

For believers in Christ to walk faithfully through dark valleys and even subtle traps that our enemy puts in front of our path. Personal desire must then mature into personal obedience to live according to God's word. While no amount of obedience can save anyone, salvation does produce a life of obedience. Apart from the light of God's word, our path leads inevitably to complete darkness. That's what we believe. That's what believers in Christ believe: that without the light of scripture, without the light of the world, speaking of Jesus, everything would be dark.

With that understanding, please stand out of respect for God's word. Follow along in your Bible as I read from Psalm 119 beginning in verse 105, and we'll be ending in verse 112.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I have sworn and I will perform it that I will keep thy righteous judgments. I am afflicted very much. Quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word. Accept, I beseech thee, the free will offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments. My soul is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I err not from thy precepts. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.

May God bless the reading of his word. You may be seated.

I want us to take a look at the first two verses. The stanza that we're going to be looking into introduces the stanza with the Hebrew pictogram representing growing seed. A seed growing. Or it could be also described as a fish swimming against the current. The letter holds also a numerical value of the number 50. Why is this important? Well, we see biblical themes of this number 50. First being the year of Jubilee, that would be the 50th year, or Pentecost, the 50th day after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which speaks of perfect restoration. And the spiritual illumination necessary then to swim against the current of the dark fallen world that we live in, we need to understand the word of God. We need to let the word of God put a light onto our path.

The word nun is related to the Hebrew word for lamp, and it spreads light. The light is needed in order for one to move forward in the Christian life. And the psalmist acknowledges that divine revelation provides then the spiritual illumination for navigating through life's darkest valleys. And apart from his precise clarifying word, we as believers are then left to stumble in the shadows of uncertainty and the moral confusion that is because of a fallen world.

I want us to examine then the contrast between lamp versus light. God's word in verse 105 serves as dual illuminative functions, meaning there's dual purposes for what he describes here in verse 105. Let's start with the phrase lamp unto my feet. Here we get the idea of providing light to just enough for one step forward. That is needed that it's only function then is for light for the very next footstep in the dark of night. And then feet is specifically illustrating the particular action. Our particular action. What is the next step in this situation that I'm in? You might think of it that way.

And then the light unto my path then cast a broader illumination, no longer the immediate next step, but rather down further along the road to show the general direction that we are to go. Path then notes the course of life of one's whole life. So understanding then these two very important descriptions of the word of God as being functional in our walk, scripture does not satisfy every speculative inquiry. Meaning, we can go on and on with issues that are not really issues according to God's word. How many people today can go into so many issues that there's all speculative. Meaning, it's not grounded in truth. It's just one's opinions and one's thoughts. And that could be a very dangerous place to be. Because if you know yourself, you can then go into a rabbit trail after rabbit trail after rabbit trail, and you actually forget the primary things of scripture. The primary issues of scripture. And so, we must be very careful to not look to scriptures for everything under the planet of this world. But, we must precisely use scripture to eliminate those things required for our immediate next step and the course of our life.

Proverbs 6:23 makes it clear, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." The word of God will show you what is true, what is right, and what is best. The psalmist ultimately acknowledges the source of hope with the words, "My feet, my path." He is going in the direction of the commandment of God, the lamp. And he says in essence that his next step never fails, that the course of his life will never fail because it is based on the unchanging word of God.

See, the same principle resonates in the New Testament for those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. After all, everything prefigures to the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. And we see the very words in John 8:12. Then spake Jesus again unto them, the disciples, saying, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Those are promises straight from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ to every disciple of Christ. We can know then that we are following the path where there's light. He will never lead us into darkness. He will always lead us into his light because he is the light of life.

And the psalmist then longs for this kind of instruction prefiguring Christ with this deep illumination that is provided to all followers of Christ. So, that's the foundation starting at verse 105. Then we go into verse 106. Here the psalmist transitions from appreciation for the Lord Jesus Christ for us as Christians and to the word of God in the context of the psalmist. And now he puts things into execution. And we see this with the words, "I have sworn and I will perform it." Here now he's using executive words, and these ordinances represent standards of uprightness that are entirely then free from corruption because after all, he is walking in the path of light. So, that's what the words you see there, righteous judgments. All things according to scripture are all righteous judgments. For God is perfect. He is perfect in his judgments. So, for the psalmist then, he embraces then the very principles of God's word, not merely for external changes, but rather he earnestly wants his life to reflect deep reverence toward God who gave the commands, who gives us the commands.

