

## “Cultivating a Delight in God’s Word”

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Scriptural Foundation: Psalm 119:97-112, ESV

### Mem

<sup>97</sup> Oh how I love your law!  
It is my meditation all the day.  
<sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than  
my enemies,  
for it is ever with me.  
<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my  
teachers,  
for your testimonies are my meditation.  
<sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged,  
for I keep your precepts.  
<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way,  
in order to keep your word.  
<sup>102</sup> I do not turn aside from your rules,  
for you have taught me.  
<sup>103</sup> How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!  
<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get  
understanding;  
therefore I hate every false way.

### Nun

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.  
<sup>106</sup> I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,  
to keep your righteous rules.  
<sup>107</sup> I am severely afflicted;  
give me life, O LORD, according to your  
word!  
<sup>108</sup> Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O  
LORD,  
and teach me your rules.  
<sup>109</sup> I hold my life in my hand continually,  
but I do not forget your law.  
<sup>110</sup> The wicked have laid a snare for me,  
but I do not stray from your precepts.  
<sup>111</sup> Your testimonies are my heritage forever,  
for they are the joy of my heart.  
<sup>112</sup> I incline my heart to perform your  
statutes  
forever, to the end.

May I commend this Book to you once again? I know that is a familiar theme from this pulpit, but I firmly believe if we grow to delight in God’s Word, our lives will be completely transformed. This Book has the answers to our struggles, our doubts, our relationships, our fears, and our future. God has given every instruction and every bit of wisdom we need to live our life with purpose, joy, and communion with Himself right here in the Treasury of God’s Wisdom.

The people who live triumphantly in this broken world are people who meditate upon God’s Word, who know God’s Word, who live out God’s Word, and who love God’s Word. They do not open this Book in a cold obligation: “That is what a Christian ought to do!” This is not merely a necessary “duty”, but rather the people who are victorious are hungry and they feed themselves from God’s Word and they become hungry for more. They say, with Job, in Job 23,

<sup>12</sup> I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.<sup>1</sup>

It is not more than the excess food we might eat, or more than the snacks we may have today, but we treasure God’s Word more than the very necessary food we might partake.

Jeremiah was also one of those who said, in Jeremiah 15,

<sup>16</sup> Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart...

Recently I read a story of a young Vietnamese woman, now twenty years old, who was imprisoned at the age of fourteen for proclaiming Jesus to her peers and to children. Listen to her story and think of the impact God has made on this young woman, in this dark place, through His Word. It is a lengthy story, but I believe it is worth reading.

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<sup>1</sup> New King James Version (NKJV)

“My father is a farmer. We are a tribal group who live in the highlands. We have a small house which we dedicate to the Lord as a meeting place. When I was about six years old I believed, just listening to my dad sharing the Bible. Since the Word of God in John 3:16, I like the Word very much and started to go and share with the children. The Lord has protected me many times.

“I would often stand there, in front of the children, sing for them a song and start to share the Bible story from Genesis, not only in my village, but in other villages, too. I also shared with the teenagers, riding on my bicycle, and the police would follow me on their motorcycles.

“When I was fourteen, on morning many army people came into my home to threaten many people, not only myself but many others. “If you do not stop worshipping God, one day we will come to arrest you!” When they finally came before Christmas, I was with twenty children inside the house. Everyone was sitting on the dirt floor and I was teaching the children to sing and sharing the Word with them. They found me and they put me in the back of a small truck. I was placed in the jail cell with one woman and two men. They asked me what I did wrong and I talked to them, witnessing to them.

“In jail, when I would sing, I sang praises to God and I prayed to God. Some of the others there said, ‘She is crazy!’ The Lord spoke to me, reminding me of Psalm 24:4-5, <sup>4</sup> He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. <sup>5</sup> He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.’ God also reminded me of what He said in Genesis 28:15, when He says He is with us where ever we go.

This young girl, Rachel, goes on to tell of enduring physical abuse and torture for her faith at the age of fourteen. She concludes, “It is not an accident the Lord has in His plan to allow me to go through testing so my faith can become stronger. The time the Lord allowed me to be in prison was like making my life new again. It made me really strong and bold in the Word of God. Now I want to go and share the Word more. I would like to go back to my village more and to other villages to share about God’s Word. If I am faced with persecution again because of the Bible, I will never withdraw. I will continue on.”

What a testimony!

