

Psalm 119:161-168

SCHIN

“Princes have persecuted me without cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word. I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil. I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love. Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments. My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly. I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* before thee.”

Introduction

“verse 161, we’ll read down to 168, this first section. Interesting because there’s really no petition here. This section, as we’re closing the Song, mentions initially, persecution that our Psalmist has talked about many times. But then leans right over in the fact how even under those circumstances and under that pressure he rejoices in God’s Word. He says **“Princes have persecuted me without cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word. I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil. I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love. Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments. My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly. I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* before thee.”** (verses 161-168) You’ll notice as we go through, he talks about loving the LORD’s Word three times here.

‘Princes Have Persecuted Me, But I’m In Awe Of Your Word, I Rejoice At Your Word Like Someone Who Finds Great Treasure’

He begins by saying **‘Princes, magistrates, civil leaders, people in authority, those with the upper hand it would seem, have persecuted me without a cause.’** If it’s David writing, we well know that. If it’s one of the writers after the Diaspora, he no doubt had similar experiences. **“Princes have persecuted me without cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.”** (verse 161) The sense of it is **‘my heart trembles at your Word,’** he says there’s authority, there’s human influence, **‘but LORD, your Word, it makes me tremble, it puts me in wonder, it makes my heart stand in awe, rather LORD, of**

your Word than men, I'm not in awe of the princes, I'm not trembling before them, but your Word, LORD, it overwhelms me. and it speaks of the kind of thing we have, Jacob fleeing from his brother, the dream at Bethel, and it says Jacob woke out of his sleep and said ***'Surely the LORD is in this place but I knew it not.'*** He was afraid, and said ***'How dreadful is this place, this is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.'*** You know, the Psalmist I think in a similar way, is saying ***'There's this stuff that goes on around me, there's that stuff that goes on around me, there's civil authorities, pressures, there's all of this,'*** but he said, ***'LORD, your Word, there are times, it trembles, all of a sudden I realize 'O my goodness LORD, this is what you were saying, this is alive, this is speaking to me, this stands off the page and it talks to me LORD, it fills me with wonder.'*** (expounded meaning of verse 161) He says ***"I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."*** (verse 162) and he describes what his rejoicing is like, ***"as one that findeth great spoil."*** Your translation might say "treasure," it's the sense of the bounty after battle, the spoils, booty after war. He says ***'Your Word to me, I rejoice,'*** he said, ***'it's like somebody who finds great spoil,'*** it insinuates that there's been a victory, there's been a battle of sorts, that's the picture. And we're enriched by it, aren't we, this evening? The victory of someone else. He said ***'and your Word comes to me like that, LORD, I rejoice in it, it's like someone on the battlefield, the smoke has cleared, the victory has been won, and someone looks and there's great treasure, there's great spoil,'*** he says ***'your Word is like that to me.'***

It's Ok To Hate What's Wrong, But We Should Love God's Law

He says ***"I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love."*** (verse 163) It's ok to hate, if we hate the right things and love the right things. And hate and love go together perfectly in many circumstances. He says this, ***"I hate and abhor lying:"*** that's a good thing. How about you? Especially when someone's lying to you. right? and you know they're lying to you. ***"I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love."*** It's ok to hate the right things, he says, about the deeds of the Nicolaitans, he said, "which thing I hate." It's ok to hate the right thing. But I find, personally, when I look at this, that I kind of hate other people's lying more than I hate my own. Just me, I'm sure that none of you can relate to that, you know. And I hate it when somebody else lies, but you know, how often to I kid myself? How often I'm saying ***'LORD, I love you with all my heart,'*** then I find some other thing sneaking in there. ***'O LORD, I can't wait to get up early and seek you,'*** that I find myself somewhere else. I don't even do facebook or twitter or any of that stuff, you guys are crazy if you're in that world, you know. That's just more distraction.

