

1

Blessing

- 1 *How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the law of the Lord.*
- 2 *How blessed are those who observe His
testimonies,
Who seek Him with all their heart.*
- 3 *They also do no unrighteousness;
They walk in His ways.*
- 4 *You have ordained Your precepts,
That we should keep them diligently.*
- 5 *Oh that my ways may be established
To keep Your statutes!*
- 6 *Then I shall not be ashamed
When I look upon all Your commandments.*
- 7 *I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of
heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.*
- 8 *I shall keep Your statutes;
Do not forsake me utterly!*

David began this psalm by introducing the idea that God's word is a *blessing* to us. Why should we recognize the word of God as a blessing, and what should we do as a result?

Blessings Come Because God Is with Us

“How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord” (Psalm 119:1).

“Do not forsake me utterly!” (Psalm 119:8).

This passage begins with an acknowledgement of being blessed. The reason we are blessed is because God does not forsake us.

James wrote, *“Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow”* (James 1:17). After the flood, the Lord made the promise to Noah, *“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”* (Genesis 8:22). These continued blessings serve a *“witness”* to Him (Acts 14:17).

Many blessings are given to man regardless of his response to them. Jesus said that the Father *“causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous”* (Matthew 5:45). Paul, in speaking of the power of Christ, said, *“He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together”* (Colossians 1:17). This world continues because of the goodness of God. Without Him, man could not exist.

We Are Blessed As We Observe His Testimonies

“How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. How blessed are those

who observe His testimonies..." (Psalm 119:1-2)

"Oh that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes!" (Psalm 119:5)

"I shall keep Your statutes; Do not forsake me utterly!" (Psalm 119:8).

However, while it is true that all men are blessed by God, those who follow His word enjoy extra blessings.

Many do not see God's expectation for us to obey as a blessing. They see God's authority as a prison from which they wish to be free (cf. Psalm 2:3). Yet this "freedom" that comes by rebelling against God is not as good as many believe. The wise man said, *"The way of transgressors is hard"* (Proverbs 13:15, KJV). He went on to say, *"Adversity pursues sinners, but the righteous will be rewarded with prosperity"* (Proverbs 13:21). Following God's word allows us to avoid the pitfalls of sin. Therefore, God's expectation for us to follow His word is not a burden but a blessing.

In order to be blessed in this way, we must *"observe His testimonies"* (Psalm 119:2). As we obey, we are to strive to be *"blameless"* (Psalm 119:1). To be blameless means we cannot be accused. This requires *consistent* obedience. Peter wrote, *"Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation"* (1 Peter 2:12). Some people, when they know we are Christians, will look for a way to accuse us of some sin. Do not make it easy on them! Live your life in such a way that their scrutiny of you causes them to glorify God rather than label you as a

hypocrite.

Furthermore, the psalmist indicated that our ways “*may be established*” as we “*keep [God’s] statutes*” (Psalm 119:5). The blessing here is a life of *stability*. Many people long for this but do not have it in their lives. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus contrasted the houses built by a wise man and a foolish man (Matthew 7:24-27). Both built houses that were subjected to severe storms and floods, but only one house stood – the house of the wise man. The only difference between the two houses was the foundation – the wise man built his house on the rock. That solid foundation was his hearing and obedience to the word of the Lord (Matthew 7:24). This was the psalmist’s point. All of us will face trouble in life. But those who have their lives built upon a solid foundation – the word of God – are blessed with a stability that transcends the temporal troubles of this life.

We also see in this passage that we must resolve to obey the word of the Lord. “*I shall keep Your statutes*” (Psalm 119:8). Faithfulness will not happen by accident. Jesus said, “*The gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it*” (Matthew 7:13-14). We will not stumble onto the right path and stagger to its end. We must seek out the truth that is found in God’s word and intentionally follow it.

We Must Seek God Wholeheartedly

*“How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
who seek Him with all their heart” (Psalm 119:2).*

“You have ordained Your precepts, that we should keep them diligently” (Psalm 119:4).

As we have seen already, observing the Lord’s testimonies leads to being blessed. But we must do so *wholeheartedly*. This requires complete and total effort on our part. The wise man wrote, *“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life”* (Proverbs 4:23). This means that seeking God wholeheartedly will affect our entire being.

Seeking God wholeheartedly means that God must be our highest priority. Jesus said, *“Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you”* (Matthew 6:33). Paul wrote, *“I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ”* (Philippians 3:8). The Lord must be first in our lives.