Would you like to have the joyful faith of this twenty-year old young woman in Viet Nam? Would you like to have the faith which liberates you from earthly fears? I know I would and we can. By God’s grace and through His Word, the Scripture tells us this kind of faith which liberates us from fears and which sets our sights upon Heaven itself comes by hearing and hearing comes through the Word of God.

Perhaps some of you are thinking, “I do believe the Bible is the foundation of a joyful life, but frankly I do not delight in it. I want to, but I open it and it seems cold to me. How can I delight in it as this young lady did, who had the Word of God being her sustenance, her source of strength, and her joy in the midst of great sorrow? How can I delight in the Word of God?”

God gives us Psalm 119 to help us with that question. We will look at our text to help us with this endeavor. We will observe five conditions which are set before us to grow within our soul a joy for God and His Word.

The first condition presented to us is: We must possess the life of God within our soul, as we read,

<sup>97</sup> Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.

The psalmist does not merely say, “Oh, how I study your Law. Oh, how your Law instructs me.” He talks about a personal joy, a personal affection, and a desire and delight. He does not merely say, “Oh, how I love your Law.” Notice, he says, “Oh how I love your Law.” He is describing the measure of his love and he notes its excess.

He is saying he cannot begin to describe how deep this love for God’s Word is. He is implying there is such an intense love for God’s Word he is astonished by its intensity. He is finding it difficult to describe its depth. He

speaks with a kind of sighing as he describes his love for God's Word. His love for the Bible is so impassioned he is surprised by the energy of his joy.

Why would he be surprised, astonished, and amazed by intensity for his own love for God's Word? It is because he knows his own heart does not bend naturally towards God's Word. He understands, left to himself his natural inclination is to resent the Law of God because the Law of God does not affirm the desires of his own flesh. It condemns his own natural thoughts, his own natural way of speaking, and his own natural way of acting and living.

It is view of the truth of the total depravity of his own soul he says, "Oh how I love your Law. This is amazing to me I would have such a deep love for God's Word."

We are not sure if David wrote this psalm, but it is my opinion he did based upon similar language David earlier, specifically in Psalm 19, to describe his own delight in God's Word. For instance, he writes, in Verses 10 and following, "The Scriptures are of greater value than gold. Even more than a great amount of pure gold, they bring greater delight than honey, even the sweetest honey from the honey comb." We find similar kinds of words in Psalm 119.

If the writer of this psalm is not David, then this psalmist surely has the same perception about the nature of his own heart as David does. In Psalm 51, David writes, Verses 3-5, "I am aware of my rebellious acts. I know, as I look inside my soul, there is a darkness there; there is a rebel which resides within me. I am forever conscious of my sin. I was guilty of sin from birth, a sinner the moment my mother conceived me."

David is teaching us, in Psalm 51, and the Bible teaches us the same truth elsewhere, our natural self rebels against God's authority and it resists His power, His sovereignty, and His righteousness. Our trouble with our relationship with God is not merely we sin against Him and we break His Commandments, but the great trouble is we are sinners ourselves and our own nature is bent away from God. Our default setting is to rebel against God and set ourselves as the "Master of Our Own Fate" and the "Captain of Our Own Soul." This is who we are from birth, David says.

It is natural for a person who possesses a heart of rebellion to neglect God's Word, to abandon God's Word, to avoid God's Word, and to even hate God's Word. After all, Scripture condemns our sin and presses the authority of God hard against our own soul. The spiritual rebel is not eager to listen to Him after His Commandments. He is trying to avoid them. The sinner has no natural appetite for God's Word no more than a lion would have for grass. The sinner looks over the banquet table found in the Bible and grumbles he like nothing of it; he has no flavor or taste for it.

This is who we are in our natural state. That describes you and that describes me. The question is: How is it, a person whose natural affections rebel against God's authority can come to have a delight in God's Word? How can that happen? How can you and I come to find such deep joy in the Scriptures? The answer is: The sinner must be changed! The sinner's heart must be transformed. We must be made new. We must be, in Jesus' words, "Born again."<sup>2</sup> We must have God's life inside of our own soul.

Apart from God's life empowering and breathing new affections, new desires, new goals, new hopes, and new submission, apart from God's life being active in our soul, not one of us would ever take any delight in any portion of God's Word. Thankfully, in Christ, that is what God offers us; He offers us His own life.

