

Psalm 119:1-176

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Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0 : 00] We've been working this summer together through the book of Nehemiah. And I've got to tell you that honestly, I thought we would complete it. That we would be wrapping it up at the end of the summer, and we would be starting something altogether new together.

But I think that providentially, we have remained and we've tarried, and there's been so much richness in here for our church. And I think for those of you that are joining us now, you're not going to be behind.

We're going to get you sped up and caught up. And I think that you're coming back at a very perfect time to pick up what's happening in the book of Nehemiah. So as a quick recap, just to get your minds caught up to where we are.

This is post-exile. Israel was carried off into exile by Assyria and then Babylon. You know some of the classic stories. A lot of the prophets take place during this exilic period.

The story of Daniel, for example, takes place during this period. And then we see a return to the land. Because the world power is turned over.

[1 : 03] It's now under the power of Persia. And the Persians are a little softer by God's providence. Their hearts are being moved by a number of kings. King Darius, King Artaxerxes. And they've allowed the people to begin to return to their land, even though they still rule over it.

And this is where we find the story of Nehemiah picking up. Some 90 years since the first movement back to Israel, back to Jerusalem. And Nehemiah has found himself, by God's sovereign hand, serving as the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes.

Serving as his trusted right hand who's tasting his wine to be sure it's not poisoned before he partakes of it. And he receives news from his brother, we see in chapter 1, that the wall around the city has yet to be rebuilt.

That it's still in ruins. And therefore, the city of Jerusalem itself is not occupied. We see that there aren't many houses built. If you read previously in Ezra, there has been a work to rebuild the temple.

And the temple has been completed. But there's nobody living in the city. They travel to worship at the temple, go back to their homes in the suburbs to live. And so the city's not thriving.

[2 : 11] And this grieves Nehemiah. Not because the glory of the city. Not because he cares so much about stone and how it's erected. But that in this day, the physical state of God's people was proportionate to God's glory.

So he says, our God is a great God. A mighty God. Who's full of loving kindness and goodness towards his people. And yet the people are in shambles. They're not put together.

Something must be done for the sake of the glory of God. He must be shown as he is. We must build the wall. So he boldly asked King Arxerxes, after a bunch of time of prayer, months of prayer, he asked King Arxerxes if he can go back and do this work.

Now recognize that the king had already issued an edict, I believe if I'm remembering correctly, 14 years previously, to stop the building of the wall. He was convinced that it was a rebellion against him to fortify the city of Jerusalem.

And so he had issued an edict to stop it. And for a king in this day to reverse his edict would be a great admission of his wrong to begin with. So this is a bold thing that Nehemiah asked of the king.

[3 : 27] And the king not only granted him to go back, made him the governor over Jerusalem, gave him his credit card, so to speak, gave him the credit he needed to get the wood to rebuild, by God's sovereign hand.

So Nehemiah goes back, and this is where revival really begins to happen. We see a spiritual revival that many would say really starts in chapter 8, but I would argue it's already begun because

the work has begun.

People have seen the need to build the wall. They've joined in that fight. We see through the chapters there's much opposition to the work, both with rumor, with threat, and actual physical opposition.

We see the people of Israel carrying stones on one shoulder and a sword on the other, really working. And they complete the wall in 52 days. Something that had yet to be completed in 90 years.

It gets done in 52 days. You can see that in chapter 6. We found ourselves last week in chapter 8. [4 : 31] And I brought to everybody last week the evidences of God-sent revival. And that's where we are. That's what we're working ourselves through. And we addressed two of them.

Now hear me clearly. You have to be careful about how you think about the term revival. As revival is seen in the Scriptures, we see ten movements of the Spirit of God turning the people of God whose hearts have grown cold back to Him.

We find America in that state today. Praise God that our church seems to be growing. But churches all over America are on the decline. Religion itself, devotion to God, is on the decline in America.

And a revival is when the Spirit of God visits in a special way and turns the hearts of God's people back to Him. So hear me. You cannot schedule a revival on a calendar.

It is impossible to do such a thing. So don't think that's what I'm talking about when I talk about a revival. They held some events here, but that wasn't the revival. It was the power of God at work in them.

[5 : 37] The sovereign Spirit working in them that accomplished these things. So we want to look at these evidences because if we desire to be the people of God, these people had a special visitation of the Spirit and they lived in a certain way.