One author by the name of Stephen Charnock observed with this scripture, illustrated by us this, that a soldier unresolved to fight is easily defeated. Meaning, if you don't even think you're going to into a fight, you're going to be defeated. And he goes on and says, "Resolution in a weak man

performs far more than strength in a coward." Think about that. The weak man is far more than the coward in his strength. Because at least the one knows who he depends upon. Not in his own strength, but in the strength of God Almighty.

Jeremiah Burroughs, also noting on this verse, he says that when we realize scripture is written directly to us as a personal lamp, our spirits are quickened unto holy obedience. Do you take the word of God as your own personal lamp? That is lighting your path as you take one step after the next. You see, you cannot borrow another person's lamp. It must be your own lamp. And I can go into that in so many ways. But let me just stick with that. Is the word of God personal to you? That's what he's saying. Is Jesus personal to you? For the believer in Christ.

Think of it this way. A small lantern carried at night does not illuminate the entire mountain at once. It's not scattered. It provides sufficient light for that single step directly ahead. So that you don't stumble over any immediate obstacles in your path. And so imagine walking through a dense pitch black forest at night using just that small little lamp. It's not going to give the entire summit and all of its vistas visible, but it will show you every turn to make as you make the next step forward. And that's what the Lord Jesus wants us to know. He doesn't want us to know, "Okay, how is my life going to end?" Many times he will give that illumination and we know that through the life of Peter. But John didn't know. It wasn't revealed to him. And so many ways we must leave that mystery to the Lord. He just wants us to take the next step in the course of our life using his word.

So, the Bible then functions as that lamp giving us step-by-step clarity for our daily choices. Do you look at all your choices in life through the lens of scripture. Your finances, your relationships, the way you make decisions, are they all under the stewardship of how you handle God's word? Think of it. How do you steward God's word determines your maturity. Are you just taking the small parts of the scriptures or are you taking all of it? The whole counsel of God. That's up to you as the steward. It's a very good question to ask oneself.

You see, rather than demanding complete visibility of your future, so many people today want to have their 5-year plan, their 10-year plan, their 15, 20, and plus year plan. But we must always hold those things lightly. Proverbs tells us, yes, it's good to plan, but ultimately the Lord leads our steps. He is the one that will lead our steps. We must hold those plans loosely. That's how we are to obey him. Christians are then called to obey the specific commands God has illuminated for each and every one of us. And we look at the lamp of scripture that is illuminated for us right now. In every situation that you're in, whether it is forgiving someone, whether you are to honor God with your finances or to flee temptation, they are all there for your admonition. And they give immediate next steps for all those that I just mentioned.

So then we look at verse 107 to 108. Let's look at this part of the text. You see, we see here that he is afflicted exceedingly. You see, suffering in the service of God is a reality. Jesus said that if I have suffered, you will also suffer. It is a reality for all believers. It is not an exception. Afflictions make us weak, does it not? That is a reality as well. But in our weakness, the psalmist admits, "I am afflicted very much." He goes on and then he doesn't trust in himself. He goes on he says,

"Quicken me." Lord, you are the only one that can strengthen me, in other words. You are the only one that can revive me, in other words. And that is what he addresses by saying, "Oh Lord, according unto thy word." You see, in our weakest moments, we forget God's word, don't we? That's the weakest moment for a believer, when we forget God's word. And so he says, "Oh Lord, quicken me according to thy word." He turns directly to God for revival. Cuz he's the only one that can restore and revive. And accepting then God's word is the only then guide for his life to continue on in strength. And it's due or rather according to God's word. So, when you are revived, it is the idea and the sense of suddenly you have this renewed zeal to pour your heart over the scriptures and ask that the commands would speak clear and that you will move with his spirit and obey his commands. Obey his precepts, his instructions. That you would is no longer delay. There's no longer delay because you are now strengthened by the word of God. That's where we want to be when we're in a revived state.