Scripture tells us if anyone is in Christ, Christ is the key to this life from God. He is a new creation. Old things have passed away and everything has become new.<sup>3</sup> Everything becomes new for us: new affections, new desires, new goals, new values, new perceptions, and a new relationship with God Himself. Through faith in Jesus, God becomes our Heavenly Father and we now have a personal, intimate relationship with the Living God. We have His life inside our very person.

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<sup>2</sup> John 3:7

<sup>3</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17

The Bible is God's book and only those who know God can possibly find it precious. This is one Book where we must know the Author to understand it and to delight in it. The very objective of this Book is to help us in that very relationship with God.

Here is the principle: The Bible does not yield its treasures to the irreverent and to the rebellious, but to the regenerate; to those whom God imparts His life. The Bible is God's love letter for His bride the church, for His own people.

I have in my possession a box of love letters Kimberly wrote me when we were in college and in seminary. I have not let anyone else read those, but if I did they would probably bore you. You may be interested in the first couple, but you would not read the whole stack because they are not written to you. There is so much in them, you would not begin to understand, nor, certainly, would you take delight in because they were not written to you.

Someone once said this is "God's love letter to His people" and a person who is not a part of the bride of Christ when they open it will not be able to understand it or to take delight in it.

Perhaps you no hunger for God's Word because your soul is still estranged from God. Perhaps you open the Bible and you find it boring, tasteless, and you are confused by it, because you do not know God through His Son Jesus. The free offer of God to you is to give His life to you through His Son Jesus. That is an offer He makes to everyone in this world. He offers you His very life to be inside your soul, growing, thriving, moving, and working.

Do you desire the life of God, and if you do will you receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord? That is the condition God makes for us.

The second condition we want to observe is: We must become humble like little children in order to delight in God's Word,

<sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. <sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. <sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

The psalmist has been a humble learner throughout his life and he comes to the Scriptures as a humble child comes to school. A humble child is full eager curiosity and questions and desires to learn. Such a child is not full of his own or her own wisdom and learning that he or she refuses to listen to the teacher. They come realizing it is not their role to teach the teacher, but it is their role to listen and learn from the teachers. A small child is ready to admit and acknowledge his or her own ignorance.

This is the attitude with which we much come to the Scriptures. If we do not come to the Scriptures humble as a little child, we will miss the reading and we will read our ideas back into the text. We must not come to the Scriptures with our own ideas seeking confirmation of them: "This is what I think. Let me look for a verse to affirm that and confirm I am right all along."

Instead, we come to God's Word as a little child ready to say, "Lord, I do not know what your ideas are and I want to discover them." God teaches those who are humble enough to receive His instructions. God loves to reveal His deepest, most precious truths to babies.

In Matthew 11:25, Jesus praises His Father for that very principle. Listen to what He says, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things, these precious truths about Himself and about His salvation, from the wise and the intelligent, those who are proud like adults, 'I already know everything. I do not need to be taught. I should be the one teaching this class,' and you have revealed them to little children." God delights to reveal profound and precious truth to children so let us become like children.

I thank God He has enabled me to study the Scriptures in some of the finest Bible institutes and seminaries in the country, but all of that learning, I realize I still need to come, when I open up my Bible in the morning, and say,

“God, I am a child. Teach me. I will not come with my own notions asking you to confirm what I already believe. I am coming to listen to what you have to say to me, to point me to the truth, and to help me.”

I believe one of the reasons we have so much trouble understanding many of the verses of the Bible is because we come to this Book as adults – we have already formed our opinions about life, about reality, what is true, what is not true, what is right, and what is wrong. We already have this set of ideas and when we come we come with all of those ideas and say, “I cannot allow what I am reading in the Book to contradict any of those things I already hold as true.” So, we read verses which do not fit our particular philosophy or theology and we ask the question: “What could this verse mean. This Book is a closed Book. I do not understand it.”

Perhaps it means what it plainly means and we should come to a little child and ask them what it means. They may be able to tell us. I believe in learning sound, Bible-study methods. I believe some texts of the Scripture are hard to understand, but we must not forget God is His own interpreter. We do not come to the Bible to argue with God over the wisdom of His truth, rather we come to learn from Him.

As a child, we come and say, “Lord, as I open up your Word, speak whatever you will and I will believe it. Whatever you say in this Word, I am going to believe it.” And, as we open up God’s Word let us learn to pray and ask God to make us like little children, to empty us of our preconceived notions, to teach us to open up our heart to receive all He would say to us, regardless of how offensive it may seem or regardless of how it may contradict preconceived notions about life, relationships, and right and wrong. Let us come as children.

