

# Loving God's Word

## Anthony Kim

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Good evening, church family. I want to go ahead and have you please open your Bibles with me to Psalm 119 beginning in verse 41. In verse 41 through 48 this evening. Psalm 119 beginning at verse 41. Tonight we're going to be looking at the Waw stanza of this psalm in the ancient Hebrew alphabet. It is the sixth letter. We're now on the sixth letter and its ancient pictogram represents a connecting hook. Whether it's a nail or a temple that helps you give the image that is connected that nail or that temple to something. Grammatically it functions in connecting words and thoughts simply by the word and. So notice in this section the word and appearing with this connecting hook. You can see this word and appearing in verses starting with verse 38 all the way to 48. Just as Jacob's ladder connected heaven and earth, this stands to remind us that the word of God is our link, namely as Christians, the mediator, right? The Lord Jesus Christ. And so to believer in Christ, the word of God connects our fragile earthly struggles to the unchanging heavenly eternal outpouring of God's mercy. And so let's look then at how God hooks our hearts to his truth. Please stand out of respect of God's word as you follow along with me in your Bible as I read from Psalm 119 beginning in verse 41.

Let thy mercies come also unto me, oh Lord, even thy salvation according to thy word. So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me, for I trust in thy word, and take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in judgments. So shall I keep thy law continually forever and ever, and I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts. I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed and I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved and I will meditate in thy statutes. May God bless the reading of his word. You may be seated.

Verse 41, we're going to see the cry for mercy. The cry for mercy. Notice it says, "Let thy mercies come also unto me, oh Lord, even thy salvation according to thy word." The psalmist begins with a deeply personal plea for God's covenant. That's right, covenant. He has an eternal relationship with every believer here in this room. This unconditional affection of God's loving kindness. We get the word said in the Hebrew is meaning of steadfast love, deliverance. Notice that he uses the plural word not mercy but the plural word mercies. As sinners, we do not just need a single drop of mercy, right? No, we need abundant mercy to get us through life from now until eternity. And he asks us that these mercies come specifically to him, recognizing only God can clear the way for his grace to

then reach our very hearts. The salvation is then grounded entirely according to thy word, built on the firm foundation that God's unchanging promises hold us fast. And so the psalmist fears being left out in his afflictions. So he pleads to God to let his unfailing love come to him personally. This is a personal relationship with the Lord, right? And you are to be found in that personal relationship again and again and experiencing his unfailing love. So when you look at your life tonight, do you need rescue and deliverance? I'm not just talking about salvation when you were saved on the onset of your salvation in the Lord, that one time event. I'm talking about constantly being rescued, constantly being delivered, right? Mercies, not mercy. Mercies. Understand what Jesus Christ did for you on the cross where the ultimate aggregate of God's saving mercy was poured out for us. Cry out then for his daily mercies because that's where mercy meets knowing he is faithful to help you. Amen. Not just once but continually.

Then look down with verse 42 with me. Then he says, "So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me, for I trust in thy word." Here the psalmist is experiencing the reality of God's salvation. It puts an irrefutable response then into our mouths. The faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ is constantly reproached, right, by skeptics, by the mocking world that says, "Where is your God?" We see that displayed all the way in Psalm 1, right? Scoffers. But when we place our trust firmly in his word, God provides us the ultimate spiritual defense. Back then, yes, it was physical defense, but now as believers in Christ, we live in a new covenant, right? And we have spiritual defense upon us. Your transformed life in Christ and answered prayers deflect the insults. God protects you from the insults from entering into your heart. So imagine then a defense attorney standing in the courtroom. The prosecution is hurling accusations after accusations, ridicule after ridicule at the client that are untrue. Satan does this to us all the time. He is the great accuser. But suddenly the defense attorney produces an undeniable piece of physical evidence that's defended by facts. The room goes quiet. This is what God's active God's word does in our lives. You just let the word of God speak through you. That's what you need to do. That's what shuts down the mouth of the accuser. Right? Jesus said, "It is written." Not what I wrote, not what someone else wrote. No, it is written. God's written word. Amen. The world may mock our faith in the Lord, but they cannot argue with the undeniable fact of a life that has been redeemed and sustained by trusting in thy word. Are you facing criticism? Are you facing ridicule or even opposition for your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? It can be in the work setting. It can be in the school setting. even within your own family that are lost. The key thing here is again imagine that courtroom setting. Who's the one speaking on your behalf? The client's not supposed to speak. So, you don't fight back. You don't take your anger and your fleshly arguments and go ahead as it were pass the defense attorney to the judge. You know, guard your heart with the shield of God's promises. Stand firm in the truth. Trust his timeline, not like your timeline. And then let the merciful kindness of God which is given

