

13-Scholar becomes a saint.docx

Psalms 119:97-104

To know Him and Make Him Known

How should we live? Where is the guide to life? Every new car comes with an owner's manual. But where is the owner's manual for us? The psalmist answers in this section that the owner's manual for life, particularly spiritual life is the Word of God.

So how do you deepen your relationship with the Lord? Our relationship to the Lord is determined by our following His will and His will is revealed in His Word. We cannot be in His will if we are not in His Word.

The psalmist thus declared his love and devotion to the Word which gave him more understanding and wisdom than his enemies, teachers, and elders (vv. 97-100). By God's Word he had kept himself pure (vv. 101-102; 9, 104) and tasted the sweetness of God's promises (v. 103). Insight and purity [holiness] (v. 104) result from being "Made Wise By The Word" (CIT). May we too meditate on God's Word throughout the day and grow in understanding and wisdom. [Mem is the thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet.]

1) CHANGED BY THE WORD, 97-100.

- a) Verse 97 begins with a shout of love for the Word. "O how I love Your law!"
- b) The concluding phrase proves that he is telling the truth.
- c) "It is my meditation all the day."
- d) Note the exclamation.
- e) He loves God's Word and boldly expresses it.
- f) We love it for its truth.
- g) We love it for its wisdom.
- h) We love it for its transforming power. ..for its comfort..for its encouragement... for its guidance... We love it for its purity or holiness.
- i) We love it for it reveals the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- j) Because he loves the Word he meditates on it all day long.
- k) He has so saturated himself in the Word that it is his constant companion and guide.
- l) Meditation takes time.
- m) We must first understand what the Bible says which requires study-a little digging.
- n) Most important of all, we must apply to our everyday lives what we read and learn.
- o) Anything less will produce little or no spiritual growth.
- p) There is much to love in the Bible but only as we study it and obey it will it change our lives.
- q) So why is he so preoccupied with God's Word?
- r) Why does he fill his mind with it rather than with the news paper, junk novels, or MTV?
- s) The answer is that through it he has become wise.
- t) The Word of God is teaching him how to live.
- u) It's God's owner's manual for life.
- v) **ILL--Some Christian women had gathered in a home for BIBLE STUDY. When the teacher discovered that she had forgotten to bring her Bible, the hostess offered her the use of her own Bible and went to get it. Looking where she usually kept it, she was surprised that it wasn't there. She searched for it every where but still no Bible.**

What will those women think of me, she thought, if I can't even find my own Bible! Running upstairs, she found the cleaning woman, who had just started working there. "Betty," she asked, "have you seen my Bible anyplace?" The maid responded with a "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" "Why in the world do you say that?" the distressed woman asked. "Because," Betty replied with a big smile on her face, "the first thing I do when I begin at a new place is hide the Bible. I do it just to find out how long it takes people to miss it! I put yours in the linen closet under the sheets."

- w) Many people, even Christians, seldom open the Bible to read it, meditate on it, or study it.
- x) And because they fail to partake of the "milk" and "meat" of the Word, they are spiritually undernourished.
- y) If someone should hide your Bible, how long would it take before you missed it?
- z) May we not neglect the Word, not even for a day.
- aa) The importance of the Scriptures is powerfully stated in verse 98. "Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, For they are ever mine."
- bb) Continually studying the Word made the psalmist wiser than his enemies.
- cc) He was not distracted or seduced by his enemies lies, for God's commandments are ever with him.
- dd) Because God's Word was his permanent possession, he has been made wiser than those who try to defeat him.
- ee) **ILL--An example of this was seen when a policeman in Haifa, a port city in Israel, was CHASING SMUGGLERS who were using a cart pulled by a couple of donkeys. When they saw the policeman in pursuit, they realized they didn't have a chance, so they jumped off the cart and escaped. Very devout in his study of Scripture, the policeman devised a plan. He didn't feed the donkeys for three days, then let them go because, from Isaiah 1:3, which says the ass knows his master's crib, he knew that the donkeys would lead him to the home of their master—which they did. [Courson, Jon: Jon Courson's Application Commentary : Vol. 2: Psalms-Malachi. Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2006, S. 149.]**
- ff) Verse 99 reveals that the God's Word has given the psalmist more insight than his teachers. "I have more insight than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation."
- gg) Human thoughts, however brilliant, come and go.
- hh) When they are based upon God's Word, they may even be trustworthy and true.
- ii) Nevertheless, by learning to use the Bible for ourselves, we can have more understanding than our teachers because we have gone to the source of eternal wisdom.
- jj) Notice again how the Word made him wiser than others.
- kk) He gain insight by constantly contemplating upon the Word.
- ll) The psalmist declares that he even understands more than the elders in verse 100. "I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Your precepts."
- mm) Now he goes beyond his teachers to those who have the wisdom of a lifetime.
- nn) Old men are those whose experience entitles them to be wiser.
- oo) Not even they can compete with God's Word. He transcends them, "Because I keep Your precepts."
- pp) He is not boasting of superior intelligence but asserting that the highest endowment of wisdom comes from doing the will of God as revealed in the Word of God.