Robert Murray McShane would say, “When you are reading a book in a dark room and come to a difficult part, you take it to the window to get more light, so take your Bibles to Christ.”

We again read,

<sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. <sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. <sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

The testimony of the psalmist is not a condemnation of his teachers or of the elders he has in his life. Throughout his life this person has sought to learn from every source he possibly could. He even took his enemies and said, “Let me learn from my enemies.” Notice the skill they used of worldly wisdom in order to ply their objectives. He noticed their application of secular, worldly, leadership principles to accomplish their goals. He learned some things from them.

He listened to his teachers and elders tell about their life experiences and the wisdom they learned along the way. He sat at their feet to glean knowledge and understanding from them. He is not suggesting we have absolutely nothing to learn from anyone else around us. But here, the psalmist is comparing the quality of the wisdom of God’s Word against every other human source. He is comparing the value of having Scripture as his guide against the value of having the best of human’s instructions as his guide, and he concludes there is no comparison.

He says, “As I look into the Word I have learned so much more than my enemies could teach me. I have learned so much more than my instructors and my teachers taught me in class. I have learned so much more than the elders when I sat at their feet because they were teaching me human wisdom. Your Word teaches me your wisdom and now I find my understanding is greater, my knowledge is deeper and more thorough. The wisdom I now have to live out my life skillfully is better because I have you, Lord, as my Instructor.”

The Word of God’s wisdom is eternal. The world’s wisdom is transient. The Bible’s wisdom is complete. The world’s wisdom is partial. The Bible’s wisdom is perfect and the world’s wisdom is faulty. The Word of God is going to take us far beyond anything any secular source could in the arena of knowing God and learning how to live life purposefully, with eternity in view. We are wise to become like little children ready to receive every thing from the hand of God.

The third condition: We must purpose to obey God, as we read,

<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word.

We do not need a great mind, a mind of vast intelligence, in order to find the silver and gold of God's Truth, but we do need an obedient heart. It is not so much the strength of our mind which enables us to understand Scripture, so much as it is the softness of our soul and the receptiveness with which we come to it in order to obey it.

The psalmist is not studying God's Word out of an intellectual curiosity or in order to be prepared for "Tuesday Night Study Group". Often times that is where we go wrong – "I have to study because I must say something profound in the study group I am a part of." No, we open God's Word because we say, "I need to study God's Word so my life will be transformed and I will bend to it, because I know there are many ways I am bent away from God and His Will. I need His Word to help me to conform myself to the image of Jesus Christ."

The psalmist meditates upon God's Word with a purpose of doing and acting and obeying. He surrenders his life to God. He desires to follow every instruction and turn from every sin; his will is wholly God's.

Without a will surrendered to God's authority, the Scripture becomes thorns which poke at us: "Ouch, I do not like that!" A willful resistance to God's authority becomes like a thick layer of ice upon a windshield of our cars on a wintry day. We decide to get in and drive, but that thick layer of ice makes us realize we cannot see anything. It is dark. It is like midnight without any lights. A heart which is still willful still opens God's Word and there is ice which keeps us from reading, discovering, and delighting God's Word.

Remember Jesus' words to the Jewish leaders who marveled at His knowledge and His wisdom. We read what Jesus said to explain that in John 7:17, "If anyone wants to do God's will, he will know about my teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak of my own authority."

The secret to knowing Jesus' teaching and the teaching of God through His Word is the desire to do God's will and the commitment to obedience. A willful resistance to God will keep us forever from delighting in God's Word.

Someone may say, "I read the Bible, but I just do not get anything out of it." That is not a statement of the quality of the Scripture; it is a statement of the character of a person's soul. When we yield our lives to the Lordship of Jesus we discover the passages which had previously been closed to us now open to us and which excite us and now reveal God's glory to us in ways we did not think possible. Surrender unlocks the treasury door of God's Word to us.

Ari Torrey writes, "The surrendered Word will do more to make the Bible an open book than a university education." Let me ask, have you surrendered your will wholly to God? Let us be careful as we answer that question for ourselves. It is an important question and one we should ask ourselves everyday.

Many, I fear, take this question rather lightly and quickly answer, "Yes, yes, of course my will is surrendered over to the Lord! I am here in church after all!" Yet, our will is not wholly surrendered. I believe God calls us to surrender our lives to Him thoughtfully, seriously, and consciously. We must ask ourselves, "Have I seriously and thoughtfully considered surrendering my life to God?"