to you first be shared to others. See, it's not just about us. It's about others as well. And God is using us, by the way, to invite those to experience his love. But how many times do we are we the stumbling block? I remember someone said about the sharing the gospel. Sometimes it will not even be that you're speaking the truth of the gospel. It could be your own testimony that makes them stumble. You can say all the right words, but if your life is not reflecting the gospel saving work in your life, it's like basically turning the gospel into nothing. So we got to be really careful with not going based on our timeline and based on what we have to stand up to know the Lord stands and he stands for you all the time. Let him speak through your life by your actions. That's the ultimate way to apply to those who oppose you.

And then look with me in verse 43. We now see the first connecting hook here in the text says, "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in judgments." Here the psalmist recognizing a profound spiritual reality that by ourselves we cannot speak God's word effectively. We can't. You see that in the text? We can only speak the word of truth if God puts it in our mouth and then keeps it there. The prayer expresses a horror of being silenced or left without a testimony because of personal sin or despair or a lack of experienced deliverance in your life. An ongoing work of deliverance for the believer. If God's word fails to manifest in our lives, our public testimony becomes again meaningless. Meaningless. This is why the psalmist prays here. We must patiently wait on God's directive and rely on his providential authority to help us. Sometimes we can be too quick to try to help ourselves, right? And this is where Psalmist says, "No, I don't want to do that. I need God to help me and he's going to help me through his word and then it's going to work out in my life in that way." And so think of a pastor who has been completely disqualified because their private life completely contradicts their public message. I read from a source in just one year nearly 1,000 pastors disappeared from ministry altogether due to a personal scandal 1,000 pastors in just one year. The danger of an unsaved man standing in front of the pulpit is one of the greatest devastations of America.

Or what about the average churchgoer? Leonard Ravenhill once said in a sermon the reality of personal salvation by asking this to his people. He says people say I'm saved and he says what are you saved from? And most of the his responses from his church would be from hell. But then he goes on and says, "Are you saved from bitterness or anger or jealousy? If you're not, you're not saved. You may have given up some dirty habits, but you are not a new creation." End quote. That's pretty clear, isn't it? He argued that if a person's life is not practically changed from the inside out by God's grace and mercy, freed from the destructive behaviors to oneself due to sin and sinning others, that jealousy and anger stays there and then one's profession of faith is completely empty. If you walk away from God, if you think you walked away from God, choosing your own sinful paths, refusing to confess hidden transgressions, you lose out on the opportunity to

be a true witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. Let that be very clear. There is no witness. If you want to speak for God with confidence, you must live out his truth by experience in your daily life. The Holy Spirit is living within you. Just for all believers, he will guide your speech. He will guard your conduct. So a true believer in Christ can then say in verse 44, look down with me. So shall I keep thy law continually forever and ever. When a believer is experiencing the transforming power of God's mercies and deliverances ongoing, their heart is connected to him. He's the one that's doing this work. And everlasting than in gratitude, you see the posture of the psalmist here is in gratitude. He's thankful for what God is doing in his life. And so this verse is a declaration of God's unwavering lifelong commitment to every believer in Jesus Christ. True devotion does not operate on circumstantial convenience. Finding a good time to do it. No, it's always a good time. Amen. It's always a good time to read the word of God. It's always a good time to be in prayer. And so what about fleeting moments? Oh, I'm just going to read when it's a good time. When I feel good. No, you read whether you're on the mountaintop or on the valley. You still trust in the Lord.

It is an enduring act of worship that God wants for everyone that is called a believer in Christ who ultimately seeks to honor God continually with his or her mouth. You see, that's what it is. It's not just heart. Yes, that is important. But what comes out of the mouth, right? That's what Jesus said. What is coming out of your mouth continually? Consider a healthy, thriving marriage covenant. A spouse does not say, "I will love you and be faithful to you only when things are easy and comfortable." Think how long that marriage would last. No, a true vow says in sickness and in health for richer or for poorer. See that kind of commitment is then unwavering. Unwavering that transcends all external pressures. You'll see that in the vows. There is no external pressures for this commitment to stay intact. That is the kind of continual obedience the psalmist pledges to the Lord here. And what does that do to all other relationships? You have that strong commitment with the Lord. Think of the kind of commitments you have with other people. It works only or rather it works in both situations. So is your obedience to the most important of all relationships which is namely God dependent on your circumstances? How is your circumstances and how is your relationship with God right now? Do you serve him only when life is going smoothly? Or do you resolve to keep his word even when the pressure is turned up? Who's by the way turning up the pressure? God is sovereign. He knows what he's doing. See, for the Christian, the refining fire makes us more pure. But the fire for those that are wood, hay, and stubble, what does that end up happening? destruction. So he's actually refining us, making us more pure and holy in the fire. So let your experience then of your knowledge of Christ's love move you to a life of steady, consistent, and joyful obedience.