Seeking God wholeheartedly also means that our lives must be completely given over to Him. Paul told the saints in Rome, *“Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God”* (Romans 12:1). Jesus said that anyone who wished to be His disciple *“must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me”* (Luke 9:23). We cannot follow the Lord part of the time and keep the rest of our lives for ourselves and our desires. We must offer our lives completely to Him.

If we seek God wholeheartedly, we will follow His word. David wrote, *“You have ordained Your precepts, that we should keep them diligently”* (Psalm 119:4). We must put forth diligent effort to serve the Lord faithfully. Peter said we must apply *“all diligence”* and add to our faith (2 Peter 1:5-7). He then said,

“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble” (2 Peter 1:10). We need to be diligent – put forth a wholehearted effort – to practice God’s word.

We Must Avoid Sin and Keep a Clear Conscience

“They also do no unrighteousness; they walk in His ways” (Psalm 119:3).

“Then I shall not be ashamed when I look upon all Your commandments” (Psalm 119:6).

Many believe that Christians can *“continue in sin”* (Romans 6:1) without concern. Paul refuted this error and asked the question: *“How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”* (Romans 6:2). Jude indicated that those who teach this error have perverted the word of God by turning it into a *“license for immorality”* (Jude 4, NIV).

Our goal must be to *“do no unrighteousness”* (Psalm 119:3). John said that his first epistle – and by principle, all of the Bible – was written *“so that you may not sin”* (1 John 2:1). God’s *“commandments are righteousness”* (Psalm 119:172). Paul wrote, *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness”* (2 Timothy 3:16). In order to *“do no unrighteousness”* (Psalm 119:3) and *“not sin”* (1 John 2:1), we must follow the righteous instructions found in God’s word.

David also indicated that God’s people should keep a clear

conscience (Psalm 119:6). However, this does not mean that we keep ourselves free from guilt by ignoring God's word and adopting a human standard. Paul persecuted Christians in good conscience (Acts 23:1). Our conscience must be trained by the word of God (Hebrews 5:13-14). Once our conscience is properly trained and we observe the commandments of God, we will not need to be ashamed as we examine our lives by God's perfect standard.

We Must Give Thanks with an Upright Heart

"I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments" (Psalm 119:7).

We began by considering God's blessings. The fact that we have been blessed should cause us to *"continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name"* (Hebrews 13:15). We must not take God's blessings for granted, but be grateful for them.

But David said one must *"give thanks...with uprightness of heart"* (Psalm 119:7). Why is uprightness (being morally right) necessary? Generally, we express thanks to God through prayer (Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2). Peter, in quoting the psalmist, said, *"For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer"* (1 Peter 3:12; cf. Psalm 34:15). The wise man said, *"The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous"* (Proverbs 15:29).

We must be thankful to God. We must also be obedient to His word. The psalmist said, *"I shall give thanks...when I learn Your righteous judgments"* (Psalm 119:7). The more we know of

God's will in His word, the more thankful we ought to be.

Conclusion

Why should we pay attention to God's word and follow it? It is the way to receive God's greatest blessings. Therefore, like the psalmist, let us resolve to obey: *"I shall keep Your statutes"* (Psalm 119:8).

#2

Purity

- 9 *How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your word.*
- 10 *With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your
commandments.*
- 11 *Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.*
- 12 *Blessed are You, O Lord;
Teach me Your statutes.*
- 13 *With my lips I have told of
All the ordinances of Your mouth.*
- 14 *I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches.*
- 15 *I will meditate on Your precepts
And regard Your ways.*
- 16 *I shall delight in Your statutes;
I shall not forget Your word.*

After emphasizing the fact that God's word is a blessing to us, David discussed a characteristic that will be developed in the lives of those who faithfully follow the word – *purity*.

Following God's Word Keeps Our Way Pure

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word" (Psalm 119:9).

The reason why keeping God's word results in purity in our lives is because the word of God itself is pure. David wrote in another psalm: *"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times"* (Psalm 12:6). The wise man wrote, *"Every word of God is tested (pure, KJV); He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him"* (Proverbs 30:5). There are no impurities or deficiencies to be found in the word of God. It is perfect; therefore, it provides us with the perfect path to purity.

In the New Testament, Peter indicated that the word of God in its purity provides a foundation for our spiritual growth. *"Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation"* (1 Peter 2:2).