I remember thinking often about this question as a young person. God slammed it in front of my face often; thankfully He did. I would attend revival meetings and I would think about the condition of my soul. God led me to commit my life completely to the Lordship of Jesus. On some of those occasions, I walked forward as an outward act of consecration to the front of the church. On other occasions, I surrendered my life to God as I sat in a pew. On most occasions, when this happened, I surrendered my life to God in the quietness of my bedroom at home.

After having that kind of youth experience, I might have been tempted to think, "Ritch, you have already surrendered your life to God as a young man. You do not need to think about that anymore. That is something you have done. That is something you have taken care of. Just live your life." That would have been a disastrous

thought to entertain. I realize my flesh is still active inside of me and God calls me to surrender to Him a conscious and active discipline in my life. It is possible for me to have this Book close more now than it was when I was an eighteen-year old young man? It is possible for me to have less light and to discover less truth today if the character of my heart is not such that I am as surrendered today as I was then.

That is why many, as they grow old, begin to lose their delight because they do not re-address this issue of consecration and surrender. Here is the principle: Truth obeyed grows our capacity to discover and delight in more truth. Truth disobeyed destroys our capacity to discover and delight in more truth.

To the psalmist, no line of application presented by God is off the table. Whatever is said, the psalmist is going to take action on it.

Truth which is not obeyed, once we discover it from God's Word, will flee from us. If we take that truth and use it we will be given more. If we refuse that truth, and push it away from us, God will take not only that truth away from us, but He will also take the truth we previously held.

Let us not let the Bible become a sealed Book to us. Reading the Bible without obeying it is like chewing without swallowing. It is a nice sensation and it can be flavorful at times, but there is no nourishment, sustenance, or real benefit, so we commit ourselves to application.

Let me challenge you, after every Sunday message, or during the message, I encourage you to jot down one application you are going to obey. If we have too many, it becomes too big and I do not believe we have any focus upon any application. At the bottom of the notes page there are questions which might help you.

- How does God want my beliefs/actions to change?
- How can I accomplish this change?
- What is the first step toward bringing about this change?

Write something there, put something down, and then commit yourself to act upon it! I would carry that charge one step further: Do that every time you open up your Bible. It should not take that long to say, "Lord, I want to leave this time of opening your Word with one action step, one thing you would have me to do in obedience to you."

The fourth condition: We must expect God to speak to us. We must come to the Scriptures with faith, believing God is a living, real God and He talks to His people. When we listen to Him we will listen to the very voice of God in our life. We read,

<sup>102</sup> I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me.

The "for you" is an emphatic "you". Some translations say, "for you, yourself have taught me." Notice the psalmist does not say, "for you book has taught me", "your Law has taught me", "your testimonies have taught me", but he says, "for you have taught me." He is not learning from a text book, but he is learning from a Teacher; "You, God, have taught me. You personally meet with me. You personally instruct me."

Do you believe God does that when you open your Bible and read it? That He personally sets before you, willing to teach and instruct, and help you?

We previously read, from this psalm,

<sup>18</sup> Open my eyes, that I may behold, wondrous things out of your law.

As we come to understand God is willing to teach us, when we open up the Bible, it is right for us to get on our knees and say, "God, teach us. Open up our eyes so we might be able to see and be able to learn. Open our heart to receive it." Prayer will also do more than a seminary education to open the Bible to our soul, for God is real and He delights to teach us as His children.

In Genesis 3:8, we learned before sin entered the world Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool of the day. That was their habit. They literally walked in the Garden and God walked along side of them. They talked. They learned. And, I am sure God would teach them all kinds of wonderful things about Himself – systematic theology, His plan for them, how to live life, and the questions they would need answered He would answer. What a great way to end the day! Often, when we think of that story, we think, “Would it not be wonderful for us to have that experience?”

Adam and Eve sinned and it changed our experience with God in this world, but it did not absolutely destroy that kind of relationship. There is a hymn Austin Myles wrote about the opportunity we have to walk with God. It is a hymn, when I was preaching in a nursing home during Bible school, every week I would ask what hymn they wanted to sing. They would always want to sing, “In the Garden”. That song says this,

I come to the garden alone  
While the dew is still on the roses  
And the voice I hear falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses.

