

Psalm 119:25-32

From A-Z, God is Good

7.2.2023

Introduction:

A. Have you ever made something worse by trying harder?

1. I can think of several times when working on a car or putting together a piece of furniture that I reach a point where I get frustrated.
2. **When I'm frustrated, trying harder makes things worse.**
3. On the contrary, when I step back and take a break, often the solution comes to mind or my fingers work better and pieces "fall" into place.
4. The same can be true with lots of things.
 - a. Years ago, when I did some competition shooting, the natural tendency when making misses was to shoot faster instead of slowing down, focusing, and making each movement count.
 - b. Sometimes, the cure to your golf swing is not more practice but going back to the basics of your swing.
 - c. When professional athletes get in a rut, they often compare where they are with their swings or shots with previous moments when things were better, purer, and more comfortable.

B. I believe the same can be true with our relationship with Jesus and the Church.

1. I am all for complexity and going deep.

2. But when life is hard, overwhelming, or too much to bear, its simplicity that I crave.

3. What I need most in those moments is to hear and know from God.

That brings us to our text today, Psalm 119

Introduction to the Text

A. Psalm 119 is an acrostic poem.

1. Each stanza of 8 verses follows the Hebrew alphabet.

2. You will notice a Hebrew letter with English transliteration above each stanza.

3. This is followed by 8 verses, with the main theme of every verse and chapter focusing on God's Word or Law, Torah.

a. Although 7 different words are used to represent Torah, they all carry similar meanings.

b. The Law, thus God, is good.

B. When it all seems overwhelming, we must remember that God is Good.

1. God is the only One that is Good.

a. Every other relationship has the capacity to fail, disappoint, shame, or sin.

b. But God is good.

2. Psalm 119 uses every letter of the Hebrew alphabet to get across this point: God is good.

3. Even though the writer's life was full of struggle, pain, anxiety, and fear, he knew where to turn in the midst of his struggle.

C. Today I want to share a word that I hope encourages and refocuses our attention.

1. I'm too easily riled up or distracted by those things that, although important, are tangential to the focus of Scripture and Eternity.

2. Today, and maybe this whole month, I'm calling all of us to refocus our eyes on Jesus.

D. This week, this message is for me, a "chiropractic" word.¹

1. The word "chiro" means "hand" and the word practice means practical. Thus, together, it means "done by hand".

2. I'm praying that for myself and for each of us, that God's word aligns, shapes, and forms us through this text so that we will all align with what God is doing and wanting to do.

TEXT

Psalm 119:25–32 (CSB)

T *Daleth*

²⁵ My life is down in the dust;
give me life through your word.

²⁶ I told you about my life,
and you answered me;
teach me your statutes.

²⁷ Help me understand
the meaning of your precepts
so that I can meditate on your wonders.

²⁸ I am weary from grief;

¹ Etymology. From chiro- ("hand") + practic; from Ancient Greek χείρ (kheír, "hand") + πρακτικός (praktikós, "concerned with action").

strengthen me through your word.

²⁹ Keep me from the way of deceit
and graciously give me your instruction.

³⁰ I have chosen the way of truth;
I have set your ordinances before me.

³¹ I cling to your decrees;
LORD, do not put me to shame.

³² I pursue the way of your commands,
for you broaden my understanding.

Three Comments from Vs. 25-26

Two Questions

One Invitation

1. Psalm 119 is both Wisdom and Lament.

A. The Psalms is Hebrew Poetry.

1. It served as the basis for prayer and worship for both Israel and the Church.
2. It is the Prayer Book and the Hymnal of all who call upon God.
3. Even today, the words of the Psalms are equally inspired, the same as the words of Jesus and the writings of Paul.
4. This is because 2 Timothy 3:15-16 tell us that ALL of Scripture is Inspired and profitable.

B. While most of Psalm 119 is Wisdom, there is an element of lament.

1. Wisdom provides instruction on how to live.
2. Lament expresses grief or sorrow.
3. The writer is certainly under distress throughout this Psalm.

a. He starts Psalm 119 by saying, “Blessed, happy, or content” are those who walk in the Lord.

b. Yet the Psalmist is completely far from feeling blessed, happy, or content.