And then look down with me in verse 45. He says, "And I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts." The secular world tells us that God's word is restrictive like a spiritual

prison as it were. But the Bible completely flips that completely on its head here. True liberty is found only within the boundaries of obedience to God's word. Amen. When we seek God's precepts, his instructions to guide us in how to live, we are free from the enslavement of sin. That's a good thing. Amen. of all of its guilt and self-destructive ends. Walking at liberty means walking unburdened by the heavy chains of spiritual slavery in sin. And so in the world finds freedom in all the wrong places. Here we see the psalmist and every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ true freedom in the Lord. Self-will and sin always promises liberty, but they always deliver a prison sentence, namely anxiety and guilt. I can tell you time and time again, those who are living in sin are right now living anxiety and guilt constantly. They don't want to admit it, but that's what's really happening. Hence, why therapy cannot solve the sin problem. It would never will. It needs to be a person. Amen. His name is only the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only one that can save us from sin. So true freedom is found in surrendering your life to the Lord Jesus Christ first and foremost but continually surrendering all to him I owe. Amen. like that hymn says who broke the power of sin and makes us truly free to live out the God's directive his instructions on how to live so much so that we can what we see in verse 46 this is what happens I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed this is the byproduct of walking in spiritual liberty in the Lord Jesus Christ it drives out the fear of man. Amen. You don't have to live in the fear of man. He gives you the power to do so. The psalmist declared that even if he is brought before the highest, proudest, and most intimidating earthly authorities, he will openly proclaim God's truth without a hint of shame or compromise. He refuses to sacrifice his faith on the altar of today's political correctness, bowing down to the world's understanding of creation, or being ashamed. Here it is, preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see this exact boldness modeled all throughout scripture. to think of the Apostle Paul standing before King Agrippa and Governor Festus unashamedly preaching the gospel of the true risen king. Think of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego standing before the furious king Nebuchadnezzar, refusing to bow to him. Think of John the Baptist confronting King Herod. They recognize that the approval of the King of Kings matters more infinitely more than the opinion of dying earthly rulers. We bound to a eternal king of kings, lord of lords, who sits on his throne forever and ever in glory. Amen. You might not be called to stand before a literal king, but you will stand before people. People that will mock you, people that will ridicule you. Will that make you fearful? Will that make you fearful by the skeptics, the hostility that will come to you? Will you hide your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ out of a fear of social shame? May that may never happen to any of us who are called believers in Christ. When God gives you his grace, cowardice will vanish. The opposite of cowardice is what? Courage. Courage to walk through the fear. speak of his testimonies then clearly like the psalmist says his testimonies what he has done in your life unashamedly love people boldly as a lord Jesus said even your very enemies and never be ashamed of Jesus your savior and lord who redeemed you. Amen.