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am His own;  
And the joy we share as we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

Of this hymn, Pastor James Boyce, who is now with the Lord in Heaven, but whom I respect deeply, comments this: “That is a pretty sentimental piece of poetry, but it probably says the wrong thing to most people who sing it. ‘Just me and Jesus; nobody else. No Bible. No mediated revelation.’ Yet there is a sense in which the psalmist says, ‘This is exactly what he finds when he studies Scripture. It takes him back to Eden, not in an unfallen state to be sure, but a place where he is personally taught by God. What this means for us is all though we have forfeited Eden we have a taste of Eden, or better yet of Heaven, when we come to the Bible and we find God Himself speaks to us.’”

We must not expect God to speak to us apart from mediated revelation. He does not promise to do that, so we do not want to sing that song thinking, “I am going to sit here, alone in my room, with nothing in front of me and God will speak to me.” I do not doubt God can do that, but He does not promise to do that, but He does promise to speak through His Word. That is how He is describing His relationship with us to be. We actively open His Word, and here is the principle, God actively and personally speaks to His people through His Word. That is how we listen to the voice of God. God is often so very personally and incredibly specific.

As our boys were growing up, one of my sons, Daniel, got angry and upset with his older brother. I am sure his older brother did something to cause Daniel to be justified in his “upsetness”. But, in his anger, he sinned and he began to speak against his brother and call him names; “You fool!”, “You idiot!”, “You dumb head!” When I talked with him, I explained, “Daniel, what I want you to do is to go up to your room, open your Bible, and pray and ask God about what you just said and what you just did. After that I want to talk with you, but I want you to ask God to minister to you.” I knew it was not time for me to talk with him, because he was so angry and so enraged, and he was not going to listen a word from me.

He went to his room. He was angry and he stomped around. He later told me, after about forty-five minutes, as he was so calm and serene and he had tears over his sin. I asked him, “Daniel, what happened?” He explained, “I was angry and I did not want to do what you said, but you told me to do it. I haphazardly opened my Bible and here is what I read from Matthew 5, <sup>21</sup>‘You have heard that it was said to an older generation, “Do not murder; and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.” <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that anyone who is angry with a brother will be subject to judgment; and whoever insults a brother will be brought before the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be sent to fiery hell.’”

Do you suppose God is living? Do you suppose God loves to meet us in very specific ways through His Word? Absolutely!



The fifth condition: We must grow to hate every sin. We read,

<sup>103</sup> How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! <sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

We live in a world full of unbelief and sin and a world which is upside-down. It ridicules what is true and exalts what is false. It calls evil “good” and it calls good “evil”. It is a dark place which has no light to brighten our path. If we love truth we must hate what is false.

We must hate every sin. There are some sins we hate naturally and there are other sins which we do not believe are as “bad”, but no person will ever delight in God’s Word who does not grow to hate every sin because God does and that is what this word is going to reveal. It is going to block huge portions of the Bible away from us if we say, “There are some sins I do not take as serious and with the same kind of vehemence in opposing it.”

The principle is: It is just as important to hate what is evil as it is to love what is good. Is it not interesting the first verse of this text begins, “Oh how I love your law!” It begins with love and the last line is “Oh how I have everything that is evil!” Those two ideas are not in opposition to one another. In fact, they are in absolutely in coordination with one another; they must come together.

The writer does not just merely hate the sins he sees in others. He also hates the sins he sees in himself. He is not selective in the sins he hates.

As believers we still have this flesh which rises up inside of us. Our flesh loves sin and the Spirit inside of us continually contends against the desires of our flesh. If we begin to befriend any of those sins, our flesh will grow and increase in strength and the Spirit and His influence over us will begin to wane. This Book will become a closed book to us and we will not delight in it.

Are there any sins in your life in which you have grown cozy toward? Those are the sins which rob you of your delight in His Word.

You may say, “Those sins are not as bad as...” and point to another person who is committing even worse sins. Those sins which are brought to your mind and to your heart are those sins which will rob you of your delight in God and your joy in His Word.

The Good News is: God has a source of deliverance for us and for our sins so we can hate those sins and we can be liberated from them. That source is repentance and confession. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us to help us clean up our soul so we will be pure again and we can see God.

I want to close by re-reading Verse 105,

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

What a wonderful life it is to live with God’s Word as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Can you say that about your life? If you do not know Jesus as your Savior and Lord, that is the place to begin. In order for this Book to be open at all to us, we must possess the life of God in our own soul and that is exactly what God offers to you and to me. God is wanting to be gracious to you and He will do just that.