

January 31, 2021

KNOWING GOD

The Point – Our hearts are satisfied as we encounter God through His Word.

PASSAGES – Psalm 119:17-24

The setting – Psalm 119 is more than twice as long as any other Psalm. It shares similarities with the Book of Proverbs in that it contains many elements of wisdom sayings. These sayings are a contrast between the righteous and the wicked, and an emphasis on the fear (reverence) of the Lord.

Psalm 119:17-18

We grow spiritually as we encounter God through His Word. The Psalm's overall theme is delighting in the Word of God. We can always rely on the direction the Bible gives. These verses served as a prayer for the Psalmist. The opening words of both verses present the Psalmist's request to God. The writer had confidence that God is there, God wants to help us and he has the power to help us. The Psalmist's prayer suggest that he expected God to relate to him not with judgement, but with mercy and goodness.

He describes his relationship with God. He was God's servant. The Psalmist's use of the term servant implies that he has been faithful to God in his actions.

The Psalmist's second prayer request was that God would open in eyes. A spiritual plea to God that He grant him an understanding of God, His Word and His ways.

When we listen to God speaking through His Word, we grow closer to Him. Reading the Bible daily will do more to help you grow spiritually and is the foundational spiritual discipline that all the others building on. The understanding that develops over a lifetime of reading the Word provides a framework for all other spiritual disciplines.

Lasting truths from these verses:

1. If we desire to live a full life, then we must turn to the Lord.
2. Life is a gift from God.
3. Bountiful living comes from obeying God's Word.

Psalm 119:19-22

In these verses, the Psalmist desired to live in obedience to God's Word. Therefore, we felt like a stranger in a world that felt at home with sin. God's people, of every time period, are aliens in the world, meaning the world system made up of everyone and everything that opposes God, His Word and His ways.

Christians live in this world, but they are not a part of it. Jesus also said that His followers are in the world, but not of the world (John 17:14-18).

The Psalmist revealed he was suffering Persecution for his love of and loyalty to God and His Word. He recognized that alone he could not deal with what he was facing. He knew that true safety and security were to be found in his relationship with God and in obedience to God's commandments. The Psalmist recognized the importance of God and His Word in his life. Christians today face situations to that of the Psalmist. Those who follow God and obey His Word are often not well received by our society.

Lasting truths from these verses:

1. Living according to God's Word will distinguish us from the world views promoted by popular culture.
2. As believers we are to have a deep longing and love for God's Word.
3. Other people may heap contempt on us because of our commitment to faithfully obeying God's truths.
4. God's Word helps us stay focused when we are facing opposition.
5. God is offended by those who wander away from His way.

Psalm 119:23-24

Persecution was even coming from government officials (princes). These included official leaders in the military, religious and other government sources. But he thought about God's statutes. When he faced danger, he looked to God and His Word for his security. By turning to God in face of persecution, the Psalmist refocused on God's perspective. May we always be so close to God that we choose to respond to persecution by turning to Him and His Word. God's Word is the only perfect, infallible source of guidance.

Lasting truths from these verses:

1. Influential individuals and institutions may challenge our decisions to stand on God's Word.
2. Our thinking on life issues is to be shaped by determining what the Lord prescribes in His Word.
3. Choosing to live by the truth of God brings us delight even in the face of opposition.
4. God provides us wise council through His Word.

Prayer

Most kind and gracious, heavenly Father, thank you for Your Word. May we make Your Word our daily companion as we walk with You. In the precious name of Jesus, I pray. Amen

Al West