I take in from another Puritan Thomas Manton I used him in the past. He said that God quickens us in affliction by reviving our sense of his love and our hope of glory. So, what he's saying here is there's two things. And I've often thought about this. I knew that we need to have our first love be brought back, but he mentions also our hope in glory. I never considered that until I read this part of this Puritan writer. Because you see, what happens when you're weak, you also start losing hope. Right? You start forgetting what God has given you as a sure assurance that you have hope in Christ all the way to the end. We know the passages, right? What he has begun in us, he will finish it until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we can trust that he will not only revive us in our love for him, but also hope in glory. That we're not only just going to be suffering and suffering and suffering, but we're going to be with him in glory together in him. See, he appeals to the covenant promises that assures true restoration to the believer's life.

Then we go on into verse 108. Despite the severe distress, the psalmist presents freewill offerings. And these, if you look in the Old Testament, are voluntary sacrifices of praise, specifically to praise and thanksgiving. And it is out of a heart of gratitude, rather than obligation from his very mouth. You see, when you are revived, what happens, just like with the psalmist, is you have now that renewed zeal to praise him. You have a renewed zeal to give him thanks because you he has restored you. He has revived you. The love is brought back. The hope and glory is brought back. And that just brings out a believer true thanksgiving and praise. After all, this is what the Lord wants from us, doesn't it? Isn't this the most honoring thing to do for the Lord when you share what he has done in your life? That's what praise is, isn't it? Praise is thanking God for what he has already done in your life. Thanksgiving is what is done in the moment. And so, with those both together, you are thanking him for what he has done in the past in your salvation, which has been secure forever and ever, and he has given you renewal and restoration. And we use that word revived. And he continues to do that in our walk. Isn't that good? That we have a savior that cares for us deeply in our personal walk until we see him face to face.

So, the psalmist's fervent desire then is to grow under this divine instruction that his life will increasingly reflect God's ways. You see, sometimes when we are in our weakness, we don't reflect God the way we're supposed to. Somehow some distortion has happened where we

haven't really absorbed the full light of God in Christ. That's what he wants for us. He wants us to perfectly reflect the light of the world. Jesus Christ told us, "Don't hide yourself in a bushel. Don't go and hide yourself. No, put yourself up so everyone can see. Not you, but see me in you." Is that what he puts back in your life? Like, "Yes, I want to go and share the gospel." Suddenly you don't have to feel obligated. You'll never have that sense of, "Ah, do I have to?" But you get to. And you're going to be saying that over and over again. It's that renewed love and that renewed hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, existential storms will remain persistent as a reality for every believer in Christ. And even when you're out of a storm, there will be another storm appearing on the horizon. And just as the previous clouds dissipate as it were, you're constantly then in this storm, which may cause you to feel like chaos in the moment. Meaning things externally can be as it were like a whirlwind. But internally you are finding peace. Like you're in the eye of the storm. In the center of God's will. That's where we are when we are in the word of God. We're constantly experiencing his love for us and hope and glory.

See, believers then are not to delay their worship until the storm subsides. You see, he says, "Quicken me. Quicken me now." Not a delay. No, but in the storm he's saying, "Lord, quicken me." Quicken me. He's calling for voluntary free will offering. Continue to praise and be delighted in the Lord even while the winds of affliction takes us on the outside. You see that in itself again is honoring to the Lord. You see we can bring then God our heaviest burdens. Well, in the storm we can bring all of our burdens unto him. We can in that moment of heavy burdens we can also give it the highest praise. All within the same as it were breath as the psalmist shows here. We don't wait for circumstances to change. That should never be in a believer's mind. If this happens then I'll be happy as it were. No. Again, Christ has already done the greatest thing upon your life. Saving your soul from sin and judgment and hell. You have much to be thankful for. Much to love him as your savior. And you have much to find hope amidst all the hopelessness that we see in this world due to the misery of sin. So we should always be in this place and remind ourselves in our weakness to quicken by him. We bring both of our afflictions and our worship to God trusting him that he will revive us. Do you trust him that he will revive you? Constantly as you're weak and he will strengthen you. When you're weak and strengthen you. Is that constantly your as it were trust in him that you can truly gain strength from him day-to-day. It's a wonderful thing to live as a Christian. We don't have to depend on external circumstances, but upon what God does in us in Christ. I can do all things to Christ which strengtheneth me. That is a true statement for every believer.

