

SBC – Sept. 20, 2026

Psalm 119:1-16 (NKJV)

“Hide God’s Word in Your Heart”

Psalm 119, with 176 verses, is the longest chapter in the Bible. It is said to be the Mount Everest of the Psalter. Its theme is the Word of God being nuanced in almost every verse. In the NKJV, there are four exceptions as found in verses 84, 121, 122, and 132.

The Psalm as a whole has no outline other than the acrostic format in which it is presented. The Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters. In the Psalm, eight lines are given to each letter. For example, verses 1-8 all begin with the Hebrew letter “aleph” which is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; verses 9-16 all begin with the second letter, which is “beth,” and so forth.

We don’t know who the author was. Many have suggested David, others Daniel or Ezra, but we don’t really know who wrote it or what the occasion was.

There are various different words used to refer to the Word of God in the Psalm. Here are some of the key ones.

Slide # 1

Law: (torah) used 25 times = Commands

Testimonies: (eduth) used 23 times = truths in keeping with God’s character

Precepts (piqqudim) used 21 times = divine instructions

Statutes (huqqim) used 21 times = fixed decrees

Commandments (mitzvah) used 22 times = divine directives

Judgments (mishpat) used 19 times = judicial edicts

Word (dabar) used 25 times = the spoken Word

Slide # 2

Psalm 119:1-16

“Hide God’s Word in Your Heart”

Aleph

vv. 1-8 The Blessing of Walking in God’s Word

Beth

vv. 9-16 God’s Word Provides Protection Against Sin

Psalm 119:1–8 (NKJV)

Aleph

1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD!

The way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15). But in contrast, blessed are the undefiled in the way. This is not talking about sinless perfection, which is not possible for anyone on this side of glory – other than the Lord Jesus Himself.

To walk in the way undefiled means living a life of wholehearted commitment as a way of life. It consistently lives a life of integrity. The old song about “nothing between my soul and the Savior” is how this person lives. This is the BLESSED life.

And then, in keeping with the parallelism of Hebrew poetry, he says these are those who “walk in the law of the LORD!” Their lives are defined by obedience to God’s commands.

2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

Blessed are those who keep truth in keeping with God’s character – His testimonies. They are those who seek God with the whole heart. “Whole heart” is found 6 times in this Psalm (v. 2, 10, 34, 58, 69, 145).

Half-hearted is not blessed. A divided heart is not blessed. James says a “double-minded man” is unstable in all his ways (Ja. 1:8). Such a person should not expect anything from God. Seeking God with the whole heart is to be all in – totally sincere.

3 They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways.

The word “iniquity” means “moral crookedness” or perverseness. Instead of being morally crooked, a truly wholehearted commitment is seen in the walk that walks in God’s ways.

A person is blessed because of wholehearted commitment that is displayed in their walk.

4 You have commanded us To keep Your precepts diligently.

God's precepts (divine instructions) have been made clear. These are not suggestions, but rather commands.

Slide # 3



But what we know for SURE is what God says!

5 Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes!

The commitment to keep God's ways is here, bathed in prayer. Statutes are what God has decreed. His desire is to walk according to what God has ordered.

6 Then I would not be ashamed, When I look into all Your commandments.

Failure to obey what God has commanded causes shame for the child of God. The goal is to not be ashamed.

Slide # 4

1 John 2:28 (NKJV)

28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and **not be ashamed** before Him at His coming.

7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous judgments.

Praise is to be in keeping with an upright heart – not merely giving lip service or going through the motions. God wants true worshipers (Jn. 4:23-24). Educating yourself to the righteous judgments of God leads to worthy worship. And so the Psalmist says...

8 I will keep Your statutes; Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

His commitment is to keep God's statutes (God's written Word). At times the child of God seems "forsaken" as he wonders: "Where is God in the midst of this turmoil?" His plea is that God will not "utterly" – that is, completely and forever forsake him, which of course God will not. But sometimes in despair the child of God may wrestle with these feelings.

Psalm 119:9-16

Beth

9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.

Verses 9-11 should be mandatory memory verses. How can a young man (or any person) cleanse his way?

The answer is by "taking heed according to Your word." The secret to holiness is found in heeding the Word. But this doesn't happen by osmosis. It doesn't happen by accident! It doesn't just happen.

You must take heed to your daily life as well as study your Bible, and you must study your Bible that you may take heed to your daily life.

– **Charles Spurgeon**

It involves a whole-hearted commitment and dependence upon the Lord as he goes on to show.

10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

Augustine, before his conversion, famously said, "**Lord, make me chaste – but not yet.**"

To truly cleanse your way, you have to have a wholehearted commitment.

And on the other side of the coin, you have to look in dependence upon God to help you – "Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments."

11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

Here is the key to not sinning! We have to hide God's word in our heart!

It is a HEART issue. In both verses 10 and 11, he mentions the HEART. He seeks God with his whole heart – v. 10. He hides God's word in his heart – v. 11. This is a heart issue.

Slide # 5

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV)

23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

Many professing Christians know the word by rote but not by heart. They have never first-hand hidden His Word in their hearts. This is a very personal thing. You personally hide it – you personally put it in the safe place in your heart. This is you personally absorbing the Word – taking it in for yourself and not just hearing it second-hand. Nothing takes the place of personal study!