And so we then continue with the psalmist in verse 47. And he says, "And I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved." Christianity is not a matter of cold indifference. It is a matter of intense internal affection. The psalmist does not view God's command as a heavy, exhausting burden to bear. No, look at it. Instead, because he deeply loves the Lord and what he has done in his life, he finds supreme delight and sweet joy and love in his heart for him. Jesus himself while on earth instructed his disciples in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Keep my commandments. a theme that's repeated throughout John's gospel in chapter 14 and 15. You can go ahead and read in your own time. When you receive a letter or text message, by the way, from someone you are deeply in love with as an illustration, you don't read it out of grueling sense of obligation or as a checklist. I have to just read this to get it through. No, you don't say that. You say, I treasure every word. You read it over and over again. I live in back in the days when people still wrote letters and it brings immense joy to your heart. The Bible has that kind of effect on a believer's life. Amen. You love reading it over and over and over again. the word of God, you find immense joy and love and peace that comes from only his word. If reading the Bible or obeying God and feels like a miserable duty to you, it indicates a relational issue, not a reading issue. Let me say that again. It's not a reading issue. It is a relational issue. Our love for God overflows into a delight in his teaching. Revelation chapter 2 verses 1-5. I'm not going to read the whole text, but just kind of bring out the main message. It's the Lord Jesus Christ, the church of Ephesus commending them for their doctrinal soundness. They are right on doctrine and they are hard at work. They are full-on ministry for the Lord. But Christ rebukes them for losing their first love which was that initial passionate again like that what I just shared and illustrated with you devotion to him and warning them of consequence if they do not repent. Yes, that word is important. The solution to the Lord Jesus give is three steps. And we see that in Revelation chapter 2. The first is to remember. To remember from what place you have fallen out of love for him. That's a good place to start. I think of when I'm hiking and I get lost. The first thing I think about is where did I get lost and go back there and then start over. That's what he's saying here. remember where you have fallen out of love. Second, he says, "Then repent." Then when you remember when that time happened, repent. Repent. Turn. Turn back to the right way. Turn all the way. See that you got to turn completely from a loveless routine to then third to do the first works. Then you can really do love the right way. When it's in love, works without love is meaningless. Your testimony is lost. It means nothing unless work is included with love. And it's an active move towards love for Christ. So moving away from something that is loveless to something that can receive love from you, which should be for Christ. And then it will flow from that love to others.

So then the psalmist says in verse 48, "My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved and I will meditate in thy statutes." The stanza closes

here with two powerful physical actions that demonstrate complete inner devotion. And this is what happens initially and is what we have to continually cultivate. Number one, lifting of hands and then meditation. Lifting of hands is an ancient gesture of reverence. That's what it means. Lifting hands. It's not this emotional type thing. No, it is an act of reverence, prayer, praise, and then ultimately signifies total surrender. It signifies a soul reaching up to God's truth like a precious gift and agreeing fully to its authority fully. Combined with that is a meditation to actually thinking over and over the word of God. choosing not merely to skim the surface of scripture, but to chew on it, internalize it, and let the word thoroughly transform your mind, your speech, and your behavior, basically your whole heart. See, worship then here involves the whole man. Not a partial, the whole man. Do not let your Bible study be then a superficial routine leaving out love towards the Lord who redeemed you. Never try to read this without the love of the Lord that helped you to be opened. Once you were blind, you couldn't understand. Now you do. And you can understand it with a loving heart. He's given you that loving heart. Always remember that is what has to continue to move you towards reading his word. When you be in that kind of a posture of receiving total surrender, I want to receive from you and doing that abundantly. What do you think it does to you? What do you think it does to your speech? Again, your heart, your actions. you're able to carry then out his commands more quickly. Have you suddenly kind of said, "Well, I don't know, Lord." Or when you hear his commands, you're you trust and obey. Trust and obey. Trust and obey. For it's the only way. Amen.

So tonight, think about these things to never be satisfied to live again a disconnected life. disconnected primarily in the love of God in Christ. If you're feeling overwhelmed, accused, silenced, or spiritually bound by something besides God and Christ, look to the connecting hook of God's word. Look over God's word. Look at the connections. We see then as I close the commitment to deep meditation to dedicate intentional time to move past again the surface level of reading without the heart and love and to never be satisfied reading that way and to truly think about what God is instructing you specifically. Not someone else but you. Next, live out an unashamed and testimony out of that love. for the Lord. Step into the liberty of Christ who has purchased you fully and boldly. Then share his truth with someone in your circle of life. Do it in a way where you do it urgently. There's that part in the passage where it talks about we are ambassadors for Christ. It says to do it with urgency because we this is how important salvation is, right? So for God to give us that urgency in our proclamation who desperately needs to hear just like we needed to hear it the first time. So then let's go to him even for just this time. Surrender then what God is showing you to surrender. Ask him for his saving mercies. Come into then with the life that is refreshed with his love tonight. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for the treasures that we find from your word. We thank you that we have clear instructions for as believers in Christ and how to get back on the right path.

We thank you, Father, helping us to go step to step just like the psalmist. And I pray, Father, that we would walk more deliberately and to move more towards you well in our walk towards your love for us that you have. God, I pray that you would do that with your people tonight. And I also pray for those that have never experienced your love for the first time. I pray for them as well. I pray that they would flee to the arms of Christ who has just waiting for them to come to him. I pray that they would hear those words of Christ. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Father, I pray that they would, as one person said, Lord will be restless until they find rest in Christ. Help them, Father. Bless them, Father. And I pray for these blessings to be both to the lost and to the saved in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.