Now Psalm 119 we continue in verses 109 to 112. And the phrase we're going to look at is my soul is continually in my hand. This idiom describes constant vulnerability and physical danger. So if you're here as a believer and you feel constantly vulnerable, well, now you can relate. Yes, you are to be constantly feeling like you're vulnerable. Yes, you should by nature feel physical danger knowing that sin in this fallen world causes all sorts of misery. Think of as a traveler because this is the idiom the illustration rather is a traveler in the ancient times holding precious treasure along a path infested with robbers. That's what he's saying, my soul is continually in my hand. I don't know when I'm going to be robbed. And so this indicates ever present danger that

could threaten our mortal existence at any moment because life is fragile, is it not? We can be gone like that if God says so. So despite living under consistent threats, the psalmist continues to place God's law at the forefront of his mind. Cuz it is the word of God that helps us not to waver. Why? Cuz the Bible the word of God does not change. The word of God does not change. Therefore, you will not waver. You won't be going back and forth. And like the Apostle Paul, similarly testifies of what the word of God does, he shares these words in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 referencing this passage. He says this, "We are troubled on every side. Yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Cast out cast down, but not destroyed." There is that paradox, absolutely, in the believer's life.

But look at verse 110. We see that the psalmist shows that walking in God's truth yes, involves hardship and enemies maliciously setting up traps on our path, actively trying to disrupt, put us off the path. That is our enemies' task, but we know he can't do that. He tries. Because every person that is in the Lord will stay on the path. We will stay on the path by his strength and by his word. And so the believer lives in a world here it is. You know what this context is talking about? Is that the enemy tries to silence you. Silence you from giving thanks to God, praising God, sharing the gospel. That's the main traps of the enemy. He wants you to get thrown off. He wants to silence you. Isn't that what Satan does? He tries to put guilt on you. He tries to overwhelm you with shame. But what did I say this morning? Jesus forgives us of our sins and takes away the guilt and the shame. And then we can now be unashamed for the gospel. He changes the very disposition of our hearts and our speech. So nevertheless, the psalmist remains grounded in the conviction that God's word is worth upholding. Meaning continue to share God's word. Don't stay silent. Don't allow the enemy to keep you silent. Whatever the cost. Because what he has done for you is worth it. He is worthy. The believer therefore turns to God and asks him to make him a living witness who does not yield to the pressure to remain silent. We do not allow darkness to reign. Amen. We want the light to reign. And he does and he allows us to. Thank God that we can be a true witness for Christ. Because this life will soon be past. But what's done for Christ shall last, right? C.T. Studd. What we do for him lasts. Only God's word is worthy to defeat our enemy then. So he goes and says, "Lord, help me. If I speak your word, that's all I need to know." That's the thing that we cannot stay silent. That's the only way then to defeat our enemy according to verse 110. And that's why he's constantly saying, "Help me to keep your precepts. Help me to keep your word and share your word." Because that's the only way to defeat the enemy. Isn't that the way the Lord Jesus did it? For it is written. They do not want the enemies do not want the believer in Christ to honor God. They also don't want us to honor God, nor do they want to be reminded of God by his daily life. They don't want to hear of God and how it can change your life. They don't want any change. It's unfortunate for them, but fortunate for us, we don't stop. We don't give up. The righteous will not let any enemy intimidate him that he forgets God's word. For the very word is his protection against the danger that he would stop praising the Lord. Think about it. Acts 16:19 to 25. I often go to this passage because it helps me. When you're in, as it were, in a dark prison cell, you feel everything shutting down. What does Paul and Silas do? Midnight hour, they're praising God, singing hymns. They're glorifying him. Even in the dungeon cell, they cannot be silenced. Even though they try their best, nope. We know in Philippians, right? He shared it to all of the Praetorian guards and even to the emperor. That is what true boldness in Christ is. When you're revived,

you're not afraid. Nothing, no obstacle can go in the way of preaching the word. Preaching the word. That is where we want to be, and we constantly need to remind ourselves of it.