The Lord expects us to be *"pure in heart"* (Matthew 5:8). This is possible as we follow the word of God. Paul said, *"The goal of our instruction is love from a **pure heart** and a good conscience and a sincere faith"* (1 Timothy 1:5). We continue to teach the word of God today, just as Paul told Timothy to do, because the instructions contained in it show people how to live pure lives.

Young People Can Maintain Purity

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word" (Psalm 119:9).

It is important to note that David singled out young men as being able to be pure by following God's word. This is contrary to the "normal" image of young people that is portrayed by the world today – sexually active and obsessed with immorality. But God created us with free will. Even a "young man" can choose to do what is right. Joseph is an example of this. Despite strong, persistent temptations from Potiphar's wife to commit fornication with her, he refused her advances even when it meant having to flee from the house (Genesis 39:7-12). One is able to "flee from youthful lusts" (2 Timothy 2:22) if he will choose to do so.

Solomon wrote, *"Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things"* (Ecclesiastes 11:9). The wise man was not advising young people to experiment with immorality and do whatever feels good. Instead, he advised the young to enjoy life, but to do so knowing that they will be held accountable by God for their choices.

While it is possible for young people to maintain purity, they will not do so if they follow the world. Peter wrote, *"For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desires of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of **sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries"*** (1 Peter 4:3). If one follows the world, he will pursue the sensuality and lusts that the world pursues.

Young people also will not maintain purity if they follow after their own lusts. James said, *"Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has*

conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (James 1:14-15). Lust leads to sin. If one is to be pure, he must “flee from youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:2).

Young people maintain purity in the same way as anyone else – by following God’s word. This ought to remind us of the importance of being spiritually-minded in one’s youth. *“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, ‘I have no delight in them’” (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Paul told Timothy, “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and **purity**, show yourself an example of those who believe” (1 Timothy 4:12). Young people can do this, but they must set their minds to do so.*

God’s Word in Our Heart Is a Safeguard from Sin

“With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes” (Psalm 119:10-12).

To keep from sin, David kept God’s word in his heart. How do we put His word in our hearts?

First, we must seek God wholeheartedly (Psalm 119:10). Paul told the saints in Rome, *“Make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Romans 13:14). We cannot give any part of our lives over to sin; otherwise, we are not seeking God wholeheartedly. With all of our being we must strive to pursue the things of God rather than the lusts of the flesh.*

Second, we have to commit to faithful obedience. David expressed this commitment when he said, *“Do not let me wander from your commandments”* (Psalm 119:10). Essentially, this commitment to obedience was a commitment to purity since obedience resulted in purity (Psalm 119:9). Job expressed his commitment this way: *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?”* (Job 31:1). Committing to obey God’s word and maintain purity is crucial.

Third, we must recognize that God is to be *“blessed”* (Psalm 119:12) and, therefore, not to be sinned against (Psalm 119:11; cf. Genesis 39:9; Psalm 51:4).

Fourth, we need to have a desire to learn God’s word. David wrote, *“Teach me Your statutes”* (Psalm 119:12). We cannot keep God’s word if we do not know it (cf. Hosea 4:6).

How We Can Obtain Purity

“Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11).

It is not enough to simply have the word of God in our minds – it must be in our hearts. Many have an academic understanding of God’s word but do not live it. Paul wrote, *“You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”* (Romans 2:21).

We must do more than just know what the word of God says. It must be *“treasured in [our] heart”* (Psalm 119:11). The wise man said, *“Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life”* (Proverbs 4:23). To be pure in our lives, our hearts must be pure. For our hearts to be pure, we must

have God's word written on our hearts.

How We Can Maintain Purity

“With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways. I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word” (Psalm 119:13-16).

After we have God's word written on our hearts so that we can live pure live before Him, how can we maintain that purity? David went on to list several things we can do.

First, we must tell others of God's law (Psalm 119:13). Teaching may not be the first thing we think about as a means of maintaining purity, yet David included it here. The ability to teach is indicative of maturity and the regular practice of God's word. The Hebrew writer rebuked those who had not yet developed the ability to teach and could not partake of the “*solid food*” of God's word (Hebrews 5:12). He explained that this reflected a deficiency in maturity and ability to handle the word: “*But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil*” (Hebrews 5:14). Of course, our teaching must not be *hypocritical* (cf. Romans 2:21; Matthew 23:2-3) – we must “*practice what we preach.*” But the ability to faithfully teach the word of God helps one to maintain the purity demanded by the word of God.

