

Study Means Learning

- As God communicated with His people throughout time
- As He provided them with His written word
- That word has been a delight and a help and a lifeline for them

- We are privileged to have the Bible readily available in our language today
- Some in the world do not
- Many throughout history have not

- This is why the words we'll read today from Psalm 119 are so enthusiastic
- Hearing directly from the God of the universe is a great joy!
- As you can imagine, it is also a great education

- That's what we'll be talking about a little today
- As our theme is "Study Means Learning"

- We know, from our discussions in previous programs, that scripture does more than just teach
- It changes us, as God intended, into the kind of people He intends
- Many times it does so by giving us information and insight we can get nowhere else

- Psalm 119 is a great text about the scriptures
- Let's look into one portion of the Psalm for clarification on our theme...

Psalm 119:97-98

97 MEM. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

- For a person in the midst of trouble (in this case surrounded by enemies), the word of God is critical
- It offers wisdom beyond any the ungodly can find
- And while they may have power or might or numbers or experience
- We have the instruction of almighty God

- This is why the person in a scenario like this can declare with confidence "I love thy law!"
- It provides a platform, at least for survival, and often for victory
- That makes it worth meditating up all the day

- It is used for reflection by the reader
- It is an object of study
- During not just a portion of the day, but all day

- If enemies are ever-near
- The follower of God must be ever-ready
- Prepared in mind and heart to act in accordance with God's will

- What else does this kind of reflection on the word provide?

Psalm 119:99-100

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

- There are no teachers in the world that know more than God
- No teachers that can communicate with more effectiveness than God
- It's not that teachers have nothing good to say
- Of course, if they point us to Him, they have a great deal of good to say
- But nothing beats going directly to the source
- The same is true of teachers from ages gone by
- People who are old or who have already died and left us their writings
- Any number of them may be helpful, but going directly to God and acting in obedience is best
- When verse 99 talks about "understanding" it is referring to insight and prudence
- This is what study can provide
- Verse 99 says "understand" - and that is a different word
- That means to have discernment, to be capable of distinguishing
- When we have insight and can discern, we are capable of living out Godliness
- But this only comes when we deeply consider, with careful attention
- And that results in other actions...

Psalm 119:101-102

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

- The Bible can keep us from doing things that are wrong
- That is when we know and internalize its truth
- When we understand some not-doing is pleasing to God
- And as this verse indicates, when we are circumspect and avoid the traps of Satan
- We have the opportunity to go on in obedience
- As we are not hindered or weighed down
- Scripture also has the ability to keep us on a right path
- Obedience can be habit-forming
- As God teaches through the Bible and the work of the Holy Spirit
- It can keep us on a straight path, a narrow path
- And that is the one that leads to life eternal
- This kind of learning and living is a delight...

Psalm 119:103-104

103 How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

- The more we partake of God's word the sweeter it is to us
- While falsehood becomes bitter to us

- There is no experience greater in the world than being enlightened by scripture
- That which is against scripture, which is against God, is to be hated
- There is no understanding in the false way - the unscriptural way
- But God's precepts help us discern and distinguish

- All this learning and growing is accomplished in us for a reason...

Psalm 119:105-106

105 NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

- We are going to need a light in this world
- Things can get dark quickly
- Not even the path directly ahead of us can often be seen
- But God's word can light that path
- It can show us where to safely and securely step
- So we do not get off-course or fall

- Why would we not then commit ourselves (without reservation) to obedience?
- A victorious life - a joyful life - demands righteousness
- To live successfully, we must live rightly

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2022