[Comment: I'm on facebook because it's another avenue of advertisement for this website, but it is a serious distraction if I'm not careful. Another huge distraction, I've noticed, is the invention, creation of iPhones and SmartPhones, where people can stay online on these mini-laptops that are a phone, computer and quality camera all combined into one. It has become one of the greatest distractions that occupy people's time that could be spent more usefully in real personal relationships with others, and with God. Our spiritual iPhone, SmartPhone, is personal prayer (which can be done anywhere) and our Bible studies.] But you know, isn't it funny, we find we hate other people's sin more than you hate your own. It's ok to hate lying, and particularly when we measure it correctly and realize that deceit is sending people to hell. Satan is the father of all lies. There's something being foisted on the human race right now, thousands are being slaughtered today, Satan is just laughing. [Jesus in Revelation 12:9 says that Satan has deceived the whole world, and that is with his lies. That means the whole world, except those whom God calls (John 6:44) are in extreme deception, they've swallowed Satan's lies, and look what it's brought into the world since his first lie to Eve in Genesis 3. Human history, all of it, is the sum total of the result of Satan's lies and deception broadcast into the world of humanity. To quote *Wardaddy*, the tank commander in the excellent movie *Fury*, **"Ideals are peaceful, history is violent."** Satan is the reason for the truth contained in that quote.] It's ok to hate lying. **"but thy law do I love."** (verse 163b)

'Abundant Peace Have They Which Love Thy Law, Nothing Shall Offend Them'

"Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments." (verse 164) Seven times a day, probably an idiom, just meaning **"continually."** There's probably not measured out specific seven times, the idea here is **'LORD, it's an idiom that means praise, LORD, I hate lying, but LORD, I love your Word.'** I see everything crazy going on in the world, and you should be able to relate to this, and then I look in the Bible and I see what's true. I see everything crazy going on, I look in your Word, I see what's true. I hear everything in the world telling me you can live morally however you want to live, and I look in your Word, and I see what's true. I hear all of this spiritual chatter out there in the world saying all of these different spiritual things, and I look in your Word, and I find what's true. I see people embracing all kinds of things that are destructive in their lives, sexual things and drugs, lies and deceit and all this, and I look in your Word, Lord, in the middle of it, I find truth. I see the world disintegrating around me, and I find in your Word, **'When you see wars and rumours of wars, famine, pestilence and earthquakes in divers places, let not your heart be troubled,**

neither let it be afraid, these are the beginning of sorrows, your Word LORD shows me this. And because of that, I continually, seven times a day do I praise thee LORD. I praise you, LORD. You're my hope, you're the light in my life, your Word, a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.' Wonderful passages, **"because of thy righteous judgments."** (verse 164b) And he says this, **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."** (verse 165) The idea is, **'Abundant peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall stumble them, there won't be any stumbling,'** that's the idea, it tells us that if we love, those who love the LORD experience peace and stability in their lives, in a crazy world. And it doesn't just say "great peace" like the peace we experience, and it is, but it's more than that, **'it's abundant peace, it abounds to us, in different circumstances,'** it doesn't say that we have peace because we got the raise we want, or we have peace because everything goes great at work [or in our relationships], or have peace because of this. This writer's saying **'I love your Word, LORD. I hate the deceit and the lying that's going on around me, but because I have your Word, I rejoice all day long, I praise you, and I have abundant peace, the peace that I have is abundant, it flows without ending, because it's not contingent on earthly experience, it's contingent upon the truth of your Word, and I know the promises that you have made,'** and he says, **'Abundant peace have they that love thy law, and nothing's going to stumble them. I know where the world is going, I know what's going on around me, I know what's happening LORD, there's no stumbling.'** (expounded verse 165)

"My Soul Hath Kept Thy Testimonies: And I Love Them Exceedingly"

"LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments." (verse 166) And it isn't just to hope for it, *'Boy I hope for it,'* it's **'I've anticipated it,'** he's expecting in his hope. **"LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments."** Well of course, you're anticipating, the Lord is coming, deliverance is coming, it comes from him, so there's the walking in his Word, anticipating, those things are consistent. **"My soul hath kept thy testimonies: and I love them exceedingly."** (verse 167) "kept," "guarded, protected" in a sense, "thy testimonies." **'My soul, deep inside LORD, I've gotten ahold of your testimonies, and my soul, LORD, hath kept thy testimonies,'** and again, **"I love them exceedingly."** (verse 167b) [Comment: his testimonies, like Moses and the Red Sea crossing, the Exodus from Egypt (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/lamb/exodus1.html>) or Old Testament history (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/kings/1.html> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/ezra/ezra1.html> and

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/Daniel/daniell.htm>), holding God's testimonies close to our hearts, loving them, diving deep into them, researching them as I have done here for me and all you brothers and sisters in Christ.]

