

Psalm 119:161–168
Feeling Rightly about God's Word

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 • Read Psalm 119:161–168

Questions from the Scripture text: Who are doing what to the psalmist (v161a)? Why? But what is the condition of his heart (v161b)? Toward what? What else does he do toward God's Word (v162a)? To what extent (v162b)? What hate and what love go together (v163)? What does the psalmist do, how many times a day (v164a)? On account of what (v164b)? Who have what (v165a)? What can make them stumble (v165b)? For what does the psalmist hope (v166a)? What do people who hope thus do (v166b, cf. 1Jn 3:3)? With what does the psalmist keep God's testimonies (v167a)? What is his disposition toward them (v167b)? What does he do (v168a)? Why (v168b)?

How should we respond to God's Word? Psalm 119:161–168 looks forward to opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **our affections toward God ought to be expressed toward His Word by which He communicates Himself to us.**

The great theme of the penultimate stanza of this psalm is the psalmist's affections toward God's Word.

Awe at the Word. Even hunted by princes (v161a), the much greater awe that the psalmist has for God's Word (v161b) delivers him from being afraid of anything else. Would you be fearless of men or circumstances? Develop a holy awe for God's Word. Handle it with awe. Hear it with awe. Think upon it with awe.

Joy at the Word. Wouldn't it be amazing to discover a great treasure?! It doesn't have to be hypothetical. Every time you read or hear the Bible, you are discovering great treasure, and you should rejoice that way (v162).

Love for the Word. Lying is wicked. God cannot do it (cf. Tit 1:2). The devil is the father of it (cf. Jn 8:44). And believers should hate it (v163a). Alternatively, God's law never ever lies. It is always true, always right, always faithful, always reliable. What a lovely thing is God's law, and dearly should we love it (v163b)!

Praise at the Word. The "seven" in v164 is a number of completeness. We ought to praise God continually, but we find that we can be quite sluggish to do so. One solution is to think upon the judgments of His Word. as we meditate upon how just and good and righteous and holy His Word shows Him to be, we would have inexhaustible fuel for praise.

Peace at the Word. When believers love the law like they should, their experience is peace. God does not change, and neither does His truth. So while people change, and circumstances change, love for God's unchanging Word gives the believer an unshakeable peace.

Commitment (in hope) to the Word. The doing in v166b proceeds from the hope in v166a. The believer doesn't do God's commandments because he is hoping in his own doing. He does the commandments of the LORD in Whose salvation he hopes (v166a). This is what hoping in YHWH and His Word looks like: doing whatever He says, because He is our hope.

Loving the Word from the soul. The theme of love for the Word has been touched twice (v163b, 165a). Now it is heightened with the focus on the soul in v167a, and loving *exceedingly* in v167b. How greatly we should love God's Word with our very soul!

All of these affections for God's Word must be directly connected to the God of the Word. Whether the keeping of the Word in v168a, or all of these affections toward the Word throughout the stanza, we engage God's Word as those whose ways are before God Himself (v168b). We live and love as those who see Him always seeing us.

What affections do you have toward God's Word? In what circumstances do these affections come out? What habits might improve/increase your affections toward God's Word? How constant/affecting is your awareness of God throughout your life?

Sample prayer: Lord, how glorious You are, both in Yourself and in Your relating to us by Your Word. We are greatly awed by Your Word. And we greatly rejoice at Your Word. And we love Your Word exceedingly. And we praise You for Your righteous Word. And we have great peace from Your Word. And great hope in You, in which we are committed to keeping Your Word. By Your glorious Word, give us to know continually that we are before You. And especially, gather us to Yourself in Your worship through Your Word, in Christ, through whom we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP119V "Though Princes Hunt Me Without Cause" or TPH119U "Though Princes Hound Me for No Cause"

"(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)"

Psalm 119 verses 161-168. These are God's words. Prince's persecute me without a Cause. But my heart stands in awe of your word. I Rejoice at your word as one who finds great treasure. I hate and a poor lying. I love your law. Seven times a day. I praise you because of your righteous judgments.