Shouldn't we also desire to live in that way? I want to see revival come. I want to see it come and sweep through North Georgia, the campus, the region, the southeast.

I want to see that happen. I want it to go out to all the world because our God is worthy to be proclaimed. We want our Christ to be proclaimed amongst all the peoples of the world. I want to see revival happen in that way.

It may not in our lifetime. I want to believe we're poised for it and it's on its way. And that's a near possibility for us. But just the same, we ought to press on to do these things.

We see that Ezra had a 14-year ministry preaching the Word of God to the people of God with very little fruit until we get to chapter 8 in Nehemiah.

[6 : 42] The four evidences. We addressed last week that if revival is God sent, God's people will be praying. We've seen this as we've worked up to chapter 8.

Much prayer. I didn't even realize that Nehemiah really seems to be more than anything a book of prayer. I didn't know that going into it and my soul has been blessed by the study of that. That God's people will be praying.

Secondly, we saw that if revival is God sent, God's people will reestablish the Word of God as the ultimate authority in their lives. They will stop making excuses.

They will stop justifying every action. They will stop comparing themselves to the standard of the world because I can tell you this, if you compare yourself to the standard of the world, everyone in this room is doing wonderful. You place yourself under the authority of the Scriptures, we are all wretched, wretched sinners.

We have betrayed God in so many ways. So these people reestablish the Word of God as the ultimate authority. They don't look at the other things around them, the periphery things.

[7 : 48] They look to God's Word as the authority in their lives. The next two. They recognize their defiance of God and view His chastisement, His correction, as just.

And finally, they turn from their defiance to obedience. And that's where I was headed this week. Getting to chapter 9. Looking at their repentance in chapter 9. But I couldn't do it. God kept arresting my study.

Praise Him, I'm a little ahead for next week because I've been looking at chapter 9 quite in depth. But kept drawing my mind back to how vitally important it is that we reestablish the Word of God as the ultimate authority in our lives.

I could not get away from it. In fact, last Sunday, I had had, just as an example, as the way we ought to be devoted to the Word of God, I was going to show you a bit from Psalm 119.

And at the last minute, I just realized this is way too much information and I cut it out. And so guess where I ended up all week? Psalm 119. So we're going to look at Psalm 119 together.

[8 : 55] Before you turn there, I want to show you just four quick observations we looked at last week to bring you up to speed. And then we'll go there. I want you to see, in chapter 4, I want you to see their eagerness.

Their eagerness for the Word of God. Verse 1, And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. They built a platform.

They were celebrating a prescribed feast called the Feast of Trumpets. You may have heard the term Rosh Hashanah before. This was a feast that was to happen in Israel nine days before the Day of Atonement when the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies make an atoning sacrifice for the nation of Israel.

This was to be a great day of celebration. And they knew this so they put together an event. All the people came, right? It's estimated that 30,000 to 50,000 people were gathered for this event.

But at the center of it was the reading of the Word of God. They were eager to hear it. So much so that they built a platform. They elevated Ezra high up above. And they took turns, I believe, reading from early morning until midday.

[9 : 59] You'll see that in verse 3. This was five to seven hours that they met together. All the people. Every one of them. Five to seven hours.

We are not eager for the Word of God. In this way. It's hard to get us here at 1030 too often. Notice also in verse 13 they come back on a second day.

They come up with a new way to disseminate the Word of God. But they come back in verse 13.

The fathers of the houses return to receive the Word and take it back out to their families. They were eager for the Word of God.

Notice their reverence. Verse 5. Ezra ascends. He gets up on the stage. The church opens up the Word of God and it says, And as He opened it, all the people stood.

Not because He asked them to stand, but because they were reverent. And I'm not suggesting that you have to stand when the Word of God is read, right? But our hearts certainly should stand at attention when the Word of God is read.

[11 : 02] These are the very words of our Lord. We ought to be reverent when they're being read.

Verse 6. We see that their bodies become engaged in this activity. They're lifting up their hands.

They bow their heads. They worship the Lord with their faces to the ground, which is a position of reverence which communicates we are not even worthy to be in your presence. Right? Your Word has been opened and they recognize that by the Word of God being opened that they were in the presence of God and that's why they worshiped on their faces.

Notice their responsiveness. Verse 9. Second half. For all the people wept as they heard the Word of the Law. I said last week as Ezra and the men that were helping him read the Word of God, the people saw an ever-expanding chasm in front of them.