*There's A Madness That Tries To Convince Us That We Can
Play With Certain Behavior When Human Eyes Are Not There—
'All Of Our Ways Are Before Him'*

"I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee." (verse 168) "I have kept" little bit of a different word than in verse 167, there it's "My soul hath kept," "protecting." Here it's "I have kept" in the sense *'I have observed thy precepts and thy testimonies,'* his reason here, **"for all my ways are before thee." (verse 168b)** that's a great, profound ending to this, you know, *'princes are persecuting me, but LORD, your Word, your Word, your Word, your Word, your Word, in your promises I delight, I love. I hate lying, I hate what's false, I rejoice in what's good,'* and he comes to the end and he says *'You know, I keep it, and beyond that, I know that all, not most, all my ways are before thee.'* (verse 168 expounded) What madness tries to convince us that that's not true? What madness? Look down in the last verse in Psalm 119, he says *'I have gone astray,'* and the sense of that is, *'LORD, I go astray.'* He's saying here, **"My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly."** *'I have kept your precepts and testimonies:'* **"for all my ways are before thee." (verse 168b)** And isn't there something in us sometimes that tries to convince us, *'You know I can't act that way in church, I can't act that way when Christians are watching,'* or *'I can't act that way when the kids are home, I can't bring that up on the computer when people are around,'* you know, there's some madness that tries to convince us that we can play with certain behaviour when human eyes are not there. And this Psalmist says **'But you know, all my ways are before thee.'** The Psalmist is honest enough to say, *'You know, I go astray,'* there's something that convinces us that that's not true. David, a man after God's own heart, would say **"Before thee, and thee only have I sinned and done this great evil in thy sight."** that's in his repentance, when he realizes what a mistake he's made. This is a man who loved the LORD, the whole earth that knows and loves the LORD is thankful to David for the Songs that he's written for us. And in his complete honesty he said *'You know, I had lost track of that, that all my ways are before him, within his sight,'* and he said *'in my repentance I realized that, and I broke down again, and I said LORD, it's before thee and thee only have I sinned and I've done this great evil in thy sight.'* The most profound theology there is, is a personal relationship with the Living Saviour. To get up in the morning

and sense his presence, spend time with him, be able to say to him *'Lord, I love your Word, I hate lying, Lord, I hate other people's lying more than I hate my own, so you're going to have to help me. And I know that my ways are ever before you,'* to the point where we would read ***'Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, my LORD and my Redeemer.'*** *'The words of my mouth,'* ever say something you were glad wasn't on a megaphone? at the wrong place at the wrong time? ***"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart,"*** I don't know about you guys, but I can struggle there. I can be so angry at someone, not really, but I'm just saying this to put you at ease [laughter], I can be so angry at someone that I think *'Would it be worth it? It'd just be a fast right, I could deny it, people would believe me, I'm the pastor, he made it up.'* He's saying ***'Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable,'*** and you're saying *'Oh LORD, please forgive me,'* and that runs into different areas of life, different realms. And when we let things like that play around in our heads instead of bringing every thought into captivity to Christ, we rehearse it in our mind, the opportunity presents itself, and because we've rehearsed it enough, we don't have to think, we end up stepping into it. And then like David, when we say ***'LORD, I messed up LORD, my sin was ever before me, it was drought, my bones, it was killing me. And then I realized LORD, I have sinned and it is before thee and before thee only have I sinned and done this great evil in thy sight.'*** The Psalmist here says, ***'You know LORD, I have observed your precepts, and that all my ways are before thee.'*** And let me tell you something, that's a blessing and a curse. Isn't it? It means whatever trouble we're in during the day, some horrible experience surrounds us, we know this, that's before his observation, we're seeing that he's there. It's not surprising him. He's not going to find out at the end of the day *'Boy, Joe got in trouble and I wasn't there to bail him out.'* No, he's there. All of our ways are before him, all of our ways.

Psalm 119:169-176

TAU

"Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word. Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word. My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me. I have gone

astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.”

Introduction

“As we come to the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet, these last verses now, the interesting thing is, the singer closes this longest of songs with greater dependence on the LORD, than all the verses he’s gone through. He had started this Psalm, this Song, saying **“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.”** I mean, I think, again, that counts me out right away. **“Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently.”** (verses 1-4) and then he begins, and we follow **“O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.”** (verses 5-6) then **“ I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.”** (verse 7) he goes and says right away, **‘LORD, I know this is what’s right, I know this is the way life should be lived, these are the things that are wrong, these are the mistakes that I make,’** then he sings this whole song about the LORD and about the LORD’s Word, and remarkable things, things that we love as we go through. And he comes to this last stanza, and in it, the way he presents it, he’s very honest, **‘I’m more dependent on you than ever, I don’t want to be left to do this alone,’** remarkably. Let’s read from verse 169 to down to 176, he says **“Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding”** and notice this **“according to thy word. Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me”** again **“according to thy word. My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.”** Great pathos here, these last verses. The section before that, talked about the persecution, but there was no petition. He talks about the wonder of God’s Word and living in God’s presence. Now, petition after petition again. He cries out to the LORD, interesting ending to a long Song.

“Deliver Me ACCORDING TO THY WORD”

“Let my cry” it’s not just a prayer now, it’s a “cry” **“come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.”** (verse

169) Look, we've all been in that situation and we cry unto the Lord, sometimes it can be in complete silence, and tears are running down our face. Sometimes, and I appreciate sometimes, I can be alone in the house or alone somewhere, and there ain't anybody around, because there are times when I just need to cry out loud. And it does my heart good to get on my knees and to talk **out loud, and to cry out loud to him.** If you haven't done it, try it, if you're a little alone tomorrow morning. **"Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD:"** and now he kind of defines, he says **"give me understanding according to thy word."** And the Hebrew word for "understanding" is the idea "the ability to discern," to understand in that sense. And he says, **'it's according to your Word.'** Not just asking for knowledge, knowledge puffeth up, love edifies. You know people that they know so much you can hardly stand to be around them, because there ain't enough room in the room for their head, let alone you. Here he says **"Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me discernment according to your Word"** ***'Let the truth of your Word be my light so that I have understanding of what's going on around me, so that I can discern, LORD. I am just not looking for information, I'm looking for application, LORD. Hear my cry LORD. My cry is this, give me understanding—discernment—according to thy Word. (exposition of verse 169)*** I love these things, the vertical of God's Word. But one of my favorite sections, **'teach me, O LORD,'** it isn't just applying the intellect, we should do that, we should study, you know, to show ourselves workers approved, straightly dividing the Word. But then there's the vertical of the Word, and when we lose that, we lose something essential in regards to being the Word of the LORD. I love that he cries **'teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it to the end.'** **"Give me"** appealing vertically **"understanding and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart."** **"Make me"** **'you're the cause,'** **"to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness."** **'even LORD, the king's heart is in your hands,'** so **"incline my heart unto thy testimonies,"** **'if you don't do it, my heart will never be inclined to your testimonies,'** **"incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear."** **'LORD, you do the establishing,"** **"unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good. Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness." (Psalm 119, verses 33-40)** So, wonderfully here as he brings the end of this Psalm together, he's doing [saying] the same thing, **"Let my cry come before thee, O LORD: give me understanding"** **'LORD, you need to do that, give me discernment, it's a spiritual gift'** **"according to thy word."**

(verse 169) He says **“Let my supplication”** specific now, he’s asking **“come before thee:”** and here it is again, **“deliver me according to thy word.”** (verse 170) Listen, very important what he’s saying here. **“Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.”** He has said **‘give me knowledge, according to thy Word.’** Now he says **‘Deliver me according to thy Word,’** because you and I can get in a situation, single, *‘I’m waiting, waiting, waiting,’* saying, *‘I’ve waited, I’ve waited, and there’s no guys, all the guys in the church are weird, Lord, I know the guy I’m dating, he’s not a Christian, but all the Christian guys are weird, Lord, and it’s never going to work, and I’m never going to get delivered from sin unless I make this little compromise.’* No, no, he says here **‘Deliver me LORD, according to your Word.’** *‘Lord, finances are bad, things aren’t working out, I’m working under the table, it’s not long, Lord, and I’m not working under the chair, just under the table, and I promise I’ll give a tithe to you, so, just,’* you know, there’s another way he can deliver us in finances. [This happened to me once, where the guy only wanted to pay me under the table, I was working two jobs I think, and one was paying me under the table, so I claimed the extra I made under the table as side jobs on my IRS tax form, and still paid my taxes, but they didn’t know who was paying me under the table. There is a way to do this honestly according to God’s Word.] *‘Lord, my heart is broken, my best friend died, one of my kids just died, I can’t get away from this, I can’t get delivered Lord, I’m not gonna drink a lot, I just need to sit alone a bit, maybe a glass of wine, I need something to soften me up,’* no, it’s deliver me according to your word. [Comment: Calvary Chapels preach total abstinence because they are a denomination that ministers to alcoholics and addicts, but they do understand the Bible teaches extreme moderation in alcohol consumption is ok. One of the proverbs actually says, in moderation, a drink in such circumstances is not wrong. But it’s not to be a way of life. And drinking to relieve stress, of any kind, like using alcohol as a stress reliever, is one of the roads that leads to alcoholism over time. So extreme caution is advised.] *‘Lord, I know that sexual sin is not right, I can’t indulge, but I can just watch a little pornography, nobody knows, doesn’t hurt anybody, nobody knows.’* No, it says **‘deliver me according to thy Word, I don’t want any unrighteous deliverance. I don’t want any clean escape here.’** In fact, **“deliver me”** is actually **Rescue me, LORD, rescue me, LORD, you do it, and do it according to your Word. I don’t want any easy-out here, I don’t want any compromise, I don’t want any unrighteousness attached to the way this works out, LORD. Give me understanding according to your Word, LORD, let my plea, my supplication come before you, rescue me according to your Word.’** (exposition of verses 169-170)

*‘When You Teach Me, Deliver Me, My Lips Shall Gush Forth
Praise’*

He says **“My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.” (verse 171)** Interesting, he says **‘Give me understanding, that understanding will help me experience freedom, being rescued, and that will produce praise in my life,’** it’s wonderful to see the flow, and this is cascading. In fact he affirms that in **verse 171**, he says **“My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.”** “shall utter praise,” your translation might say “bubble forth,” the idea is “gush forth.” **“My lips shall gush forth praise,”** when? **“when thou hast taught me thy statutes.”** In response to him. Ever get in one of those situations where the LORD all of a sudden just speaks to you, or says something, and he blows your mind? You fall down, tears are going, you can hardly say *‘Thank you, I praise you,’* it’s gushing forth, it’s bubbling forth. And he says that here, he says **‘LORD, give me understanding according to your Word, deliver me according to your Word, and LORD, when these things [God’s teaching and deliverance] are real, my lips will gush forth praise LORD, when you’re my teacher, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.’** There are times I know for all of us sitting alone with the Lord, sitting alone with his Word, going through a difficult circumstance, reading through Proverbs, reading through the Psalms, just spending time, and all of a sudden something rises off the page. Doesn’t happen every day. But I find if I read faithfully, it happens. All of a sudden something comes to life and rises off the page, and the tears are flowing. And my thanks, my praise is gushing forth, he hasn’t changed, he’s the same yesterday, today and forever. And it says that gushing forth is a response to when he stoops down and he teaches.

*What A Privilege To Be Able To Speak God’s Word Into
Somebody’s Life*

He says, and then **“My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.” (verse 172)** “My tongue,” it could have just said *‘My tongue shall speak,’* they do you know. But he says **“My tongue shall speak of thy word.”** Speech produces something, it can produce pain, it can produce difficulty, the Book of Proverbs says you should put out the scoffer and contention will cease. Put out the person that sows discord, the critical person, and things settle down. If you’re a critical person, here on earth, you can find things to criticize **all day long.** And you may even be right. Again, Satan is the accuser of the brethren, it doesn’t say his accusations are wrong. It just says we’re covered in the blood. And here, he says **“My tongue [keyboard, smile] shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are**

