

Subject: *God's Word Above All*

Scripture: *Psalm 119:145-160*

Life is all about choices. And the choices we make and the habits we form are all about priorities. As someone said, "Whatever gets your attention will get you." We do what is really important to us at any given time. Psalm 119 reads like a personal journal of a godly man and one thing is clear, the top priority in his life is God and His written Word. Everything else takes a back seat. Nothing else is even close.

God's Word is top priority (vs. 145-152)

Notice that verse 145 and 146 begin with the expression, "I cried." That word involves intense desire or yearning for something. In this case it is an intense cry for God's Word and His help.

- Vs. 145-146, the priority of obeying God's Word

To keep is to obey. He makes this commitment with his whole heart. This is no half-hearted commitment. There's a song we sing, "I Am Resolved," and we can sing that but then our resolve begins to dissolve. There is a direct connection between salvation and obedience. He will obey God no matter what the cost.

- Vs. 147-148, the priority of spending time in God's Word

The writer is up early in the morning and he stays up late at night to get in the Word. There is no mention anywhere in this psalm that this man is a preacher, a priest, or a prophet. From all accounts he is just a regular man in love with God's Word. One of the greatest lies ever believed in this world is that the Bible is mainly a book for pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, and not a book for every person.

- Vs. 149, the priority of spending time in prayer

The psalmist bases his requests on God's loving kindness and judgment. David Hocking commented: "In order to really walk with God and be dedicated to the Word, you have to have a heart that is calling out to God and asking Him for His help. Prayer and the Word go together; they are essential disciplines of the Christian life" (Hocking, *Psalm 119*, 75).

- Vs. 150-151, the priority of staying close to God

There is a play on words here. Wicked people come near to me, but they are far from God. All is well because God is near to me. Can you say what the writer says in verse 151? God is near if you want Him to be near. ***James 4:7-8***⁷ *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*⁸ *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

- Vs. 152, the priority of trusting God's unchanging Word

Through life's ever-changing circumstances God's Word is consistently reliable. Never doubt in the dark what God has shown you in the light. God's Word never changes. I thought of the words to that great hymn, *In Times Like These*: "In times like these, you need the Bible; in

times like these, Oh, be not idle; be very sure, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the solid Rock.”

God’s Word is top priority in spite of adversity (vs. 153-160)

- Vs. 153-154, a prayer and a testimony

The psalm writer asks God to deliver him in affliction because he does not forget God’s law. If we are willing to hear what God says, He is willing to hear what we say. But the opposite is true. If we are not willing to listen to Him, He is not willing to listen to us. **Proverbs 28:9** *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.* Prayer is not for rebels, but for obedient children.

- Vs. 155, a tragedy and a reason

The psalmist’s attitude was to keep and honor God’s Word. On the other hand, the world has no interest in the Word. Salvation is far from the wicked man because he does not seek God’s Word, the only source of guidance and truth about salvation. **2 Timothy 3:15** *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

- Vs. 156, a praise and a request

The psalmist bases his request on the merciful nature of God. He asks God for life in keeping with His Word.

- Vs. 157, a problem and a resolution

Although he is outnumbered by his enemies, the psalmist will not depart from God’s Word. One man with God is a majority. Notice the word “decline.” He will not lower himself down to the level of his enemies but will take the high road.

- Vs. 158, an observation and a sadness

Someone once said the greatest tragedy in life is not what people suffer, but what they miss.

- Vs. 159, a declaration and a desire

The psalmist loved Scripture. Since God knew his love for the Word, he asked God to quicken him (give him life). Note the connection between his love for the Word and God’s loving kindness for him. God’s life-giving power is mentioned nine times in Psalm 119 and four times in this section (“quicken me” in vs. 149, 154, 156, and 159). God’s Word has power to make us alive and keep us alive. God uses His Word to save us and to strengthen us.

- Vs. 160, a fact and an assurance

God’s Word is true and eternal. From the first word to the last there is nothing false or misleading in Scripture. The writer states his absolute confidence that everything in God’s Word is true. Do you share that conviction? The hallmark of the Christian faith is certainty.