

SBC – Oct. 4, 2026

Psalm 119:33-48 (NKJV)

“LOVE FOR THE WORD OF GOD”

The theme of Psalm 119 is the Word of God. It is the longest Psalm – the longest chapter in the Bible. We don’t know the author or the occasion. It is structurally built around the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, with eight verses devoted to each letter in successive fashion.

There are various words used to nuance the Word of God. Some of the key ones are as follows....

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

Theme: The Word of God

Psalm 119:33-48

“Love for the Word of God”

vv. 33-40 (Heb. letter “He”) – Desire for Loyalty to the Word

vv. 41-48 (Heb. letter “Vav”) – God’s Word Answers for the Believer

Verses 33-40 correspond to the Hebrew letter “he” (pronounced as “hey”)

Psalm 119:33–48 (NKJV)

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end.

Statutes are enduring principles – fixed decrees as ordained by God. The desire of the Psalmist is that God instruct him so that he might live it out to the end. We first have to know what God has ordained, and then we can live accordingly.

A great prayer is: “**Lord, help me to finish well!**” A life well lived is one that finishes well! We love Paul’s words at the end of his life and we all hope we can one day say it with him...

Slide # 3

2 Timothy 4:7 (NKJV)

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Well in order to do this we have to live a life in accordance with God’s Word. The Spirit-filled life is essentially a Word-filled life – that is a life governed by the Spirit is governed by the Word.

Slide # 4

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled with the Spirit,**

Colossians 3:16 (NKJV)

16 Let the **word of Christ dwell in you richly** in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

The reason I say the Spirit-filled life is essentially the same as a Word-filled life is because after commanding that the believer be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5 Paul then spells out what they looks like in marriage, and in the home, and in the relationships of life. Then in Colossians 3 he makes the same analogies in relation to the Word dwelling in us richly.

In order to keep God’s Word to the end, we must first know what God desires. When he says, “**Teach me, O LORD, the way,**” that shows he has a “teachable heart.” That is the first thing we must bring to the table if we are going to live out a God-pleasing life. And so he continues...

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

The desire is there for the writer. He wants to obey with his whole heart. He just needs to be educated as to exactly what God wants him to do.

Note the connection between “with my whole heart” (v. 34) and “to the end” (v. 33). That is the desire of the godly, to be obedient with our whole heart to the end. That is what will receive of the Lord, “Well, done good and faithful servant.”

“‘To the end’ means without time limit, and ‘with all my heart’ means without reservation.” - ***James Montgomery Boice***

35 Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.

You might want to really think about this prayer: “Make me.” God is at work in our lives to MAKE and SHAPE us but this often involves what we call “heavenly sandpaper” which isn’t comfortable, but it is good for us.

Slide # 5

Psalm 119:67 (NKJV)

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.

But those sincere about God want God to make them to walk in the path of His commandments – for they delight in the path of obedience.

In this the writer acknowledges his dependence upon God to guide him to direct him in the right way he should go.

And even more specifically, he requests...

36 Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness.

He asks God to work in his heart. We need help in the heart, and it starts with acknowledging we need help. It starts with humbling ourselves and looking to God to thus work in our hearts.

The testimonies of God are His commandments which testify of the conduct that He demands of His people. The desire here is that his heart is bent toward obedience and not covetousness.

Someone has said that covetousness is the “handmaiden of all sins.” It is true that most sin is borne out of wanting what God has forbidden.

Covetousness is the wrongful desire to possess that which is not rightfully yours to have. It is the opposite of contentment. And Paul, in Colossians 3:5, says covetousness is idolatry. Thus, covetousness is putting personal desire above the will of God.

The Psalmist desires a heart that finds contentment in God and His provision in accordance with His Word.

Slide # 6

1 Timothy 6:6 (NKJV)

6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

37 Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.

There are some STAND OUT verses in this Psalm, and this is one of them. Jesus spoke of the critical issue of the eye gate in both Matthew 5 and Matthew 6.

Slide # 7

Matthew 5:28–29 (NKJV)

28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Slide # 8

Matthew 6:22–23 (NKJV)

22 “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.

23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

The Bible warns about the “lust of the eyes” (1 Jn. 2:16).

This is a great prayer for all of us, for anyone struggling with porn, for temptations with social media and entertainment.

Here is God's commentary on TV: "Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things." – **William MacDonald**

As I say, there are all kinds of applications. The cell phone has become one of the devil's greatest tools. Now of course it can be a blessing to, but there is the thing. People become obsessed with looking at their phones. Much of it is frivolous "worthless things" or outright offensive to God. It is a major distraction, often in things that are not edifying or spiritually helpful.

Worthless things are things that don't ultimately matter; they don't have any eternal value. In contrast is the Word of God. Turn your eyes from looking at worthless things to looking at the Word of God. – That has eternal value!

