Sing Psalm 119.43-46.

(Dix: *For the Beauty of the Earth*)

Let my words be Your words, Lord; strengthen me to keep Your Law.
All my hope is in Your Word, and I seek Your precepts all.
I will ever keep Your Word, for I trust in You, O Lord!

Lord, take not Your Word from me, for I trust it day by day.
I will walk in liberty as Your precepts I obey.

Psalm 119:41-48

Let me speak Your truth, O Lord, for I hope in all Your Word.

To Your Law I lift my hands to embrace and hold it dear.
In Your truth my glad heart stands, knowing You are ever near.
I will meditate, O Lord, on Your statutes and Your Word.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. What are affections and why are they so important?
2. What is the role of the heart in our witness for the Lord?
3. Why do delighting in God's Word and meditating in go together? What do these produce?
4. Would you say that you have "circled the wagons" of your heart around God's Word? Explain.
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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