The psalmist knew the value of taking God's word and *hiding* it in his heart. It is **hidden** in the sense that it is on the *inside*, where no one can see it, and it is *safe* so that no one can take it away.

-David Guzik

"Memorizing is precisely what is called for, since it is only when the Word of God is readily available in our minds that we are able to recall it in moments of need and profit by it."

– James Montgomery Boice

I often think of Jesus, the ultimate example of faith in this regard. In the Messianic Servant Song of Isaiah 50:4-11 we read this:

Slide # 6

Isaiah 50:4 (NKJV)

4 "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.

The Messianic Servant says, "*He awakens Me morning by morning; He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.*" This refers to a lifestyle - a day-in, day-out pattern. How does one become "learned"? It involves a "morning by morning" discipline. This is the model of the perfect disciple.

He is being taught by God “morning by morning”. This is the example of Jesus. Each morning God awakened Him with new insights.

And consequently, what happened? When the devil came to test Him – to throw everything that he had at Him- what did Jesus do? Well, three times in Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus rebuffed the devil by saying, “It is written.” He stifled the devil with the Word!

The greatest defense against sin is hiding God’s Word in your heart! This is the secret; this is the key to victorious Christian living!

Jesus spoke very specifically of the power of His word to cleanse and keep us pure: He said, “*You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*” ([John 15:3](#)) And again, “*Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*” ([John 17:17](#))

Slide # 7

“The best book in the world is the Bible. The best place to put it is in the heart. The best reason for putting it there is that it saves us from sinning against God.” - ***Anonymous***

12 Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes.

The psalmist seems to interrupt his thoughts on the connection between God’s word and a pure life with this expression of praise.
– ***David Guzik***

Indeed, God is to be praised for the sanctifying power of His Word. God does it and He does it through the Word!

And so the Psalmist humbly says, “Teach me Your statutes” (God’s decrees). We need God to teach us! We don’t get this on our own!

Slide # 8

John 6:45 (NKJV)

45 It is written in the prophets, ‘**And they shall all be taught by God.**’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Ephesians 4:20–21 (NKJV)

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

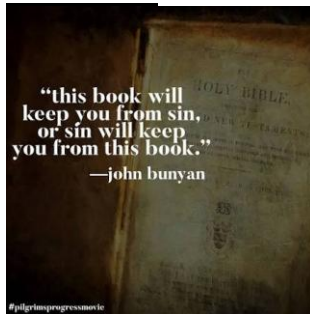
21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

The key thing in God teaching us is that we have to have a “teachable heart,” and then we have to be in the place of learning – that is we have to be in the Word.

Don’t be praying, “Lord, teach me,” and then not open your Bible. Rather, say, “Lord, teach me” and then open your Bible and let it happen.

Both John Bunyan and D.L. Moody wrote this in the front of their Bibles.

Slide # 9



13 With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth.

What is in the heart is expressed through the lips. We need to hide God’s Word in our hearts, but we don’t keep it there in isolation.

As the old saying goes: “Keep the Word, but don’t keep it to yourself.”

Do you really want to know a person? Just listen to them. What they talk about is the overflow of their heart – it just comes out.

And so the Psalmist says, “Your word I have hidden in my heart” but then he also says, “With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth.” God’s Word is for sharing!

14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches.

The Psalmist greatly valued the riches of God’s Word, and so he celebrated it. What a treasure is the Bible!

How many really feel this way about God's Word? The way you treat the Word is telling. If you seldom read it – it really isn't important to you – no matter what you say.

Dear writer of Psalm 119, how do you feel about the Word? He might well respond: "Well, let me tell you in the LONGEST chapter in the Bible – let me tell you in 176 verses in which almost every verse nuances how precious it is from every angle."

Slide # 10

Job 23:12 (NKJV)

12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have **treasured the words of His mouth** More than my necessary food.

The Scriptures as riches is a repeated theme in Ps. 119 (vv. 14, 72, 127, 162; see 19:10). To treasure any possession above the Word of God is idolatry and leads to trouble. – **Warren Wiersbe**

And so the Psalmist resolves...

15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.

He determines to meditate on God's precepts (divine instructions) and contemplate His ways.

Slide # 11

"We master the Word through memorization – the Word masters us through meditation."

"Meditation is recalling what we have committed to memory and then turning it over and over in our minds to see the fullest implications and applications of the truth." - **James Montgomery Boice**

The result is JOY!

16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

It's not like he has to do this as a drudgery. He says he will delight in God's Word, and he will not forget it. He will deliberately stay focused on God's Word, and it is a joy to do so.

A life well-lived is a life lived through the Word!

*Matthew Henry – the great 18th century Bible commentator – was introduced to [Psalm 119](#) as a child. His father, Philip Henry, told his children to take one verse of [Psalm 119](#) every morning to meditate on, and thereby go through the entire psalm twice in the year. Philip said to his children, “That will bring you to be in love with all the rest of the Scriptures.” Perhaps that practice was why Matthew Henry loved the Bible so much that he wrote commentary that is still used today. – **David Guzik***

God help us to hide His Word in our hearts – it is the KEY to the victorious blessed life!