Tino Wallenda is a member of the famous "Flying Wallendas" family. Tino describes what he's done for a living - walking on a cable that is 5/8ths of an inch thick, suspended between 30 and 100 feet in the air, at times suspended over lions, or between buildings and even over a pool of sharks! Tino tells how his grandfather, Karl Wallenda, started him out on a wire just two feet off the ground. He taught Tino how to hold his body rigid and how to place his feet on the wire and how to hold the pole with his elbows close to his body.

Tino writes that "**the most important thing that my grandfather taught me was that I needed to focus my attention on a point at the other end of the wire; a point that was unmoving and would not shift.**" Tino Wallenda says that he has found that his grandfather's secret for not falling off the high-wire is also the secret for keeping your balance in life - concentrating on something that never moves and that he says is Jesus Christ!

And by application I want to say it is the Word of God as seen in our text tonight. Stay focused on the Word.

"The prayer is not so much that the eyes may be shut as '*turned away*,' for we need to have them open, but directed to right objects."
-**Charles Spurgeon**

When the writer says, "**revive me in Your way,**" he is praying for God to refocus him and get him back on the right path where he is word-focused. Note the progression of thought as seen in verse 38.

38 Establish Your word to Your servant, Who is devoted to fearing You.

I take it that the writer wants God to so establish His Word in his life that he then lives a life consistent with proper reverence.

Again, we note that the desire is there. He wants to obey with his whole heart (v. 34), he delights in the Word (v. 35), he wants to be revived in God's way (v. 37), and he is devoted to fearing God (v. 38). When you pray with that kind of a heart, I believe God will answer. This is life-changing stuff! But you gotta wanna!

39 Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments are good.

We don't know what the reason for the reproach was. Was it just a matter of scorn from unbelievers, or was it a matter of disgrace he had brought on himself because he had gotten off track?

I tend to think the latter because in verse 37 he pleaded for God to revive him, and he does so again in verse 40. It seems he had been struggling with focusing on "worthless things" that bring shame and dishonor (reproach). This is the very thing he dreads as he desires to be faithful!

So he says, "***Your judgments are good.***" God is good, and His "judgments are good."

The very attributes of God (cf. v. 68) become the characteristics of Scripture: 1) trustworthy (v. 42); 2) true (vv. 43, 142, 151, 160); 3) faithful (v. 86); 4) unchangeable (v. 89); 5) eternal vv. 90, 152); 6) light (v. 105); and pure (v. 140). – ***John MacArthur***

He acknowledges that God's "judgments (His judicial edicts - righteous consequences) are good." And so he says...

40 Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.

He really does long for God's precepts (His divine instructions). And so again he pleads for God to revive him in keeping with His righteousness – that is, keeping with His perfect and faithful character.

Again, his heart is devoted, but he acknowledges his struggles and his dependence upon God to revive him spiritually through the Word. How often we need to pray, “revive me” – which is really saying, “bring me back to where I should be” in keeping with the Word!

The Psalmist is really acknowledging “that spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” and that He needs God’s help in this struggle (cf. Mt. 26:41).

Verses 41-48 correspond to the Hebrew letter “Vav” (pronounced as “vave”).

41 Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD— Your salvation according to Your word.

“**Mercies**” is the Hebrew word “hesed” that has the nuanced meaning of loyal love couched in active mercy.

Because it carries so many layers, English Bibles often translate it in different ways, such as “lovingkindness,” “steadfast love,” “mercy,” or “loyal love”. No single English word can fully capture its meaning.

- NR Johnson

The basic idea is that of “loving faithfulness.” It is often defined as “covenant faithfulness.” This is the kind of love commitment in a marriage relationship where there is the combo of love and faithfulness.

The writer desires to have this reflected in his experience, resulting in salvation (deliverance) according to God’s word.

Again, we don’t know what the occasion or situation of trouble the writer was in, but he was clearly seeking God for deliverance.

42 So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, For I trust in Your word.

I love this! His answer to those who reproach (scorn/mock) him will be prayer answered for deliverance. His answer will be, “See, what God has done for me.” And he is trusting in God’s word accordingly!

That too is a great emphasis. We pray for help and expect that God will “deliver” (pun intended) in accordance with His Word. This is a great answer to our critics who don’t believe in our God or answered prayer.

Slide # 9**1 John 5:14–15 (NKJV)**

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask **anything according to His will**, He hears us.

15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, For I have hoped in Your ordinances.

The sense here seems to be concerning his witness. He wants God to enable him to speak the word of truth in keeping with the hope that he has ordained, as seen in the Scriptures. His testimony ties with Scripture all along the way.

44 So shall I keep Your law continually, Forever and ever.

He is asking to the end that he keep God's law (Word) continually as a way of life to the very end – forever and ever. Compare verse 33, where he prays that he might keep God's word to the end. He is all in for life – forever!

45 And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts.

The word "liberty" literally means "wide space" or "broad place." The obedience of verse 44 brings the "liberty" of verse 45. Liberty/freedom goes hand in hand with walking according to God's precepts (instructions).