And so, the psalmist then continues in verse 111, he claims God's testimonies as an everlasting heritage, as an everlasting inheritance. And he speaks to a lasting treasure that he cherishes more than any material wealth. Oh, believer, this is so important because we live in an age of a lot of material wealth. This is the one of the main things that people want in this world is not material wealth. And yet he touches on the very thing of inheritance here. Who is our inheritance? Well, we know who our true inheritance is, but before I even mention it, you see, your identity is important to God. Your identity is important to God. If you find your identity in anything outside of Christ, it won't last. So, he touches on this based on inheritance. See, inheritance is based on your identity. Who is the one you're part of? Right? Based on who your family is, as it were, will determine your inheritance. Who is our, as it were, father? Who is our elder brother. And so, the verse that comes to mind is this, Romans 8:17. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. What a wonderful thing to know that we are heirs of God, and we are joint heirs with Christ. If it wasn't for Christ, we could not be heirs of God. And if so we be that we suffer with him, what a wonderful thing we can suffer for Christ and not for our sins. And that we may be also glorified together. You see, this part of life that we are in, everyone is suffering. Everyone is suffering. Whether you're suffering for Christ or you're suffering for your sin, you are suffering in this life. But for the believer, the context is we have glorification. We get to be glorified together with God and Christ. That's our main inheritance. And that's what he's referring to here in this passage of 111 referencing to Romans 8:17. You see, what happens to the psalmist happens to every true believer in Christ, that we no longer have a burden but delight in the soul when we hear the words of Jesus. When we hear about God's word, it ought to bring us joy as he says, "Rejoicing in the heart." We get to rejoice in the heart because this is not our end. Our suffering in this world is not the end. It's just a small part of all of eternity. God opened the course of life to not just this life only but beyond to eternity. And our soul is secured to the very end. What a joy. That's how we can rejoice. So, all the things that you're going on, yes, it's a reality. It's just for a short moment. Like a twinkling of an eye. Like a vapor. There's so many expressions of it.

Now, we go into verse 112. He says in the statement, I have inclined mine heart. So, he goes from rejoicing in the heart to I have inclined my heart. See, what happens is the heart is the command center. It's the very command center. It's where everything is at the center of your life. When everything is aligned, then it is speaking of your heart. Is your heart aligned to God's will or not? This is where the psalmist concludes. When you're revived, that's part of the alignment. You being filled with hope again is part of that alignment. You taking on the words and receiving it with delight and as your instruction is part of that alignment. But, let's see how he concludes. With all this that has been set before us, he goes on and says, I have inclined mine heart. This is the reflection. It is an intentional bending or even a better way of saying bowing with reverence to the Lord. You see, sin always wants to prop back up in its pride and say, I can do this. No, it's only he can do this. Whatever that is, if it's What does it say in the book of James, whether it's this or that, is to the Lord. It's to the Lord. And that's the idea. That's the sense.

Lord, I just want to bow to you in reverence. My posture is that Lord, whatever you decide, whatever you want from me, I will do. That's the inclining of his heart. That is the best place to be in full respect. Because you know what? Isn't that one of the main things, and I said this in the previous sermon, authority is a bad name now. And it's getting worse and worse to the very time now that the Antichrist would be considered the authority. That's what we're approaching, isn't it? But no, God is the true authority. The God of the Bible. And so we must always understand who we are bowing to. We are not bowing to any man, nor Caesar or whoever it may be on the throne in this world for temporary, but the true sovereign God and Christ. That's whom we are bowing down to, and that is our lifelong devotion, our hearts' devotion is to him. And his instructions therefore then is what we devote ourselves to. We devote ourselves to every instruction that is been poured out into these words for us. And every believer in Christ can resonate with this kind of commitment, this kind of genuine faith that is nurtured through consistent obedience.

May God bless these words to our hearts. I have so much more, but we must conclude. Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, I thank you that we have our true light for us, which is Christ Jesus, who have come in the flesh, the word become flesh. And we have his clear instructions for us as believers in Christ. He asks us to observe whatsoever he has commanded and he promised that lo, I'm with you always even unto the end of the age. Oh, what a promise that is for a believer. And we rest knowing Lord that whatever you want out of us that we put deep respect for your authority. And we want to do everything that you ask us to do. Bless us to this way in our hearts more and more, Father as we continue to live according to your word and according to the course of life for each one of us that would be pleasing and honoring to you. Thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.