

Subject: *The Blessing Book*

Scripture: *Psalms 119:1-8*

Psalm 119 could be called God's Treasure Chest of Blessing. With 176 verses, this is easily the longest chapter in the Bible, longer than 30 individual books of the Bible. What makes this chapter unique is its one theme—the written Word of God. It is an alphabetical psalm. Each verse in the twenty two sections begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This was of course inspired by God and probably intended as an aid to help the original readers to memorize it. In English it can be translated like this:

1. **A**ll they that are undefiled in the way, walking in the law of the Lord, are blessed.
2. **A**ll they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart, are blessed.
3. **A**lso they do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.
4. **A**ll thy precepts diligently to keep thou hast commanded us.
5. **A**h, Lord! That my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!
6. **A**shamed I shall never be, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.
7. **A**lways will I praise thee, with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.
8. **A**ll thy statutes will I keep: O forsake me not utterly.

(By Theodore Kubler in 1880, in Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*)

Psalm 119 is similar to Ps. 1 and Ps. 19. From sunrise to beyond sunset, God's Word dominated the psalmist's life. He spent time in the Word before dawn (vs. 147), daily (vs. 97), seven times a day (vs. 164), nightly (vs. 55, 148), and at midnight (vs. 62).

God and His Word are not identical, but they are inseparable. If you love God, you will love His Word. If you honor God, you will honor His Word. If you put the Lord first in your life, you will put His Word first in your life. The writer of this psalm says that he is a companion to all who fear God and obey His Word, so the Word is the basis of Christian fellowship. On the other hand, the writer says he is angry with wicked people who disrespect God's Word. To disrespect God's Word is to disrespect God Himself.

In this A section (the Hebrew Aleph) it begins with two verses that begin with "Blessed." When a person loves the Word, learns what it says, and lives by it, he will be blessed.

THE CHARACTER OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 1)

The "undefiled" are not sinless, but they are blameless (NLT, "people of integrity"). They are serious about God and what He expects of them. They walk in God's ways, not their own.

Psalms 128:1 *Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.*

James 1:27 *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

At the car wash on Volunteer Parkway I see people washing their car when it already looks clean. Yesterday I saw a man wiping his car with a towel and it was foggy with light drizzle.

THE COMMITMENT OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 2)

They keep (observe, obey) His testimonies and they seek Him with their whole heart. This refers to the whole inner person (mind, will, and emotions). We can't keep God's testimonies if we don't know them, and we can't know them if we don't read and study. As we make our way through these verses we see important steps to Bible study:

- Observation – what does this Scripture say?
- Interpretation – what does this Scripture mean?
- Application – what does this Scripture require of me?

THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 3)

“Walk” (vs. 1, 3) refers to the way you conduct yourself and live your life each day.

This is a good prayer to put us on the right path every day...***Psalms 143:8** Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.*

THE COMMAND FOR THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 4)

The teachings of God's Word are not suggestions or advice.

THE CONFESSION OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 5)

Notice the change of pronoun in these verses (vs. 1-3, they; vs. 4, us; vs. 5-8, I). This is the confession of an honest struggler (NLT, “Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your principles!”). It is the same struggle that Paul described in **Romans 7:18-23**.

THE CONFIDENCE OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 6)

To “not be ashamed” means not disappointed. To “have respect” is to look into or seriously consider. When we take God's Word seriously, when we read and study and apply it seriously, we will not be disappointed. I have never heard anyone say they were disappointed that they learned God's Word and lived by it. On the other hand, many people live with the disappointment and regret of neglecting God's Word.

Joseph Alleine says that obeying God's Word is the mark of a genuine Christian: “The hypocrite is not thorough in obedience. The new man bears fruit unto holiness, and though he makes many a blot (mistake), yet the law and life of Jesus is what he looks for as his pattern. He respects all of God's commandments. He is sensitive in his conscience even to the little sins and little duties” (*Voices from the Past*, 11).

THE CONTENTMENT OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 7)

God's Word causes praise and worship with joy and gratitude. God's Word is a reflection of His character, especially His righteousness (vs. 40).

THE CALLING OF THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED (vs. 8)

They call for God's help and cry out for God's patience. They see the importance of living by the Book. As we explore the riches of truth found in Psalm 119, let us remember that God has given His written word not just to inform us, but ultimately to transform and equip us for life.

Romans 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

The book you hold in your hand is THE HOLY BIBLE. The Holy Spirit uses the Holy Bible to shape our lives and make us holy people. We need to pray, "Lord, reveal your holiness to me and make me holy through your Holy Word."

All scripture must be applied to our daily life as suggested in this prayer: "Help me to carry into ordinary life portions of divine truth and use them on suitable occasions, so that its doctrines may inform, its warnings caution, its rules guide, its promises comfort me" (Arthur Bennett, ed., *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers & Devotions*, 201).

2017 will be a year to remember the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. This was a time when the church returned to the foundational truths of the Christian faith. Five Latin phrases emerged during the Protestant Reformation to summarize the Reformers' convictions about five essentials of the Christian faith. These five fundamental beliefs were:

- *Sola Scriptura* ("Scripture alone") – The Bible is the only authoritative source for faith and practice.
- *Sola Fide* ("faith alone") – Salvation is by faith alone.
- *Sola Gratia* ("grace alone") – Salvation is by the grace of God alone.
- *Solus Christus* ("Christ alone") – Salvation is in Jesus Christ alone.
- *Soli Deo Gloria* ("to the glory of God alone") – Salvation is for the glory of God alone.

Of these five fundamentals the most basic is *Sola Scriptura*, because the Bible is the foundation of everything we believe all everything we do. The Bible is our final authority and our sufficient guide. Since the Bible is so important, we should renew our commitment to read and study it consistently and obediently. As teachers and preachers we also renew our commitment to the truths God has entrusted to us in His Word. As parents we should renew our commitment to read it and apply it in our homes. We should do everything in our power to focus on the Word of God. In our prayers, actions, attitudes, example, and influence we should be fully committed to God's Word.