It was opening up wider and wider and wider. As the holiness of God was being elevated, they recognized their own sinful state. They recognized how very short they came of this and they wept over it.

They actually responded to it. They allowed it to enter through their minds and affect their hearts rather than sitting numb, doodling, clipping your fingernails.

[12 : 16] That's happened here. I found fingernails. Balancing your checkbook. Reading some other text because you've checked out and you're bored. They allowed the Word of God to permeate in them.

Consider that if you're not getting anything out of the sermon, it might be your fault and not mine.

Verse 9 and 10 and 11, we see that this day was a day that was meant for celebration.

As they were realizing how very sinful they were, this was a day that was to celebrate the atoning work that was coming. This foreshadow of the final atoning work of Christ. And so they're told repeatedly that this should be a day of joy.

That they ought to turn from their weeping. And there is a time we see coming that they're properly responsive in repentance, but this was a day that their fear of God, the fear of the holiness of God, was turned to joy because of the atoning work of Christ.

And then we see their obedience. They didn't just receive this, stack a bunch of knowledge into their head, but they actually did something with it. They discover, in verse 14, we see they discover

another feast, the feast of booths that they were meant to practice.

[13:29] Because I won't get into all the details of that, but they did with the Word of God, told them to do, which is the true mark of Christian maturity, that you are obedient. Not just a hearer, but a doer of the Word of God.

And then notice in verse 17 the result of their obedience. And there was great rejoicing. So that's where we were at last week. So here comes part two. So there's the intro to it.

Here comes part two. I want you to turn to Psalm 119. Psalm 119 is the longest psalm.

It's 167 verses, or excuse me, 176 verses in total. It has a very unique structure. If I'm getting this correctly, I think there are eight other, or maybe nine other.

I think there are eight other that kind of follow this structure, other psalms. But this psalm was written in 22 stanzas, each containing eight verses or lines, if you prefer.

[14:38] Each one beginning with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. So notice in your Bible, probably, you have a heading right above verse 1 that says Aleph.

It would have been there, A, so to speak. And each of the lines in here began with that letter. It was an acrostic that way. So it's a very unique structure here.

We don't actually know who wrote Psalm 119. There's a lot of conjecture out there. Two major ones. Number one being that David wrote it. It's very Davidic in its language.

It seems to follow some of the events of his life. There's a proposition that he wrote it over a great period of time as he reflected on the Word of God, his statutes, his law, and how it was that it gave him life in the midst of all of these things that he was experiencing.

That's the way I tend to lean, mostly because men I respect lean in that direction. Sometimes I don't have an opinion of my own on something. The other possibility, though, is that Ezra, the priest scribe that was reading from the Word of God in Nehemiah 8, actually wrote it and did so as a way to re-ingrain in people the value of the Word of God during this period of exile and the return during this 14-year ministry where this is basically what he's been doing is ministering to people the Word of God.

[16:03] People suppose that potentially he wrote it. A few think maybe Ezekiel did, but most would say of Ezra. Now, either way, Ezra, as the priest scribe, was the one responsible for bringing back together the words of Scripture and that would have included this if David had written it.

So recognize that during this 14-year period of time, it is most likely, and this is, I don't know this for sure, but it is most likely that this psalm was being used to minister to the people of God.

These people that decide to get together to celebrate Rosh Hashanah and say to Ezra, bring the book of the law. We want to hear from it. We're being fed these words.

That their hearts were being pricked by the emotion that goes in to Psalm 119. I wish that all of us could write this psalm.

Not that we necessarily have the writing ability. I know that I don't have the writing ability to write in this way. But that our hearts could be united with the psalmist's heart. That we could really say, this is true of me.

[17:14] Psalm 119. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. So let's pray together and then we're going to read it together. It is long and I'm going to read it well to you.

But let me remind you. I've been practicing. Let me just remind you as even maybe now you're thinking, oh my gosh, it's going to take about 15 minutes to read it.

Five to seven hours. hours. Right? Do you have such a short attention span that you can't look at a copy and follow along with me for 15 minutes?

And I'm going to ask that you try to let the words permeate your heart. Let's pray together. Father God, truly your word is a gift to us. And we recognize as a church that it is your word, that it's inspired, was written by a man, but carried along by your spirit.

And as such, Lord, help us to stand underneath it. Have it speak into our lives. Make it the ultimate authority. And Lord, please, prick our hearts where our hearts need pricking.

