



## **The Power of the Living Word (Psalm 119 pt. 2)**

**Let's Pray: Heavenly Father, we praise you that your Word is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, the sword of the Spirit; speak to our hearts from your Word and change us by your Spirit for Jesus' sake, Amen.**

### **Bible Reading as per PPT:**

**During lockdown**, you may have acquired a new gadget in order to work from home.

My question is, did you read the manual, whether online or on paper?  
**If you're like me, you probably didn't.**

**If I attempt to read a camera manual, for example, and they are the worst** – I'm asleep in seconds.

Forget sleep clinics all you need is a gadget manual.  
So, don't keep it with your gadget – just by your bed!

### **Why is this so often the case?**

Well we may think we know best anyway, although manufacturers say we only ever use 20% of what the gadget (computers) can actually do.

**But another reason is that the manual has no power and no grace – no power or grace to motivate us, encourage us, speak to us, or comfort us in times of frustration and anger!**

It is dead and often gets outdated very quickly.

**Whereas another kind of 'manual', the 'manual' for living life to the full - the Bible, is very different.**

**(OHP) Now** we may decide to ignore it and go our own way at our peril, but it really does have power to motivate, encourage, comfort, warn and

correct (**Psalm 119.9**), to make us wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, to show us the way and then to keep us walking in the way of the word (**Psalm 119.10-11**), so we may know the blessedness of obedience (**Psalm 119.1**) in our own relationship with God, by his grace.

**(OHP)** For it is living and active, the sword of the Spirit, as it's God's word, the word of Christ, the word of his grace which speaks to our hearts, enters our hearts and changes us by his Spirit. And by our hearts I don't mean our 'tickers' but what the Bible calls your heart – the core of your being - your will, which impacts on your mind and your spiritual heartbeat. This is a key message of **Psalm 119**.

So what's powering your heart?

**You see, it's been said the Psalms are a spiritual cardiograph.** The more we're at home in the Psalms, the healthier our spiritual condition.

This is certainly true of **Psalm 119**, which says that the way we're to delight in the Lord and feed on him, is to delight in, and feed on his Word – to love his law, and then to sing it, so to speak, in the power of the Spirit, as we go about our daily lives.

**Last week we saw that the verses of Psalm 119.1-8 are a real challenge for us.**

**Yet we need to learn to echo this deep longing for holiness, by God's grace.**

You see **Romans 8.29** says it's God's purpose for us that, after being rescued by him – **by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, that we're to become 'conformed to the image of his Son' or grow in holiness, even though that won't happen perfectly until heaven.**

**But I wonder**, if we're so worried not to make the mistake of suggesting we can become **perfect this side of heaven**, that we fail to remind ourselves of the urgent need and longing for **holiness now and to co-operate with the Holy Spirit in that.**

**Psalm 119** says that we need to really grasp **Psalm 119.1-2** and **Psalm 119.4**: that only **deep holiness of heart will bring blessing.**

**So, I wonder if our main issue isn't actually cheap grace.**  
**Photo...OHP**

**(OHP) Cheap grace** says of **Psalm 119.1-8**: ‘*This is a very high standard. And frankly it’s a bit too tough, so I’ll just thank God that Jesus kept the standard for me, so that I no longer need to.*’

**Isn’t that what we think, say and do at least sometimes?** But it’s just not true according to **Psalm 119**.

You and I need to live out **Psalm 119.5** in response to all that God has done for us in Christ and work out what God works in us (**Philippians 2.12-13**), in what is a very fuzzy world and wider church and be a Daniel. **Psalm 119.5**:

*Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!*

**The Lord make me like that.** Shouldn’t that be our prayer? For the **blessedness of obedience** in relationship with God is a blessedness we should **long** for. Look at **Psalm 119.1**:

*Blessed are those whose way is blameless* [not sinless but walking the way of obedience].

**But you say How? How is all this possible?**

Well that’s answered in **Psalm 119.9-16** which we’re focussing on today. The first verse of which directly answers the how.

Look at **Psalm 119.9**:

*How can a young man* [and of course not only the young or men] *keep his way pure?* [Answer] *By guarding it according to your word.*

**So, the answer is by the means of God’s Word.**

And this is the main theme of **Psalm 119.9-16**.

The means of obedience in relationship with God is his word.

His word is /has personally taught us by him and in response we’re not to neglect it, but rather we’re to prayerfully meditate on it, store it up and consciously keep it.

**So these verses say a great deal about what our relationship to God’s Word should be – the kind of heart we need (in other words, a whole heart - from God – Psalm 119.10) when we hear or read God’s Word in the first place; the discipline (‘I will not forget’ Psalm 119.16); the storing up in the heart etc. It’s such a helpful look at**

what a healthy believer's relationship to God's Word looks like. **Psalm 119.9-12** focus on the word in the heart and **Psalm 119.13-16** follow that with the response of the lips.

**So first:**

**(OHP) THE WORD IN THE HEART Psalm 119.9-12**

**The word in the heart has power to keep us walking in the way of the word**

*These verses teach that the word that calls us to walk the way is at the same time the word of his grace. This word can enter the heart and enable us to walk this way. It comes from outside and weaves its way into our heart. So, these verses sing the music of grace. **Do you see?***

**There's a two-way dynamic going on.** On the one hand, he seeks the Lord with his whole heart, **Psalm 119.10**. He guards his path according to the word **Psalm 119.9**. On the other hand, he recognises that he can only do this as that promise is stored up in his heart **Psalm 119.11**. He knows that by nature he will always wander from the commandments **Psalm 119.10**. **Only the word in the heart can keep us in the way of the word.**

**One of my greatest pleasures in Ministry is**

**a) to lead people to faith.**

**And then perhaps just as (B) important...teaching them (and anyone else) the way they should go...by encouraging them in the Gospel and their lives... (That why I guess my main ministry is Pastor Teacher...)**

**Often Folk** began to want to know and follow Christ. **God's word had entered their hearts...**As they listened, read and eventually spoke the word of God, it entered their hearts.