Great peace. Have those who love your law and nothing causes them to stumble. Yahweh, I For your salvation and I do your Commandments. My soul keeps your testimonies and I love them exceedingly. I keep your precepts and your testimonies for all my ways are before you.

So far. Reading of God's word.

Now, we have heard throughout. Psalm 118 throughout all the Psalms throughout Proverbs thus far indeed, we hear it and read often in the Bible. About how useful God's word is for instructing us and teaching us, and training us. And All of that is true. But his word is also useful to us because of the effect that experiencing him in his word has upon us the affections that we have.

Emotional response or relational response to God and his work. Is a studying strengthening invigorating thing. In our lives. And so, in verse 161, Even though there are princes, who are attacking the psalmist without a Cause His heart is able to stand his art as stable. Why? Because he has off for God's word.

Once you have been in the presence of the Living, God and realized, That the creator of all things. Is addressing you and you are before his face once you have trembled like that. small people like princess. Cannot scare you. Now that of course for someone who doesn't have genuine, awe at the Lord, that sounds small or that sounds Irrational.

What do you mean, like, small people like princess. Just think of The number of Christians who are continuously anxious about government conspiracy. I'm not talking about necessarily conspiracy theory, some of it is, conspiracy fact. But you know what else is fact? How small they are compared to God.

That's a fact. And he had an order to be able to be stable and to stand before smaller fears, we need to be stabilized by the great fear. This is similar to what the Lord Jesus is talking about when he says, Don't Fear those who kill the body.

He's like, Don't fear whom, don't fill those fear those who do. What Well, because we fear Him. Who is able to destroy both body and soul? In. And who will do so. And who, of course, will raise the body of Believers unto Glory. And so there's awe that we should have at his word.

There's joy that we should have at his word, we had that illustration earlier in Proverbs 4 of imagine if instead of announcing the preaching of the word in the pulpits of the

churches, They were announcing the showering of the congregation with gold and silver and jewels. And how people would really begin to show up once they discovered that was true.

Maybe one of the reasons why, or one of the instrumental ways. Right now, that that is not happening is because Those who are preaching the word. Don't believe it's gold and silver. And treasure. And so hard. It that way and what may God, give preachers, and hearers to be conformed to verse 162 that we would Rejoice at his word.

So you have awe his word, you have rejoicing, his word. Verse 163, you have love for his word. We saw that in Proverbs 4 earlier as well, loving wisdom, embracing wisdom. Here, loving his Oh, his law is always true. you you think about something that you love and it's different characteristics or someone that you love.

And think about your mom and various things about her. Your faithfulness and service and perseverance, and There are many other things we could go on for a while and you you just think about those aspects, you think. Oh, I love her. Well. Or what a wonderful thing. The law of God is First of all it's his very own and since as Titus says God cannot lie.

The Bible cannot lie. That's what inerrancy is all about. It's not about tallying up all the difficult texts and archaeologically or scientifically unlikely, things or whatever and and trudging through them and saying aha accurate accurate. No it is God's word. That's why it is accurate, accurate accurate? That's true too, that's mine.

But it's not accurate because we have discovered a certain consistency and accuracy over. Thousands of years, we discovered that consistency and accuracy over thousands of years because it is his And as we love, what is his? And we find that what is his is always true. There's a corresponding hate.

That should go with it. Hate and abhor. Lying. Love for God's word and discovering that God doesn't lie and that his word doesn't lie. Should help us to hate. As Jesus says in John 8, The devil is the Of all lying. Woe to the Christian. Who seeks to justify or who succeeds in his mind, at least in justifying lying.

Is inconsistent with the character of God, is inconsistent the character of his word. And there is a love that we may have. That will help us to have the hate that we should. And so we are in awe as word verse 161. We were choices. We're in verse 162.

We love his word verse 163. We praise Him continually on account. Of his righteous judgments. And so we are impressed and we respond to his word with praise. And when it says seven times a day that's a number meaning continually. Basically my day is full Of everywhere. I go, I remember what God's word says about, where everywhere I go and everything I do and everything I hear and in every single circumstances I am realizing God's judgments are righteous, I praise him this time and I praise him that I get to the end of the day and I spent my whole day praising him.