[18:24] I know everyone in this room is not devoted to your word the way they ought to be. And I pray that our time together will be a remedy to that. And I pray this in Christ's name.

Amen. Now, before we get into this, I want to read to you a quote from Charles Hattie Spurgeon. There's much repetition throughout Psalm 119, but listen to what he had to say.

Many superficial readers have imagined that it harps upon one string and abounds in pious repetitions and redundancies. But this arises from the shallowness of the reader's own mind.

Those who have studied this divine hymn and carefully noted each line of it are amazed at the variety and profundity of the thought. Using only a few words, the writer has produced permutations of combinations of meaning which display his holy familiarity with his subject and the sanctified ingenuity of his mind.

Have I made you feel bad yet if you're going to be bored? All right. Let's go to work. Verse 1.

Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.

[19 : 37] Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong but walk in his ways. You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.

Oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes. Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. I will praise you with an upright heart when I learn your righteous rules.

I will keep your statutes. Do not utterly forsake me. How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you.

Let me not wander from your commandments. I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Blessed are you, O Lord. Teach me your statutes. With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth.

In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes. I will not forget your word.

[20 : 41] Deal bountifully with your servant that I may live and keep your word. Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. I am a sojourner on the earth. Hide not your commandments from me.

My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times. You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones who wander from your commandments. Take away from me scorn and contempt for I have kept your testimonies.

Even though princes sit plotting against me, your servant will meditate on your statutes. Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counselors. My soul clings to the dust.

Give me life according to your word. When I told of my ways, you answered me. Teach me your statutes. Make me understand the way of your precepts and I will meditate on your wondrous works.

My soul melts away for sorrow. Strengthen me according to your word. Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law. I have chosen the way of faithfulness.

[21 : 40] I set your rules before me. I cling to your testimonies, O Lord. Let me not be put to shame. I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart. Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes and I will keep it to the end.

Give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the path of your commandments for I delight in it. Incline my heart to your testimonies and not to selfish gain.

Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things and give me life in your ways. Confirm to your servant your promise that you may be feared. Turn away the reproach that I dread for your rules are good.

Behold, I long for your precepts and your righteousness give me life. Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise.

Then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me for I trust in your word. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth for my hope is in your rules. I will keep your law continually forever and ever and I shall walk in a wide place for I have sought your precepts.

[22 : 47] I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame for I find my delight in your commandments which I love. I will lift up my hands toward your commandments which I love and I will meditate on your statutes.

Remember your word to your servant in which you have made me hope. This is my comfort in my affliction that your promise gives me life. The insolent utterly deride me but I do not turn away from your law.

When I think of your rules from old I take comfort, O Lord. Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked who forsake your law. Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojournings.

I remember your name in the night, O Lord, and keep your law. This blessing has fallen to me that I have kept your precepts. The Lord is my portion. I promise to keep your words.

I entreat your favor with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to your promise. When I think on my ways I turn my feet to your testimonies. I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments. [23 : 49] Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me I do not forget your law. At midnight I rise to praise you because of your righteous rules. I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love. Teach me your statutes. You have dealt well with your servant, O Lord, according to your word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge for I believe in your commandments.

Before I was afflicted I went astray but now I keep your word. You are good and do good. Teach me your statutes. The insolent smear me with lies but with my whole heart I keep your precepts. Their heart is unfeeling like fat but I delight in your law. It is good for me that I was afflicted that I might learn your statutes. The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Your hands have made and fashioned me. Give me understanding that I may learn your commandments. Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice because I have hoped in your word. I know, O Lord, that your rules are righteous and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.

[24 : 57] Let your steadfast love comfort me according to your promise to your servant. Let your mercy come to me that I may live for your law is my delight. Let the insolent be put to shame because they have wronged me with falsehood.

As for me, I will meditate on your precepts. Let those who fear you turn to me that they may know your testimonies. May my heart be blameless in your statutes that I may not be put to shame. My soul longs for your salvation. I hope in your word. My eyes long for your promise. I ask, when will you comfort me? For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, yet I have not forgotten your statutes.

How long must your servant endure? When will you judge those who persecute me? The insolent have dug pitfalls for me. They do not live according to your law. All your commandments are sure. They persecute me with falsehood. Help me. They have almost made an end of me on earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts. In your steadfast love give me life that I may keep the testimonies of your mouth.