*It didn't enter by sitting cross-legged with an empty mind.*

*It came through hearing and reading the word of God.*

*The sword of the Spirit changes the human heart.*

**It happened to me too. Romans 5.8 8 but 'God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**

**Is Word entered my heart 43 years ago.** And if you'd like to help others hear and read the word of God so that it may enter their heart – why not invite them to read, John's Gospel with you over zoom or over a coffee in the garden.

**Hebrews 4.12** says:

***The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

Do you believe that?

**And it's such a delightful thing when that word does enter someone's heart.**

You can sense the amazement in **Psalm 119.12**:

*Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes!*

That is, he prays, '**Teach me to do them!**' So this isn't teach me the answers to the Times Crossword, that I may be clever and do well in a Bible study.

**No, it's 'Teach me to walk, that I may not wander, stumble or fall',** but rather grow, know God's blessing and humbly be a blessing to others.

**So, do you see that Psalm 119 is about the habits that change the heart?** For the word that first enters the heart in Christian conversion goes on entering week by week when that word is preached, heard or read.

It weaves its way into us, when we receive with humility the word that's already been implanted, in our hearts (**James 1.21**).

(OHP) And **James 1.19-27** states that it's not only to be humbly received but also sung:

***Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore, put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. If anyone thinks he's religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.***

**Did you get that?** Humbly allow God's implanted word to work in you by his Spirit and then sing it out, to change us and the world, which brings us secondly to:

**(OHP) THE WORD ON THE LIPS Psalm 119.13-16**

**The word in the heart bubbles out through delighted lips**

The movement here in Psalm 119.13-16 is from the mouth of God to the heart of the believer and then on to the lips. God speaks.

*That word is stored away in the heart and that heart overflows into lips that declare with joy that word.*

The word **delight** in Psalm 119.14 has the sense of a **festive rejoicing**. A genuine bubbling over with joy.

***Bubbles have come to mean something else during Covid 19, but here the word in the heart, bubbles out through delighted lips.***

To what extent? Psalm 119.14:

*I delight in the way of your testimonies as much as in all riches!*

**The champagne corks of our hearts should be popping in response to God's Word.** I wonder if that's how we react to the word in the heart?

So there's great delight here but notice also meditation (Psalm 119.15). So, the lips here aren't chiefly speaking to others but rather the believer is reading aloud to him or herself.

**And this meditation on God's Word is a source of great delight.**

**Why? Because the word is the word of his grace.**

**And surely this should be even more true for us today as the Spirit of God dwells in us as believers forever.**

I've heard a couple of Christians from Eastern Europe and East Asia say that they speak chapters of the Bible out loud to themselves each day, something they learned to do while being in jail for their faith in Jesus.

It keeps them going and growing as they find the spoken words actually catch hold of them, take them by surprise, and ambush them with grace and joy as they weave their way into their hearts.

You could find it powerful too.

**It's the word of Christ and therefore the word of grace.** It's the word which has the power to change the human heart.

**So, let's learn to read, hear, and meditate on, and then to sing and live this Psalm.**

Let's believe that blessing comes by walking the way of the word in the power of the Spirit.

**Let's long that we'll walk that way with a whole heart from God. And let's not despair but look to the word of his grace and receive it humbly.**

What habits and disciplines do you have in order to guard your way according to his word and to store up his word of grace in your heart? Why not think about that in response to this Psalm?

**God bless you as you read and meditate on his word and sing it and put it into practice this week. Amen!**

**(Prayer as per ppt)**

**KNOW WHO YOU ARE and WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR YOU...**

**You are a child of God.**

**You are forgiven.**

**You are chosen.**

**You are more than a conqueror through Christ.**

**You are loved.**

**You are an overcomer.**

**You are blessed.**

**You are healed.**

**You are delivered.**

**You are redeemed.**

**You are filled with purpose.**

**You are all of this and so much more ... Amen**

**Closing Prayer:** There are times in our journey called life where we reach a "fork in the road".

When you reach a fork in the road, there is a division that takes place and a decision has to be made.

You have to decide what you are going to stick with and which way you are going to go. As we look at our lives today.

There is so much sickness, disease, and turmoil going on in the earth.

### **It's time to make a decision.**

Are you going to go God's way or the world's way?

Are you going to pray and trust God to bring healing to the land in every area or are you going to put your trust in yourself and other people and try to take matters in your own hands?

### **I choose God.**

He is omnipotent and omnipresent. In other words, He is all-powerful and everywhere present.

The healing we need and the change we need in the earth can only be found in Him and done by Him.

This world just needs to believe Him, trust Him, obey Him, and turn back to Him. He wants us to want Him.

Follow the fork in the road that requires you to walk in faith and to follow God!

### **It's time for a release.**

It's time to release some things to God.

Father today we release the hurt, the pain, the worry, and the doubt we have been feeling to You.

Father we know that You are God.

We know that You said to cast our cares on You for You care for us.

**So**, Father we cast everything that has been weighing us down over to You. Father we know that we can't fix anything in and of ourselves, but we also know that all things are possible in and with You.

Jude:

<sup>24</sup> Now, to the one with enough power to prevent you from stumbling *into sin* and bring you faultless before his glorious presence to stand before him with ecstatic delight, <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Saviour, through our Lord Jesus Christ, be *endless* glory and majesty, great power and authority—from before he created time, now, and throughout all the ages of eternity. Amen!