

Sunday Night Message

May 22, 2016

Psalm 119

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 119:17 - 24

Introduction

We are continuing our examination of the longest Psalm as well as the longest chapter of the Bible. As we discussed last week, this psalm is a Hebrew acrostic where every eight verses are separated into sections where the first letter of each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first eight verses each begin with “Aleph”, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Verses 9 – 16 all begin with “Beth”; verses 17 – 24 all begin with Gimel; and, so on.

We do not know the writer of this psalm, though we think it must have been a “high profile” person, perhaps a king or a priest. Nor do we know the historical context. There is no doubt, however, as to the theme of the psalm. 170 out of the 175 verses in this psalm speak directly regarding the Word of God. The writer of this psalm is expressing his love and devotion to the Word of God, and is encouraging us to do the same.

"GIMEL."

Gimel is the third letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. Every line in verses 17 – 24 begin with the letter Gimel.

We see in this third section of Psalm 119 how the Word of God relates to three different attributes of God’s children - believers.

I **We Are Servants (vs. 17, 23 – also 38, 49, 65, 76, 84, 122, 124, 125, 135, 140, 176)**

Notice also v. 21 – It takes humility to be a servant. The proud are the opposite of servants – and they hold no value in the Scriptures.

The Word of God is absolutely imperative for the servant of God. Since the servant of God is in submission to God, he is also in submission to God’s Word.

“Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.” (Psalm 119:17)

We do not know who this anonymous psalmist was, but we do know that he considered himself God’s servant.

Samuel was instructed by Eli when He heard God speaking to say, “speak Lord for thy servant heareth.” This writer, like Samuel, Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel, James, Paul, and Timothy were all ascribed with the title servant of God. Many people want a title, but few want the title of servant. Jesus was also a servant and taught servant leadership to His followers. Remember when He washed the disciples’ feet.

Turn to Mark 10:35 – 45

God expects us to be his servants, and He always deals bountifully with His servants. He supplies all that they need in order to fulfill His purpose, and He also gives them some of their desires. He also expects us to serve each other; and if we are to be servants of God, we must also be:

II We Are Students (v. 18; 24)

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Psalm 119:18)

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Notice that the psalmist asked the Lord to open his eyes.

God has given us His Word, and today He has given us the indwelling Holy Spirit that enables us to understand the “things of the Spirit of God”, but we still need to pray and ask the Lord to open our eyes that we may see and understand the Truth.

Turn to Ephesians 1:15 – 23

Notice also in v. 20 – the writer speaks of his desire for God’s Word.

Jesus said:

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

(Matthew 5:6)

Job said:

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

Would to God that more of God's servants hungered after the Word of God.

Reading it every morning, and coming to hear it preached and taught as often as the church doors are opened.

The word contains the principles that we need and also gives us the spiritual nourishment that strengthens us today to serve God on this godless planet as His ambassadors.

III We Are Strangers (v. 19, 23)

"I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me." (Psalm 119:19)

The song says, "this world is not my home, I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue."

The Bible says that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth:

Turn to Hebrews 11:8 – 16

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" (Philippians 3:20)

"My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." (Psalm 119:20)

"Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments." (Psalm 119:21)

"Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies." (Psalm 119:22)

"Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes." (Psalm 119:23)

"Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors." (Psalm 119:24)