[26 : 00] Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations. You have established the earth and it stands fast. By your appointment they stand this day for all things are your servants.

If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts for by them you have given me life. I am yours. Save me for I have sought your precepts. The wicked lie in wait to destroy me, but I consider your testimonies. I have seen a limit to all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad. I love that one. Oh, how I love your law. It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged for I keep your precepts. I hold back my feet from every evil way in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules for you have taught me.

[27 : 01] How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through your precepts I get understanding. Therefore, I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

I have sworn an oath and confirmed it to keep your righteous rules. I am severely afflicted. Give me life, O Lord, according to your word. Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O Lord, and teach me your rules.

I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts. Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.

I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever to the end. I hate the double-minded, but I love your law. You are my hiding place and my shield.

I hope in your word. Depart from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according to your promise that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope.

[28 : 04] Hold me up that I may be safe and have regard for your statutes continually. You spurn all who go astray from your statutes, for their cunning is in vain. All the wicked of the earth you

discard like dross.

Therefore, I love your testimonies. My flesh trembles for fear of you, and I am afraid of your judgments. I have done what is just and right. Do not leave me to my oppressors.

Give your servant a pledge of good. Let not the insolent oppress me. My eyes long for your salvation, for the fulfillment of your righteous promise. Deal with your servant according to your steadfast love, and teach me your statutes.

I am your servant. Give me understanding that I may know your testimonies. It is time for the Lord to act, for the law has been broken. Therefore, I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold.

Therefore, I consider all your precepts to be right. I hate every false way. Your testimonies are wonderful.

[29 : 03] Therefore, my soul keeps them. The unfolding of your words gives light and imparts understanding to the simple. I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments. Turn to me and be gracious to me as is your way with those who love your name.

Keep steady my steps according to your promise and let no iniquity get dominion over me. Redeem me from man's oppression that I may keep your precepts. Make your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes.

My eyes shed streams of tears because people do not keep your law. Righteous are you, O Lord, and right are your rules. You have appointed your testimonies in righteousness and in all faithfulness.

My zeal consumes me because my foes forget your words. Your promise is well tried and your servant loves it. I am small and despised yet I do not forget your precepts.

Your righteousness is righteous forever and your law is true. Trouble and anguish have found me out but your commandments are my delight. Your testimonies are righteous forever.

[30 : 05] Give me understanding that I may live. With my whole heart I cry. Answer me, O Lord. I will keep your statutes.

I call to you. Save me that I may observe your testimonies. I rise before dawn and cry for help. I hope in your words. My eyes are awake before the watchers of the night that I may meditate on your promise.

Hear my voice according to your steadfast love, O Lord. According to your justice give me life. They draw near who persecute me with evil purpose. They are far from your law. But you are near, O Lord, and all your commandments are true.

Long have I known from your testimonies that you have founded them forever. Look on my affliction and deliver me for I do not forget your law. Plead my cause and redeem me.

Give me life according to your promise. Salvation is far from the wicked for they do not seek your statutes. Great is your mercy, O Lord. Give me life according to your rules.

[31 : 06] Many are my persecutors and my adversaries, but I do not swerve from your testimonies. I look at the faithless with disgust because they do not keep your commands. Consider how I love your precepts.

Give me life according to your steadfast love. The sum of your word is truth and every one of your righteous rules endures forever. Princes persecute me without cause, but my heart stands in awe of your words.

I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil. I hate and abhor falsehood, but I love your law. Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous rules. Great peace have those who love your law. Nothing can make them stumble. I hope for your salvation, O Lord, and I do your commandments. My soul keeps your testimonies. I love them exceedingly. I keep your precepts and testimonies, for all my ways are before you.

Let my cry come before you, O Lord. Give me understanding according to your word. Let my plea come before you. Deliver me according to your word. My lips will pour forth praise, for you teach me your statutes.

[32 : 12] My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right. Let your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts. I long for your salvation, O Lord, and your law is my delight.

Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments. Can you honestly join in with everything

the psalmist says in that psalm?

I can't. I've read it a number of times in the last couple of days, getting ready to not make any mistakes. And even still, as I read it again, I go, some of those.

The way he speaks of the word of God, there's all these synonyms used here, word, law, commandments, statutes, ordinances, testimonies, precepts, all of these things are synonymous. He's talking about the written word of God. This is what he is referring to. That it is the source of joy and life. That it is a comfort to him.