Second, we should rejoice in God's testimonies (Psalm 119:14). Remember that God's instructions are for our good. The wise man, in passing down the wisdom that came from

above (cf. Proverbs 8:22), advised his son, “*My son, give attention to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding; that you may observe discretion and your lips may reserve knowledge. For the lips of an adulteress drip honey and smoother than oil is her speech; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of Sheol*” (Proverbs 5:1-5). Though this is specifically addressing fornication, the principle extends to all sin in general. The momentary pleasure it may bring is not worth the devastating consequences. Following God’s word helps us to avoid the pain, sorrow, and bitterness that inevitably comes with sin.

Third, we need to meditate upon God’s precepts (Psalm 119:15). Paul wrote, “*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, **whatever is pure**, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things*” (Philippians 4:8). The more we keep God’s word at the forefront of our minds, the better equipped we will be to keep our lives pure.

Fourth, we are to regard God’s ways (Psalm 119:15). This is the idea of having *respect* for God and His word. This respect must be grounded in fear and reverence. “*The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility*” (Proverbs 15:33). We must fear God so that we will regard His ways and conform to His standard of purity.

Fifth, we should delight in God’s statutes (Psalm 119:16). Elsewhere, David described the one whose “*delight is in the law of the Lord*” as being “*blessed*” and “*like a tree firmly planted by streams of water*” (Psalm 1:1-3). Remember that God’s word is the way of blessings and stability.

Sixth, we must remember God's word (Psalm 119:16). If we forget God's law, we will not practice it. James contrasted the *"forgetful hearer"* with the *"effectual doer"* of the word (James 1:25). He wrote, *"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves"* (James 1:22). Those who forget God's word will inevitably revert back to the life of *"filthiness"* and *"wickedness"* they left when they came to the Lord (James 1:21).

Conclusion

If we want to obtain and maintain purity, then we need to follow God's word. We must treasure His word in our hearts and keep His commandments.

#3

Companionship

- 17 *Deal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.*
- 18 *Open my eyes, that I may behold
Wonderful things from Your law.*
- 19 *I am a stranger in the earth;
Do not hide Your commandments from me.*
- 20 *My soul is crushed with longing
After Your ordinances at all times.*
- 21 *You rebuke the arrogant, the cursed,
Who wander from Your commandments.*
- 22 *Take away reproach and contempt from me,
For I observe Your testimonies.*
- 23 *Even though princes sit and talk against me,
Your servant meditates on Your statutes.*
- 24 *Your testimonies also are my delight;
They are my counselors.*

People value friendships, family relationships, and being part of a community. But often, God's people will be strangers and outcasts. His word provides comfort and guidance when we feel as the psalmist did – as “*a stranger in the earth*” (Psalm 119:19). In this lesson, we will consider the idea of God's word

providing *companionship* for us.

If We Follow God's Word, the World Will Reject Us

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

"Even though princes sit and talk against me, Your servant meditates on Your statutes" (Psalm 119:23).

Why would David feel like *"a stranger in the earth"* (Psalm 119:19)? Why will God's people today feel like strangers? It is because we seek to follow God's commandments. This determination is an automatic difference between the people of God and the people of the world. Paul wrote, *"For we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks and all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one'"* (Romans 3:9-10). Of course, even the people of God have sinned (Romans 3:23). The difference is that we strive to obey God and not remain in sin.

God expects His people to be different. Paul wrote, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"* (Romans 12:2). Being strangers is not just a *feeling* of not belonging, but a reality. Peter said, *"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul"* (1 Peter 2:11). We do not belong in the world. Paul reminded the brethren in Philippi, *"Our citizenship is in heaven"* (Philippians 3:20).

David also wrote of the opposition he faced from princes (Psalm 119:23). Those who reject the Lord will reject us. John

explained the reason why Cain killed Abel: *“Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous”* (1 John 3:12). He gave this example to make his point: *“Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you”* (1 John 3:13). If we are righteous, we can expect to be hated by those who are evil (cf. 2 Timothy 3:12). Often, the persecution will come from those in positions of authority (cf. Matthew 10:17-18). This is especially true when power is held by those who are evil (Proverbs 29:2). But we must be prepared for this reality: if we strive to serve the Lord, we will be ostracized and oppressed.

God’s Favor Is Better Than the Favor of Man

“Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word. Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law” (Psalm 119:17-18).

Humans are social beings. We crave the approval of others to varying degrees. But too many want to be *“a friend of the world”* (James 4:4) by compromising their faith. However, Paul made it clear that we cannot strive to please men *and* please the Lord. *“For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ”* (Galatians 1:10).