2) CLEANSED BY THE WORD, 101-103.

- a) Verse 101 relates a practical value that comes from meditating upon the Word of God. "I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word."
- b) As we walk in the way of God, His Spirit enables us to keep His Word.
- c) To keep God's Word is obey its precepts.
- d) The keeping of God's way is incompatible with walking in the evil way.
- e) Thus the Word of God has restrained the psalmist's feet "from every evil way."
- f) God's Word is the guide for his life.
- g) It is the owner's manual that shows him where to walk.
- h) It keeps him from evil, and, by implication, directs him in righteousness.
- i) In verse 102 we learn that he has not departed from God's ordinance because he has been taught by God Himself. "I have not turned aside from Your ordinances, For You Yourself have taught me."
- j) These ordinances reveal God's justice and order life according to His will.
- k) The psalmist proclaims that his faithfulness to God and His Word have come from God and what He has taught him.
- l) Many Christians read their Bibles.
- m) They flip through the pages and take a quick look at a verse here or there simply to satisfy their curiosity.
- n) They admire its thought-provoking expressions, but they don't study its deeper truths.
- o) It fascinates them but doesn't change them.
- p) For when you study the Bible in a hit or miss fashion, you miss far more than you hit.
- q) A true student of the Word is not a person with a big head, full of all sorts of knowledge, but one who has an obedient heart and is committed to do God's will.
- r) While God's truth is food for our souls, it is not a "buffet" from which we select only the things we like.
- s) If the Bible tells us something is wrong, We stay off that path.
- t) If God tells us something is right, we do not abandon it.
- u) Is the will of God burdensome to the psalmist?
- v) Hardly.
- w) He confesses the Word's sweetness to him in verse 103. "How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"
- x) Though it was an acquired taste, the psalmist now enjoys the Word.
- y) Honey would be the sweetest thing the psalmist could taste.
- z) God's Word has become like honey to him, and it should become so to us also.
- aa) It gives our life the sweetness and energy we need to obey His commands.
- bb) The unsaved person finds the Bible boring, but the devoted child of God feeds on the Scriptures and enjoys the sweet taste of truth.
- cc) This is what it means to go beyond Bible study.
- dd) As he takes in the Word of God, it is a pleasure.
- ee) There is a delight in knowing that we have a sure guide to life.

3) CHARGED BY THE WORD, 104.

- a) The Word also charges us up so that we stand against evil.
- b) It is a relief in knowing that we are not left to wander alone, but as the psalmist concludes in verse 104, because we are certain as to what is right, God can empower us to stand

against deceitfulness. "From [Through] Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way."

- c) God's revelation taught him what is true and what is false.
- d) This understanding engendered by God's Word leads him not to tolerate falsehood (as in our relativistic world today where all is gray).
- e) He hates the false ways that lead to death.
- f) This is not arrogance.
- g) This is honesty, born from a man who has learned from life's owner's manual how to live.
- h) He knows that there is no eternal wisdom apart from God's precepts.
- i) Oftentimes BANK TELLERS are taught how to spot counterfeit bills by handling so many real bills that when a fake is slipped in, the teller can see and feel the difference.
- j) So too, I have found the best thing I can do with regard to deception is to know the Word so that when something is said that is contrary to Scripture, it won't sound right.

IN CLOSING

God's Word points us to the way of life. It gives understanding, insight, and wisdom to those who meditate upon it and then live out its teachings. As we grow in grace we will live and serve the Lord in ways that bring Him glory and honor. Maybe then the learned of the world will say of us as they said of Jesus first disciples in Acts 4:13. "Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." [14] "And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply."