

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 9 (February 25-March 3, 2018)

When you pray, you are speaking to God, but when you read the Scripture, God is speaking to you. Psalm 119 is powerful because the psalmist is praying to the Lord about the Word of God. We will continue to use this psalm in this week's devotions.

Sunday, February 25 (read Psalm 119:49-56)

Remember your Word to your servant, for you have given me hope. (Psalm 119:49)

This portion of the psalm should be helpful to anyone who is going through a difficult time. The writer has found hope (assurance) in God's Word, so he claims the promises of the Lord, even though he is suffering (v. 49-50). Unbelievers are mocking him for trusting God (v. 51-53). In one form or another, they say, "If God were real, you wouldn't be suffering." The psalmist, however, has a relationship with the Lord that encourages him to sing songs of praise, regardless of his location or the time of night (v. 54-55). He ends by declaring, once again, his commitment to obeying the precepts of the Word of God (v. 56). I hope you have done the same.

Monday, February 26 (read Psalm 119:57-64)

I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise. (Psalm 119:58)

God changed my prayer life completely when He said to me, "Preach and pray my **promises**, not your **performance**." In this passage, as a result of his confidence in the Lord's **promises**, the psalmist promises to obey God (v. 57-58). He has determined to follow the Lord, regardless of what others do to him (v. 59-61). This is important because, around the world, 2017 was the deadliest year in history for Christians. The wicked will always try to tie you up with questions arising from their disbelief, but the precepts of the Lord will endure forever. Your so-called friends may reject you and taunt you, but you can find new and lasting friends in the family of God (v. 63). Allow His love to fill your heart as He teaches you His Word (v. 64)!

Tuesday, February 27 (read Psalm 119:65-72)

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your Word. (Psalm 119:67)

I have never had anyone come to me and say, "Things are going so well for me that I think I will change my life completely and become a Christian." As you learn more about God and His ways, you will realize that He often works through trials to bring us closer to Him (Romans 8:28). Only when you realize that you are helpless without Him will you turn to Him in repentance and allow Him to rule your life. Not only does the psalmist admit that his afflictions brought him into the joy of obedience to the Word of God (v. 67), but he confesses, "It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees (v. 71). He cherishes God's Word more than silver and gold (v. 72). Have you arrived at this point yet?

Wednesday, February 28 (read Psalm 119:73-80)

Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands. (Psalm 119:73)

Those who reject Genesis and the Biblical account of creation will never seek to learn and obey the commands of God (v. 73), but those who trust His Word completely, like the psalmist, will live a life that will make many fellow believers rejoice (v. 74). John writes, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (3 John 4). Likewise, I rejoice when someone testifies about the faith exercised by one of my spiritual children. Some of them suffer affliction, but they still realize that God loves them and that He will never fail to fulfill His promises (v. 75-76). People who know the Word of God also know that He is a God of love and compassion (v. 77). In His time, the Lord will deal with non-believers, but we are called to trust and to meditate on His Word (v. 78). God has called us to be witnesses to other Christians. May we be worthy of this high calling (v. 79-80).

Thursday, March 1 (read Psalm 119:81-88)

My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your Word. (Psalm 119:81)

There is a tremendous battle going on in America as well as most of the other nations of the world. The battle is between the politically correct worldview and the Biblically correct worldview. True Christians, realizing that this world is not their home, long for the rapture of the Church when Jesus will finalize the salvation He has already begun (v. 81). Brutal persecution is rampant in many countries already, but Americans have been spared most of the **physical** persecution. We definitely are taking **verbal** abuse from the media and from the college campuses, so it's certainly bad enough already to make me long for Heaven (v. 82-88). At the proper time, God will judge and punish non-believers (v. 84). Will you hold onto His commands in the face of persecution?

Friday, March 2 (read Psalm 119:89-96)

Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. (Psalm 119:89)

Often I hear people say that times are different than they were when the Bible was written. This text is a reminder that, although times may be different, the Word of God **has not** and **never will change** (v. 89-90). Jesus, who is the Word of God incarnate (John 1:1-2, 14), "is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Verse 91 reminds us, "all things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16), so they will endure forever. The psalmist declares that his trust in God's Word is the only thing that has kept him from perishing during his affliction (v. 92-93). He now calls out to the Lord to save him from his enemies as he walks, not in human perfection, but in obedience to the commands of God (v. 94-96).

Saturday, March 3 (read Psalm 119:97-104)

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. (Psalm 119:103)

Romans 10:4 declares: "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes." The psalmist loves the law that came through Moses (John 1:17), but regardless of how much he meditates on it (v. 97), he will never be able to keep it perfectly; therefore, he needs, just as we do, God's mercy and grace that comes only through Jesus Christ.. When you know and believe the Word of God, you will be wiser and have more understanding than non-believers, especially the liberal professors who are teaching the politically correct worldview (v. 98-100). This kind of trust in the Word will lead you to obedience to the One who said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (v. 101-104; see John 14:15). We will continue with this marvelous psalm in next week's devotions.