

Session 3

November 1, 2020

COMMITTED TO HIS WORD

Psalm 119:1-11

The Bible speaks of the Word of God in two ways. First, there is the revealed, inspired, written truth of God, the Bible. But in John 1, Jesus is also described as the Word. That is, He is the manifest, living truth of God. In the same way that the Bible reveals God, Jesus reveals God. While the written word and the manifest (incarnate) Word are not *identical*, they are *inseparable*. Jesus will never contradict the word of God, and the word of God will never contradict Him. For this reason, we should love the written word of God and obey it every bit as much as we love the manifest incarnate Word of God—the Lord Jesus—and obey Him.

Psalm 119 is all about God's written word. In fact, only two verses out of the 176 verses in this psalm do *not* make reference in some way to God's word. The tone of this, the longest of the psalms, is joyful and celebrative. God's word is not simply a collection of rules and regulations to make our lives more difficult; rather it is a treasury of godly principles to make our lives better! And ultimately to lead us to Christ. In these opening verses, three key truths are mentioned.

God's word keeps us happy (vv. 1-4). These first verses set the stage for the psalm. The theme is that God's word is central to all that we are as believers. Through parallel statements, the magnificence and uniqueness of God's written word is highlighted throughout. In the first four verses, the word of God is described as His *instruction* (v. 1), His *decrees* (v. 2), His *ways* (v. 3), and His *precepts* (v. 4). Those who *live by them* are happy and blameless (v. 1), as are those who *keep His word* and *seek Him* passionately (v. 2). Further, those who *follow His ways* are free of iniquity (v. 3) if they are diligent in *keeping His commands* (v. 4). The old English “blessed” means happy; contented; satisfied; or fulfilled (see also the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-10). Notice that these opening verses are general, describing as blessed *anyone* who seeks God and faithfully obeys His word. For reflection: *Why do you think so many people see God as angry and judgmental rather than loving and redemptive? What can you do to help them see God as He really is?*

God's word keeps us humble (vv. 5-8). Here, the psalm becomes much more *personal*. The pronouns “I,” “me,” and “my” occur seven times in four verses. Notice that there is a *progression* in these verses as well. First, there is sorrow and disappointment at the writer's failure to keep God's commands (v. 5). Then, there is shame brought out by God's convicting Spirit (v. 6). Next, the psalmist looks forward to discovering the riches of God's teachings (v. 7). Finally, he pledges his obedience to God's word, and makes the plea that God would never leave him (v. 8). For reflection: *Think about some ways that God speaks through His word to bring conviction of sin. (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17 for some helpful hints).*

God's word keeps us safe (vv. 9-11). The final verses in this week's lesson combine the general and the personal. The rhetorical question in verse 9, “How can a young man keep his way pure?” is answered with “By keeping Your word.” The application, however, returns to the psalmist in

verses 10 and 11, where the writer links seeking God with “all his heart” with treasuring God’s word “in his heart.” The results are similar as well. Seeking God keeps him from *wandering* (v. 10); and treasuring God’s word keeps him from *sinning* (v. 11). For reflection: *Why do you think it is so important to maintain a regular routine of Bible study and meditation? Are you consistent in doing so?*