[33 : 19] That it builds him up. That he can stand firm because of it. In the light of any obstacle. That he stays up late, awakes at midnight, rises early because the word of God is a salve to him.

It's a solution that gives him strength, that helps him go on, that helps him persevere in the light of these things. You hear the way he praises the God of the word throughout all of this?

He has a clear understanding of the holiness of God. He stands under the word in fear and trembling. Your word has spoken.

I love it. I delight in it. I fear it. I want to know it. I want to have it permeate all of my being. rather than much of us who stand over the word of God.

We spend a paltry 15 minutes a day and then we want to tell people what it says. You have no right if that's the way we love God's commands.

[34 : 25] This is a precious psalm and I hope that it's working in your heart. Let me draw your attention to just a few verses as we move on. Have you ever considered the very interesting language that the gospel of John uses?

The apostle John uses a language that's unique in the scriptures. As he begins the book of John, he says, in the beginning was the word. And the word was with God and the word was God. Speaking of Jesus Christ and he calls Jesus Christ the word, the logos in Greek. And this is the only place that we see this in the scriptures and it causes me often to try to figure out the interplay with that.

What is being communicated to us? Why is it that John was moved to use those particular words? Let me draw your attention here in Psalm 119 to two phrases that reoccur.

I hope in your word, logos, right? This would have been in Hebrew. The Greek translation of it would have used the word logos here. I hope in your word and give me life according to your word.

[35 : 38] We see this verse 25, verse 81, verse 107. I'm doing this for the sake of those taking notes. Jot these down. Verse 25, 81, 107, 114, 154.

We see these phrases repeated here. And it draws a very clear connection in my mind to what's happening in this case. We could read it, I hope, in your logos, the very being of who you are, your representation here on earth, because we can come to understand what John's trying to communicate by simply looking at the text.

So do that. Turn to John, chapter 1. Keep you on your toes.

Those of you who only brought your New Testament version of the Bible, you're on the same page with us now. All right, let's read it together.

John chapter 1, starting in verse 1 through verse 5. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

[36 : 54] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Skip down to verse 14. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us.

And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. I have a painting that Sam did for me. Well, she didn't do it for me. She did it for a show, and I took it in my study downstairs that simply says, And the Word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us.

And it's this constant reminder to me that as I preach, what I preach is Christ crucified. That's the point. The Word of God here simply testifies, the words of God testify of the Word of God.

So understand that God and Word go together because the Word is his manifestation. It's his showing of himself. And John, here, chapter 1, would seem to say to us that there cannot be God without Word, that God cannot be oligos, but he is in fact logos, that the Word and God go together. The Word is the agent by which God makes himself known. And this is why both our scriptures and Jesus Christ are called the Word of God.

[38 : 12] The words of God. They testify of our great Lord. Jesus Christ himself is the subject matter of this entire thing. From beginning to end, this is all about Jesus Christ.

God is the Lord. Sometimes people try to press him into some text where he may just not exactly belong. Sometimes the text is really about me, but ultimately it's about how much I need Jesus Christ.

This is what the Bible is about. And therefore, if you love Jesus Christ, you'll love the Bible. If you love the Word, you're going to love the Word.

Are you with me on that? We see a really beautiful picture. the road to Emmaus. I think most of you are probably familiar with this. Luke 24, 27.

We see some disciples traveling and who shows up after resurrection? But Jesus Christ, they don't recognize him, but he sits down and he schools them. Oh, would I have loved to have been a part of that conversation.

[39 : 13] It would have been precious. Verse 27 says, And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. How good would that have been as we preach through Nehemiah?

Be like, Jesus was telling me that this means, we're going to tell you all the places that he's typed and foreshadowed and all of those things, but the scriptures are ultimately and finally about Jesus Christ.

And beloved, if we love him, we will love his word. One more spot. Turn to Hebrews chapter three. We get a similar language here.

Again, we don't know who the author of Hebrews was. I'm picking a lot of unknown authored books here. The same is true of Nehemiah, in fact. But certainly the writer of Hebrews was a pastor to these people, to these Jews that he's writing to.

So he's bringing about some correction for them. He's keeping them from wanting to turn back away, to turn from their new found life in Christianity back to Judaism, because that was the temptation here at this time.