True freedom is found in obedient submission to God's Word. The world thinks the "Christian way" is binding, and they want to break free from it and live as they please. But true spiritual freedom is only found in a submissive relationship to Christ and His Word. The Bible defines freedom in relation to sin and the devil.

We are freed from sin, but bound to Christ. We are free from the power of sin, but Christ is our Master and in this we have FREEDOM!

Slide # 10**John 8:32 (NKJV)**

32 And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free.**"

John 8:36 (NKJV)

36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

46 I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed.

Here is an example of the “liberty” mentioned in the previous verse. To have the ability to speak the Word of God boldly before kings and people in great authority shows true liberty!

“This is part of his liberty; he is free from fear of the greatest, proudest, and most tyrannical of men.” - **Charles Spurgeon**

Paul knew this kind of freedom when he said...

Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Slide # 11**2 Timothy 1:7–8 (NKJV)**

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

As we seek God through His Word we are filled with boldness. People bold for God have first spent time with Him in His Word!

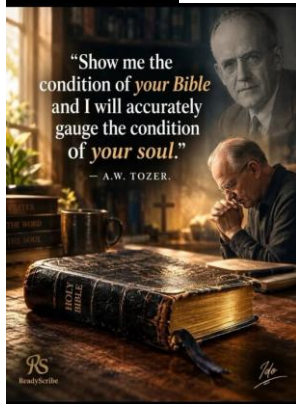
47 And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love.

Thus, the writer determines that he will delight himself in God’s commandments, which he loves. They have been his delight, and he resolves to focus on the joy he finds there.

Notice he said, “I will,” which means it is a matter of choice. It’s like when Paul said, “Rejoice in the Lord always.” (Phil. 4:4). We choose what we will focus on – what we will delight in!

All the way through, in spite of human frailty, we see that the psalmist LOVES God's word. This explains the great length of the Psalm. It's not that the true believer never struggles – he does, even as repeatedly noted in this Psalm. And yet we LOVE the Word!

Slide # 12



Those who love the Bible find deep personal enjoyment in its pages. It is a fountain of delight, a river of pleasure, a never-failing source of satisfaction. – **William MacDonald**

48 My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes [decrees].

Hands lifted up is a gesture of worship. This is worship in keeping with the Word of God. This is the posture of a true worshiper who worships “in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:23-24).

And note the double emphasis on LOVING the Word, as seen in verse 47 and again in verse 48.

And that which we love we meditate on – we fill our minds with it.

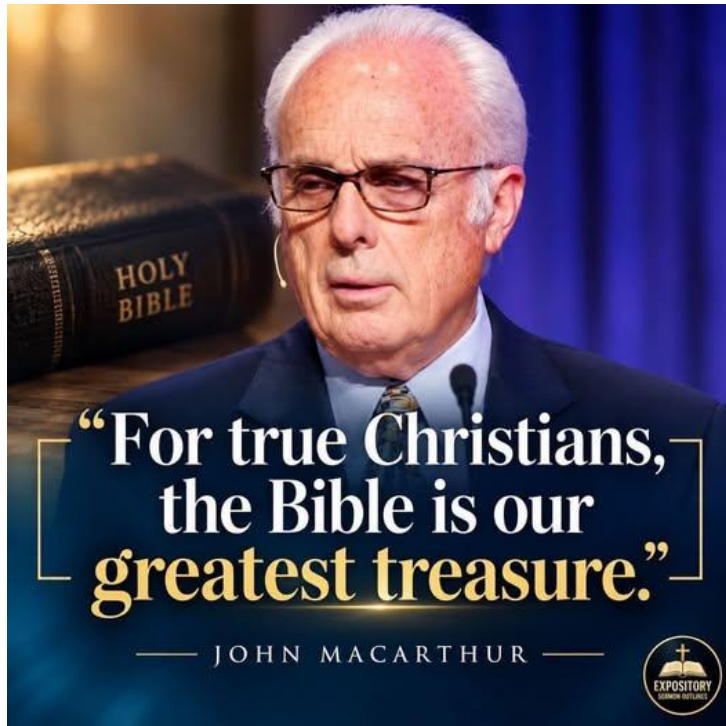
“Why then is the Bible read only – not *meditated on*? Because it is not *loved*. We do not go to it, as the hungry man to his food, as the miser to his treasure. The loss is incalculable.” – **Charles Bridges**

What we see in our text tonight is a heart for God's Word. The writer desires to obey it, to have it be the master of his life. God things in keeping with the Word are his answer to his critics. He finds everything he needs in the Word!

“The mark of a true Christian is love for Scripture, love for Scripture whether it’s promises or commands. God’s true church has always been a place where people hunger for the truth from the Bible.”

- **John MacArthur**

Slide # 13



If you are a true Christian you love God’s Word, certainly not as we should but we do treasure it. As Jesus said...

Matthew 4:4 (NKJV)

4 But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”

God help us to love His Word!