Since we can only please one – either God or man – we must choose one or the other. Our choice must be to please God because His favor is better. David explained why this is:

- God can *“deal bountifully”* with us (Psalm 119:17), because He is the source of every blessing (James 1:17).

- He provides life (Psalm 119:17). This includes both *physical* life (Acts 17:25) and *eternal* life (Romans 6:23).
- He has shown “*wonderful things*” in His word (Psalm 119:18) – including His love, grace, and power to save. This has been recorded to give us hope (Romans 15:4).

There is nothing that any man can offer us that could even begin to compare with what God offers us.

God’s Rebuke Comes against the Disobedient

“You rebuke the arrogant, the cursed, who wander from Your commandments. Take away reproach and contempt from me, for I observe Your testimonies” (Psalm 119:21-22).

Those who “*wander from [God’s] commandments*” and disobey His word will be punished. Paul reminded the brethren in Thessalonica that “*those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus...will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power*” (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Because of this, we must not join (seek companionship) with them. Paul warned the saints in Corinth: “*Do not be bound (unequally yoked, KJV) together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?*” He added, “*Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,’ says the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 6:14, 17).

If we know that God will punish the disobedient and we want to avoid that punishment, we must remain separate from

them. But more than just separating ourselves from those who are disobedient, we must be obey the Lord. Paul wrote, “*The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you*” (Philippians 4:9). Practicing those things which are found in the word removes “*reproach and contempt*” (Psalm 119:22) and makes it possible to enjoy God’s companionship (“*The God of peace will be with you*” – Philippians 4:9).

However, it is also worth noting that God’s favor and companionship that come as a result of our obedience is not the same thing as man acting in such a way as to *earn* salvation. Many in the religious world ridicule the idea that we must *do* anything to be saved, claiming that would mean we *earn* our salvation. It is true that we cannot earn salvation because of sin (Romans 6:23). Therefore, if we are saved, it is by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8). But remember what Jesus said, “*So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, ‘We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done’*” (Luke 17:10). If we claim to be servants of God, we *must* obey Him and “*observe [His] testimonies*” (Psalm 119:22). This does not mean that God *owes* us salvation or anything else. It simply means that He has given us conditions we must meet and we simply do what He has commanded.

We Must Long for God’s Word

“I am a stranger in the earth; do not hide Your commandments from me. My soul is crushed with longing after Your ordinances at all times” (Psalm 119:19-20).

After declaring himself to be a *stranger*, the psalmist

expressed a longing for God's word. *"Do not hide Your commandments from me. My soul is crushed with longing after Your ordinances"* (Psalm 119:19-20). Notice two other verses from the same psalm that express the same longing for God's word:

"Behold, I long for Your precepts; revive me through Your righteousness" (Psalm 119:40).

"I opened my mouth wide and panted, for I longed for Your commandments" (Psalm 119:131).

Why should we desire God's word? There are many reasons we could cite. But in this context, we desire the word of God because it can give the faithful what the world cannot – *companionship*.

God's Word Gives Us Counsel

"Your testimonies also are my delight; they are my counselors" (Psalm 119:24).

The psalmist said that he delighted in the testimonies of God because they were his counselors. We must have the same delight in the word of God because it provides us with counsel as well. God's word leads us in the way that we should go.

Like David, we are *strangers* in the earth (1 Peter 2:11). Yet through the word we find *companionship*. It is not that we have the physical presence of God with us. But we do have His word. Notice a few passages:

- Jesus gave the promise: *"Lo, I am with you always"* (Matthew 28:20). How is He with us?

He is with us as we continue to *“observe all that [He] commanded”* (Matthew 28:20).

- The Lord said, *“I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,”* so that we confidently say, *‘The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?’* (Hebrews 13:5-6). How can we have confidence that the Lord is with us? Notice the next verse: *“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith”* (Hebrews 13:7). As we remember the word that we have been taught, we can remain confident that the Lord will not forsake us.
- John wrote, *“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son”* (2 John 9). To have the Father and the Son means to have *fellowship* with them. How can we continue to enjoy fellowship with God? We must abide in the teaching of Christ.

The Lord is with us through His word. In other words, we can enjoy the Lord’s companionship to whatever degree His word is written on our hearts. We are *“filled with the Spirit”* as we allow *“the word of Christ [to] richly dwell within”* us (Colossians 3:16).

Conclusion

We are strangers on the earth. We may often feel alone or isolated. Yet the Lord is *always* with us through His word. As

long as we remember His word, He will be our constant companion.

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