

Psalm 119:25-32

Introduction – Psalm 119 is an extended meditation on the Word of God. The Psalm-singer is reflecting on how and what the Word does in and through his life in countless situations. Therefore, as we go through each section, the themes of the verses and the sections ought to reflect and bring to mind many other Scriptures – and so this is what we will do.

In this section, the Psalm-singer bewails the bondage to earthly things in which he finds his soul bound. The soul cleaves to the dust, melts in heaviness, and cries out for enlargement of heart from its spiritual prison. He meditates over the power of the Word to arouse prayer, to change his path and confirm his choice to turn back to Yahweh, and its ability to free us with renewed resolve. The Word of God is in every tribulation whether of body or mind, and whether of providence or self-induced misery, the surest source of help, direction, relief, and security.

The Confession: My Soul Clings to the Dust (vv25-27) – Man comes from the earth but, made in the image of God, the breath of God is breathed into his nostrils and man became a living being (Gen 2:7). The Psalm-singer plays with this image in his meditation over his soul's seeming unending desire to simply pursue carnal pleasure. When we are dead to the things of the Spirit, we place our "faith," our "life" in the things of the world (1 John 2:15-17, Phil 3:19, Col 3:2, Rom 7:22-24). The Psalm-singer declares his ways (v26), either the mundane cares of his life that have his attention and anxiety, or his inclinations to worldliness and carnal corruptions. In either case, he knows where and to Whom he must turn.

The Word of Revival – When caught up in carnal temptations, the desire for revival may be far from your thoughts. God gives His Word to stir us up even when we only wish that we did desire revival. Other times, we do not have a sense of life in the Spirit, but we wish for it, and the Psalm-singer shows us where to seek it. And all of this comes to the believer who first experienced the life-giving Spirit of regeneration; the Spirit Who will continue to overflow in the life of the one Jesus purchased. Spirit-wrought revival is all the work of God and something we cannot produce or direct (Deut 30:6), and yet we are called to set our mind on things above, not on things on the earth (Col 3:2) which is another way of telling us to constantly dwell in the Word.

Understanding the Word – It's not simply about reading the Word: "*He who made our understanding must also make us understand*" – Spurgeon. And so we read (and sing, and meditate and hear) the Word while asking the Spirit to give understanding and application. This is why we never read the Word only once and why we pass on the same Word to future generations (Psalm 78:4, Ex 13:14-15, Josh 4:6-7); there are always new insights and new applications to be made.

Confessions of A Discouraged Soul (vv28-31) – The Psalm-singer sings even when his soul is heavy, calling on the promises of his God (v28). He seems unable of his own to get rid of sinful tendencies and habits of lying and seeks to be granted the grace to abide in the law of God (v29). We see the beginnings of the grace of repentance as he states three synonymous phrases of commitment (or recommitment) followed by a petition for God to empower him to walk faithfully and not be put to shame (vv30-31).

The Blessing of Discouragement – "*It is better to be melted with grief than to be hardened by impenitence*" – Spurgeon. One assurance of salvation is discontent with one's spiritual advancement. Those who do not care about their progress, those are the one's that should cause us the most concern. But there is a godly discouragement that is the work of the Spirit and brings forth fruit in due time (2 Cor 7:9-10). The Psalm-singer has this kind of sorrow, for he seeks remedy from the promises of the Word and the grace of his God (Is 40:29, 31, Eph 3:16, Phil 4:13). By faith, there is a way to put off the old man and to put on the new (Eph 4:22-25).

Trusting God means Trusting God – Taking that step of faith away from carnal pleasures or carnal complaining, and trusting God before all the promises come looks risky unless you have that faith (Josh 24:15). It means coming into the light and having your darkness exposed (John 3:19-21). Abiding in the Word is proof that you are disciples of Jesus indeed (John 8:31). It means we trust Him and call on Him to keep us (Psalm 25:2, 20).

An Enlarged Heart (v32) – Medically, this is a bad thing. Spiritually, it is the best thing. Having meditated honestly before God in His Word, the Psalm-singer knows "*I will run the course...*" because God will provide: "*You shall enlarge my heart.*" When we behold Him and His promises with understanding, this is the result (1 Kings 4:29, Isaiah 60:5, John 8:32). Seeing how the Lord has worked before strengthens us for the work ahead (Heb 12:1-2).

A Spiritual Zeal (1 Cor 9:24-26) – God gives this gift and the work of the Spirit accomplishes this according to the Word and through the Word. This is why Psalm 119 points us to the Word. "*What a change from verse 25 to 32, from cleaving to the dust to running in the way. It is the excellence of holy sorrow that it works in us the quickening for which we seek, and then we show the sincerity of our grief and the reality of our revival by being zealous in the ways of the Lord*" – Spurgeon. Amen.