[40 : 21] There was much persecution going on for the Christian church, but none for the Jews. So it's very easy just to go back into being Jewish and practicing those things and saying, well, it's the same God, right?

We're still worshiping the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. We're just taking out the Jesus Christ thing. And so the book of Hebrews is really about saying, no, no, this thing that you've entered into is a whole new thing. It's a better thing. It's a higher thing.

Don't go back to that lesser thing. It doesn't deliver. And he talks here in chapter 3, if you look at verses 7 through 11, about a rest, entering into rest.

And he's quoting here from Psalm 95, verses 7 through 11. It says, therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today, if you hear this voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for 40 years.

Therefore, I was provoked with that generation and said, they always go astray in their heart. They have not known my ways. As I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest.

[41 : 23] The people of Israel wandering in the wilderness, putting God to the test, not trusting him, pursuing him as they ought to. Does it sound familiar to the people in this room? And he's saying to them, he swore an oath to say, I'm not going to let them enter into the rest.

And the author here of Hebrews is saying, but there is a rest. Please know that there is a rest for the people of God if we will continue in his ways. If we're caught up in Christ, having placed our faith in him, there is a rest.

So he goes on to talk about this and he quotes a couple of other times from the Old Testament and then we arrive at the classic verse that I think everyone knows, verse 12. For the word of God is living and active, sharp with any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

True and amen. What does he say right before that? Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. So what is he driving them to, right?

He's driving them to a reverence for, an eagerness, a responsiveness, an obedience to the word of God. That's exactly what he's trying to say to them here.

[42 : 33] That's where we pick up verse 12. I think probably all of you know verse 12 but haven't really read the chapter preceding that. That's what he's driving us to. But watch what he does.

This is so cool. So verse 12 again, for the word of God, he's speaking about this Old Testament scripture that he just got done quoting. Again, logos, this manifestation of God, his very words to us, Old Testament telling us to be obedient, to pursue, enter into the rest.

Verse 12, for the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. It treats all of us holistically.

And no creature is hidden from what? His sight. Not its sight. But from his sight. But all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

He just changed. What is he talking about now? Did he just totally stop one thing and start talking about another thing? Of course not. Right? He's talking about the very same thing. But rather than saying that we're all hidden from its sight, being the word of God, we're not hidden from his sight.

[43 : 44] Who is he talking about? Keep reading. Context, context, context. Verse 14, Since then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens.

Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. Jesus, the word of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we don't have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The word of God, himself, Jesus Christ. Christ. The gospel of God that's found here. It's the motivation, the great catalyst for wanting to know him in his word.

I had a conversation this week with a brother I love who goes to this church that his fear sometimes is that we get too top heavy.

[44 : 59] We know too much and we don't do. And I think that is a warranted fear. It's something I don't want to see happen with our church. But I think often we don't know enough, which is why we don't do anything.

Because we haven't devoted ourselves to the word. We don't really know the standard to which we're supposed to live. We're not really thankful for the salvation we have because we don't see that ever-widening chasm that the people in the Amayas day were experiencing.

They didn't really behold the glory of God. We don't see it. And therefore we kind of go about our normal, average, everyday Christian lives. Not caught up in the splendor of the kingdom.

Where do you find it? How do you get moved to that? Here. Right? Say to Nehemiah, come and open the book. Come read to us.

You guys ever feel like planning an event and building a stage and asking me to read the word of God to you for seven hours? I'll do it. This is precious for our living. We need it.

[46 : 04] It is our sustenance. We must devote ourselves to the word of God. Remember the psalmist. The psalmist didn't say, and it's a drudgery.

I've got to set my alarm early and get up and roll out of bed. I don't have class till eight o'clock, but I've got to get up at six o'clock. It was a joy to him to relish the word of God.

Right? To live abiding with it. To meditate it throughout the day. Remember the record that he praised God seven times a day for his word? Just that.

What other things that he praised God for? All the things that the word had to tell him about who God is. I am deeply convicted. I don't know that I will listen to a seven hour sermon.

I would probably press pause a lot during that time. I couldn't stand still for a 15 minute reading of Psalm 119. I had a pace. I just got antsy.

[47 : 05] How do I? We need to be praying that this becomes a reality for us. That we could say yes and amen to every word of Psalm 119.

That that will actually be reality in our lives. we have been delivered by the word of God. Let us relish the word of God.

Let's pray together. Amen. Amen.