4. We don’t know who wrote Psalm 119.

a. It was possibly written by David.

b. Some propose Ezra, the scribe.

c. Perhaps it is anonymous for a reason, so that all who read it may relate to what the message is.

C. King David is raw in this Psalm.

1. The first two letters are pretty upbeat and happy.

2. But then the mood gets real, honest, and relatable.

3. The Psalmist is not in a good place.

a. He is not having fun.

b. He is stressed, perplexed, and longing for a change.

c. For 176 verses, he expresses his hurt and pain.

4. A few examples:

Psalm 119:107 (CSB) ¹⁰⁷I am severely afflicted; LORD, give me life according to your word.

Psalm 119:49–53 (CSB)

T Zayin

⁴⁹Remember your word to your servant;
you have given me hope through it.

⁵⁰This is my comfort in my affliction:
Your promise has given me life.

⁵¹The arrogant constantly ridicule me,

but I do not turn away from your instruction.

⁵² LORD, I remember your judgments from long ago
and find comfort.

⁵³ Fury seizes me because of the wicked
who reject your instruction.

4. The writer perfectly captures the human condition.

a. He's hurt by betrayal.

b. He's angry and furious because people reject God's
instruction, causing others harm in the process.

c. If this is David, then we see him far from feeling like the
same man who killed Goliath; instead he feels afflicted,
ridiculed, and overwhelmed.

D. The beauty of the Psalms is that they encourage us to be honest
with God and ourselves.

1. So much of what we do is fake or dishonest.

2. We act as if God cannot handle our frustration, our pain, or
our disappointment.

a. Yet, God in His goodness, left for us the prayers and
words of King David and others as examples of the kind of
relationship He encourages us to have.

b. A relationship that cannot handle honest words and
thoughts is unhealthy.

c.

2. Psalm 119 expresses a longing for God's Word.

A. 7 different words are used to represent Torah; they all carry the
same meaning.

1. The words are:²

- ‘ēdâ, translated here as “**decree**” (used 23 times)
- mišpāt, “**ordinance**” (23 times)
- ḥōq, “**statute**” (22 times)
- dābār, “**word**” (22 times)
- mišwâ, “**commandment**” (22 times)
- piqqûd, “**precept**” (21 times)
- ‘imrâ, “**promise**” (19 times)

2. These words help express the totality of God’s Word.

a. Not only the commandments, not only the promises, not only the decrees, but every word that comes from God.

b. Jesus quoted this Old Testament truth in Matthew 4:4 (CSB)

“He answered, “**It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**”

B. The Psalmist longed for God’s Word because he valued the one behind the Word.

1. A letter written to me by a close friend, my spouse, or a trusted leader has far more value than a junk mailer.

2. For example, King David loved the Lord and thus desired the Word.

a. Even when the Word was a message of judgment from Nathan, David loved the Word.

b. Even when David was told he couldn’t build the Temple, he respected the word.

² deClaissé-Walford, Nancy. 2014.

c. Jesus prayed, "Take this cup from me" and yet submitted to the Word of God to die for the sins of the world.

d. The Apostle Paul prayed for deliverance from a thorn in the flesh, yet God answered, "My grace is sufficient."

e. You can't love God's yes and reject His no.

3. We all must

C. David, although far from perfect, loved the Lord and longed to hear from Him.

1. This is one of the things that made David a man after God's own heart.

2. It wasn't his skills as a warrior, but his passionate pursuit of God through His word.

3. God does not require perfect people, but people who are willing to be men and women who love His Word.

Third comment:

3. Psalm 119 is the Psalm of Pentecost

A. It would be relatively easy to dismiss this Psalm because it's Old Testament.

1. But what if I told you this Psalm was repeated often by Jesus, His disciples, and all of the Jews between King David and Jesus, the Son of David?

2. Psalm 119 sits in a group of Psalms called Hallel.

a. Hallel (Hallelujahs) were read walking up to Jerusalem.

b. Psalm 113-118 were read journeying to the Temple for Passover.

