

“Treasuring Christ in His Word”
Psalm 119:9-16
January 22, 2006

Context

1. Psalm 119 is an instructional Psalm made up of 22 sections. All the stanzas of each section begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet and the sections are in alphabetical order.
2. Psalm 119 is a devotional on the Word of God. This Word is our only rule for faith and practice.
3. The second section, v. 9-16, is the “beth” (2nd letter of the alphabet) section. This is fitting because “beth” also means “a house” (“beth-el”). In this Psalm, the Psalmist urges us to make our hearts a home for God’s Word.

A. Treasuring His Word in our Hearts (v. 9-12)

1. Purpose of the Word (v. 9, 11) – God gave us His Word that we might live according to it and might not sin against Him. But to accomplish this, we must hide the Word in our hearts. To “hide the Word in the heart” is to treasure it. (There were no banks so people hid their treasure. See Matt. 13:44.)
2. Praise for the Word (v. 10a, 12a) – The Psalmist turns from statement of truth to statements of praise, “I seek you with all of my heart . . . Praise be to you, O Lord.” The 2nd person “you” is used. The Psalmist is praising the God of the Word.
3. Pleas regarding the Word (v. 10b, 12b)
 - a. “Do not let me stray from your commands.” The Psalmist knows the human heart well. We are prone to wander. We need the Word to keep us close to Christ.
 - b. “Teach me your decrees.” Apart from the work of the Spirit we cannot hear or comprehend the Word (I Cor. 2:12-14). We are completely dependent upon Him to teach us.

B. Treasuring His Word In Our Lives (v. 13-16)

1. Speak it - “With my lips I recount . . .” (v. 13). To have the Word upon our lips will burn it into our hearts. And when it’s hidden in our hearts, our words will be full of the Word (Ps. 73:23-28, Jn. 15:7-8).
2. Rejoice in it – “I rejoice . . . as one rejoices in great riches” (v. 14). This is an “exuberant, festive joyfulness” (Boice) in His Word. His Word is to be far above all other joys and pleasures (Ps. 19:9-11; 119:72).
3. Meditate on it – “I meditate on your precepts” (v. 15). To treasure His Word we must dwell on it and think long about it. As it “cooks” in the “crock-pot” of our souls, God will flavor every part of our lives with His Word (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2-3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
4. Delight in it – “I delight . . . I will not neglect your Word” (v. 16). This is a “settled pleasure” (Boice) in the Word of God. The Word is to be your life, “They are not just idle words for you—they are your life” (Deut. 32:47).

C. Tips From a Fellow Pilgrim

1. Pray. Ask God to give you a love for His Word and ask Him for help in memorizing. Repent over past neglect. Do not let the enemy play the guilt "card." Jesus destroyed that one.
2. Join us in our church-wide Scripture memory plan. Our aim is 100% participation. We have selected verses to go along with the sermon texts. Make use of the available tools: bookmarks, bulletin, Clarion, website, posters, and visit the Scripture "helps" table in the narthex.
3. Help us by incorporating the memory verse into your home groups and ministry groups. Hold each other accountable and come up with creative ways to memorize together.

Words From Other Fellow Pilgrims

"We have all heard of weeds choking the wheat; if we were wise we should learn from our enemy, and endeavor to choke the weeds by the wheat. Preoccupation of mind [with the Word of God] is a great safeguard from temptation. Fill a bushel with corn, and you will keep out the chaff: have the heart stored with holy things, and the vanities of the world will not so readily obtain a lodging-place." (Spurgeon)

". . . It will not be enough to skim through a few verses in daily Bible reading, nor to study a passage only when we have to teach from it. No. We must daily soak ourselves in the Scriptures. We must not just study, as through a microscope, the linguistic minutiae of a few verses, but take our telescope and scan the wide expanses of God's Word, assimilating its grand theme of divine sovereignty in the redemption of mankind. 'It is blessed,' wrote C. H. Spurgeon, 'to eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last, you come to talk in Scriptural language, and your spirit is flavoured with the words of the Lord, so that your blood is Bibline and the very essence of the Bible flows from you.'" (Stott)

"I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished . . . I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it." (Mueller)

". . . The preservation of our joy in God takes *work*. It is a fight. Our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, and he has an insatiable appetite to destroy one thing: the joy of faith. But the Holy Spirit has given us a sword called the Word of God for the defense of our joy.

Or, to change the image, when Satan huffs and puffs and tries to blow out the flame of your joy, you have an endless supply of kindling in the Word of God. Even on days when every cinder in our soul feels cold, if we crawl to the Word of God and cry out for ears to hear, the cold ashes will be lifted and the tiny spark of life will be fanned. For 'the law of the Lord is perfect, *reviving* the soul.'" (Piper)