righteousness.” What a privilege, look, what a privilege to speak his Word. It’s embarrassing to me, people come up to me and say ‘*Pastor Joe, thanks for teaching the Word.*’ I’m thinking ‘*You gotta be kidding me, it’s like somebody’s thanking me for eating apple pie alamode?*’ I don’t want them to find out I would do it even if they didn’t pay me, I’d still come and do it, I love to do what I do. But isn’t it wonderful for you, if you get into somebody’s life, and they’re broken, and open up, and you finally get to speak forth God’s Word to somebody? You see them get saved, you see them break down and say ‘*You’re right, you know I need to ask for forgiveness,*’ you know, isn’t it wonderful to be able to speak forth God’s Word into somebody’s life? I can’t imagine a greater privilege, because all the rest of it is coming apart, it’s all falling apart. And here we are in the last days, and Jesus said ‘**he who is the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John.**’ And John the Baptist was the greatest prophet born of woman, greater than Elijah, greater than Abraham, greater than David, greater than Zechariah, greater than Ezekiel, greater than Isaiah. And his message was repentance, and Jesus said ‘**he who is least in the kingdom, your message is clearer than John’s, there’s more clarity.**’ And we have that message to bring to a lost world, “**My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.**”

LORD, I Have Longed For Your Salvation

“Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.” (verse 173) “May” again, the pleading, “**May thine hand help me**” and here’s his reason, “**for I have chosen thy precepts.**” ‘*It’s a decision I have made LORD, I’ve chosen to get on the right side of these things, I’ve made a choice LORD, it’s your precepts, that’s how I’ll live, that’s how I’ll move forward, so let your hand help me, for I have chosen thy precepts.*’ “**I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.**” (verse 174) ‘*I have longed for thy salvation,*’ and this is a believer no doubt, who is writing this Song for us, longing to see the LORD’s coming. You know it tells us in 2nd Corinthians chapter 1, Paul is speaking of the Lord who delivered us from so great a death, ‘**and doth deliver, in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us.**’ [And then,] “**I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.**” (verse 174) We have an eternal salvation, we have been saved, we are being saved, we shall yet be saved, and he says ‘**LORD, I have longed for your salvation.**’ I don’t know about you, I’m doing that all the time, more than ever, for lots of reasons. One is, this space suit [he’s tapping his chest] is wearing out [tell me about it, Pastor Joe!]. The other one is, and as I look at the world, I can’t stand it. I just heard from somebody in the Middle East, I talked with someone yesterday, and again, they said a man was martyred over there, before he was killed,

they sacrificed his two and a half year old daughter in front of him, and then killed him. And I hear this stuff, and I think ‘*Come Lord Jesus, come Lord!*’ Because when you come, there’s no death [after he comes and puts down all opposition, the Beast army and the whole world opposing him at his coming, but yes, after Jesus (and we) return and establish his kingdom, there will be no death], there’s no sorrow, there’s no pain [cf. Isaiah 11], there’s no weeping, ‘*Lord, come and make things right.*’ And there’s incredible things going on, don’t get me wrong, in regards to God’s kingdom. But if you’re anything like me, ‘*Let’s just Lord,*’ how many times we say, ‘*Come on, Lord, get us out of here. Come on Lord, blow the trumpet, come Lord, I’m ready.*’ [Or as it says in **Psalm 119:126**, “***It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.***” In other words, as we covered earlier, ***It’s time for you to go to work, LORD!*** That should be our prayer to the Lord and God the Father, and it is part of Scripture, and we’re supposed to pray according to his Word, Scripture. So have at it. But one last Revival is needed first, the Lord has to work that miracle first.] **“I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight.” (verse 174)**

In Our Routines: ‘Revive My Soul, Let It Come Back To Life’

“Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.” (verse 175) The idea is, ‘***Revive my soul, let it come back to life again.***’ Not just the physical frame, you realize it’s inside, and I am often like that, I don’t know about you guys. There are times, I can go through my routine, I love what I do, my life is busy, I’m in a great routine, I get up the same time every Monday, I have Bible class, I have staff meeting, working through all kinds of things all day, go home, crash Monday night because I’m tired from Sunday [he preaches four services each Sunday], Tuesday’s supposed to be a day off, I come back to church then with my wife, we’re doing things here. Wednesday, come in, teach my Bible class, meetings, try to get out and get home to get ready for Wednesday night Bible study [which this sermon was preached on], Thursday’s supposed to be a day off, so we just do whatever we’re doing then, then Friday I come in, teach my Bible class, and then meeting, wrapping up the week, Saturday I study all day, I go to bed at midnight, up at 5 on Sunday, get ready, come in, three services, go home, crash, watch the second half of the Eagles game, get something to eat, get back here at 5 O’clock to meet with the pastors, prayer-meeting. That’s a routine, it goes a million miles an hour, it goes and goes and goes. And it’s a good routine. It’s not a bad routine, I’m not robbing convenience stores, I’m not out doing something crazy, it’s a good routine. But look, in the middle of that routine, I can dry up. And I’m doing good stuff. In the middle of that routine, I can feel myself getting crusty and tired, and I have to say **‘Lord, revive me, Lord, revive me, Lord. My routine on**

the horizontal is going a million miles an hour, Lord, if I don't have time with you, if I don't experience your presence, Lord, if my heart is not moved, Lord, by you, Lord...revive my soul, O, LORD,' I'm sure we all know that. **"and it shall praise thee;" 'LORD, you're the only one that can do that, you can give life to something that was alive.'** Certainly, they had seen that, and we think, you know of Aaron's rod, it was a stick, dried up for years, and God causes it to bud and to bring forth blossoms and almonds and flowers. This is the God that we serve, it's the God that we serve. He says **'Revive me my soul, inside, bring life again,'** **"and it" 'my soul' "shall praise thee; let thy judgments help me."** (verse 175b) **'LORD, I need life, and I need guidance,'** and the Psalmist is smart enough to know exactly where to go to get that.

*'LORD, I Have Gone Astray Like A Lost Sheep, Seek Thy
Servant'*

Verse 176, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." And look how he ends this, how he ends this, I mean, we've been going through this for, how long have we been in Psalm 119? Several years? I don't know, we've been here for a long time [8 weeks to be precise]. And then we've heard all of the things, **'LORD, I'm going to do this, LORD I keep your statutes, LORD I love your precepts,'** and he finally comes to the end here, and he remarkably then, he says, not just **'I have gone astray,'** the sense of it is, **'LORD, I go astray, like a lost sheep. It isn't that I want to LORD, this happens in my life, I go astray like a lost sheep,'** his last petition, **"seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."** The song ends with **'I don't want this to depend on me.'** Isn't that remarkable. **'LORD, I go astray, I have a tendency,'** men and sheep have a tendency to wander. David did. Men and sheep have this tendency, to wander. [And look how God prepared Moses to shepherd his people Israel to the promised land, for over 40 years in the desert. He had Moses herding real sheep in the desert for 40 years for training. That says something here.] This is what's right, this is what I should be doing, this is what I know, this is where I should be, but there's something in us. You raise kids, you know you raise kids, and you give your little son instruction, **"I want you to stop this, I want you to pick this up, I want you to go over there and I want you to clean that up."** Perfectly clear, **'DO YOU UNDERSTAND?'** **'Uh-huh.'** And then you come back an hour later, he's shooting bb's at something, he's doing something else, and the mess is still there, and you say to him **'Didn't I tell you I wanted you to do something?'** and you just kind of get a blank stare? **'Didn't I tell you I wanted you to clean up?'** **'Uh-huh.'** **'Why didn't you!?' 'I don't know.'** You know, just because human beings and sheep are prone to

wander. This is what I should be doing, this is what I know I'm supposed to be doing, and the LORD says **'Why are you doing that!?'** you're saying *'I don't know...'* **'I go astray LORD,'** and I can honestly say that to him, **'LORD, just I love you, I serve you, my life is given over to you, but LORD I'm twisted in the wrong direction, so I wander.'** And usually it's not when you're in the battle, it's when you have a breather and you let down. You know, if you're driving in the fog, you never get in an accident, because you're like this. It's when it's a beautiful sunny day, you're playing on the radio, you're talking, **crash!** And it's the same thing, when things are tough, there's warfare, we're in a tough situation, we're fine. And it's usually when things are lax, kind of all the pressure lets down, that's when we can wander sometimes, and we can be somewhere that we shouldn't be in our thoughts or in our actions. **'I go astray, LORD, like a lost sheep.'** Beautifully, listen, **"seek thy servant;"** **'I might go astray, but I don't forget your commandments LORD, I remember your Word.'** **"seek thy servant;"** Listen, as we end this, God is this way with you and I, he will never change, this is the way he is with his ancient people, **"Thus saith the LORD God, behold I, even I, will search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock. In the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I will bring them out from the people and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers and all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be. There shall they lie in a good fold and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. And I will feed my flock, I will cause them to lie down, saith the LORD God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick. But I will destroy the fat and the strong, I will feed them with judgment."** (Ezekiel 34:11-16) the LORD in fact saying, ***'This is what I will do, this is what I'm going to do for my people.'*** And it hasn't changed, you and I, Jesus said **"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which was lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it upon his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home he calleth his neighbours and his friends, saying, Rejoice with me, for I found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise, joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over the ninety and nine persons which need no repentance."** He's still the same, he is with his people Israel, no doubt he is with us. He says ***"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost."*** He said, ***"I am the good***

shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. He said, **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall any man put them out of my hand.”** He hasn’t changed, he hasn’t changed. I think, obviously, we walk in greater light than the Psalmist did. The Psalmist was inspired as he put these things to the page. And when he was finished he laid down his quill, he was no longer inspired, but what he put to the page was. And it still speaks to us today.

In Closing

Ya, there’s rulers and all kinds of people out there that have all kinds of power, but you and I are supposed to rejoice in God’s Word, to love his Word, to understand that we can live in it, we can walk in it, we can rejoice in it, and that our lives, our ways are always before him. That’s both a warning and it’s an encouragement to us, because we’re never lost, we’re never without his care. We can cry unto him, that he would give us understanding according to his Word. We can make supplication unto him, that he would rescue us, according to his Word. Our lips will utter praise when he’s the one whose teaching us those things of discernment and deliverance. **‘My tongue shall speak of thy commandments, let thine hand help me, I have chosen, LORD, to follow you, I’ve longed for thy salvation, LORD, I’ve longed for it tonight, O LORD, and in thy law I delight. So let my soul live, revive me LORD, internally, give me fresh life again, and my soul shall praise thee. Let your teaching, your judgments help me LORD. because I go astray, like a sheep LORD, I get myself into a mess here and there, I shouldn’t, so my final request is this,’** imagine this, **‘seek thy servant.’** Isn’t that interesting? You know, he challenges us that we should seek him, seek ye first the kingdom of God. But the last request is **‘Seek thou me, LORD, seek thou me.’** And the LORD says, **‘I will, I’ll seek my ancient people when they’re driven out, I’ll gather them, I’ll heal them, I’ll bring them back to the land, and I’ll seek my people in redemption as the Saviour of the world. I will seek them, I came to seek and save that which was lost, it is my nature, I’m a redeemer, a restorer, a reconciler.’** And my encouragement to you this evening, would be, look, as the musicians come, if you feel like you’ve wandered, you feel like what we were talking about, **‘Hey, all of my ways are before him,’** and you were thinking **‘Ut-oh, I’m involved in something I shouldn’t be involved in, I know that’s true,’** you think, **‘what convinces us there’s anything different, you know, the warfare,’** just look, you come back in perfect honesty, you know, this longest chapter in the Bible, this longest song in the Bible, says, **‘LORD, I’ve gone astray, I go astray, I need you to make me alive, and I need you to lead me, you have to give me life and you have to give**

me guidance, because I go astray. Seek thou thy servant, LORD, seek me LORD. I'm not going to forget your Word.' (exposition of verses 172-176) Isn't that wonderful? ***'Seek thou me.'*** So, my encouragement would be, to you this evening, if you've wandered, if you've gone astray, you're thinking that he's done with you, you're listening to the enemy lying to you, that this evening you should be willing then, according to his Word, he kept saying ***'Deliver me according to your Word, LORD, give me understanding, according to your Word, then I'll praise you.'*** You should this evening, according to his Word, be willing to say *'Alright Lord, here I am, I've been blowing it, messing up, I've gone astray, you're the great Shepherd, you give your life for the sheep Lord. I need you to seek me this evening, Lord. As we sing this last song I need you to come to me in this crowd, Lord, I need you, forget about everybody else that's here, I need you by your Holy Spirit to minister to me.'* Amen? Let's stand, we'll pray, we'll sing a couple songs...[connective expository sermon on Psalm 119:161-176, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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