B. Psalm 119, however, was recited not at Passover but at Pentecost.

1. "It is recited at the Feast of Pentecost, the spring festival observed fifty days after Passover, which celebrates the giving of the torah to Moses at Sinai during the wilderness wanderings."³

2. Every year, for hundreds of years, faithful people read aloud Psalm 119 at the Feast of Pentecost.

3. As part of their life and spiritual journey, they celebrated the giving of the Law each year.

C. Yet, I cannot but think it was no accident that on the Day of Pentecost, the same disciples that received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit had ALSO recited Psalm 119.

1. Just as water Baptism is full-immersion representing the complete giving over of ourselves to God, the Spirit Baptizes us fully.

2. Our victories, our struggles, our emotions, our trials, and our desires are brought under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

2 Questions

Question #1: Does your life feel like you are down in the dust?

A. This may seem overly dramatic.

1. But have you ever felt so dry and dead that you

2. Who in this room has thought about quitting?

3. **Don't RAISE YOUR HAND** Who in this room has considered suicide recently?

a. Maybe you considered quitting your spouse or considering leaving the Church or, worse, Jesus.

³ deClaisse-Walford, Nancy. 2014. "[Book Five of the Psalter: Psalms 107-150.](#)" In *The Book of Psalms*, edited by E. J. Young, R. K. Harrison, and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., 870. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

b. Have you ever wondered how long you can keep going?
When were you going to catch a break?

4. If so, you can relate to the writer of Psalms 119.

5. But instead of quitting, he asked the Lord to revive Him.

B. I want to encourage someone in this room today with this truth:

1. God never asked you to pretend like things are better than they are.

2. Instead, **the place of miracles begins in a place of honesty.**

a. When Jesus asked the blind man, "What do you want?" the blind man had to admit to being blind.

b. Before Jesus fed the five thousand, the people had to admit they were hungry.

c. Before Jesus binds the broken-hearted, we must confess our broken hearts.

3. Does your life and soul feel like it is so beaten down that you are eating the dust?

a. If so, that's ok.

b. Because that position leads us to our petition.

Question #2: Have you asked to be revived?

A. This is the first of seven prayers in these 8 verses.

1. "Give me life through your word."

2. The Hebrew says, "revive me".

B. Yes, our lives may be in the dust, but we are to pray for God to revive us again.

1. Nine times in Psalm 119, the writer mentions the need for life and revival from God.

2. This is a gift that only comes from God.

C. The Good news is that we are invited to pray and receive life, revival, and renewal from God.

1. The Torah could not bring life, the Apostle Paul said.

2. But the Spirit brings life and freedom.

3. And on the Day of Pentecost, the day the Jews had recited Psalm 119, God sent His Spirit so that we might experience life, revival, and renewal.

D. If today you are feeling dry, dead, hopeless, or helpless, know that God invites you to bring your feelings, doubts, emotions, and experiences to Him.

Invitation: Notice the Invitation.

Psalm 119:26 (CSB)

²⁶I told you about my life,

and you answered me;

teach me your statutes.

A. Every person needs a friend, a pastor, and a counselor.

1. We all need people to talk with, pray with, and share with.

2. We were designed to live in a community.

3. But there are times when we take our hurts, opinions, feelings, and feelings to the wrong place.

4. When we do, we live out of alignment.

- a. As great as other believers are, there is only one who can help us.

- b. There is only one person that can revive us, heal us, and save us.

B. When you don't know where to go, go back to where it all started.

1. Go to Jesus, the LIVING WORD.
2. Go to Jesus, who listens to our problems and offers us to cast all of our burdens upon Him.
3. Go To Jesus, who teaches us in Spirit and in Truth.
4. Go to Jesus, who a bruised reed He does not break,
5. Go to Jesus, Who does not snuff out a smoldering wick but encourages it to burn again.

C. Today's Invitation

Matthew 11:28 (CSB)

²⁸ "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

1. I invite all who will to come to Jesus this morning.
2. Tell Him all about your troubles.
3. Tell Him what feels too heavy to carry.
4. Tell Him about your life, and let Him teach you His ways and revive you again.