This is what happens when his word is as bound to our hands or a front Loop between her eyes.

His word gives peace. Great. Peace. Have those who love your law. And so again, we have the love that we were hearing about in verse 163. But now that love isn't just producing in us. I hate for lying, it's producing in us a piece. Why? Well, we always have his law.

And if we love his law and we're meditating upon it, we're instructed by it, then we'll never take a step in the wrong direction. It's not just like having, you know, Google Maps on your phone, as you drive, it's like having Google Maps in your heart, controlling your hands so that you don't make mistakes in the directions.

And of course infinitely more accurate than Google Maps. You understand the illustration? His word gives us. We respond to it with confidence and certainty. That everything God is doing is to bring us at last into the fullness of our salvation. One thing, after another confirms has worked Yo, I hope for your salvation and I do your Commandments not since I do your Commandments, I have hope for salvation.

No we're not earning salvation. We're doing the Commandments of him, whom we are, sure is saving us. That's why we do. What he says. Not to get, or to earn. The Salvation. But because he is saving us. And doing his Commandments is what he has said for us to do.

We trust him? And so, there is We respond to his word with hope. To respond with. Awe and joy and love, and praise and peace. And I think includes again. With love and this time. Love exceeding. My soul keeps your testimonies, and I Love them. Exceedingly. Not like a Pharisee, right?

They would say I keep your testimonies and they are a tremendous burden. Give me more of them. I can take it. I will carry the burden. No, my soul keeps your testimonies. And I love them. Exceedingly. And so, this stands of the psalm Is really pressing home to us, isn't it?

How do you feel about God's work? Now in a feeling saturated obsessed, controlled Society. We have learned to be. with good reason. A little bit. Careful about asking how we feel about things because we don't want to be those who are controlled by our feelings. We want our feelings to be well, instructed, and to respond, rightly to situations.

We want to be controlled by our thoughts. We want to be controlled by God's word. By the will that comes from our new nature who we are new in Christ. That's what we want to be controlled by. But if we are, we should have right feelings about the word of God.

Feelings are not, it would be wrong. Wicked. Just to be called to his word. To be unaffected by his word and by reading it and by hearing it by sharing it together, as we are now in the family by sitting under it preached, as he addresses us, and in the public worship.

By considering it in our times of of private worship personal worship. Realizing that God. Is coming near by his Spirit, personally, even at those times. It would be wrong for us to be unaffected or bored. Or find it. We often do all those things. And God forgive us and God help us.

But here we have a stands on the psalm that is urging us to be in awe and to Rejoice and to love his word to praise him for it to draw. Peace and strength from it. To have hope and certainty. Well. Because it's Verse 168. I keep your precepts and your testimonies.

For all my ways are before you. And this is, of course, true in two different ways one. He's our creator He was the one who made us for himself. He is the god with whom we have ultimately to do Put this before you language is and it's not the same.

Preposition. As in the first commandment but it means a similar thing. You still have no other gods before me. He says, That we are. In Covenant with him and we are Before his face. We are his. And he is ours. And his Banner over us is love. And since we are, We need to respond to him.

By keeping his presets by keeping his testimonies. And, Responding to or feeling about. His precepts and his testimonies. The way we feel about him. For, he's communicating himself to us. By use of his word. So praise God. Very helpful stanza in this Psalm and something that we will be we hope and Trust by the ministry of his Spirit to us growing in for the rest of our lives.

responding to his word with the right affections. Let's pray. We thank you. Our gracious. God. And our heavenly father, you have given us. Close our day together. Considering your word and addressing you. Crying out to you. Calling upon your name. Like we are now. Singing your word like we have and Like we're about.

Thank you for. Creating us for yourself redeeming. For yourself and unto yourself. Please help us by your spirit. To love you to Rejoice over you. To have peace and hope. And praise you. And to do so, also, all of these things with your word, Before we ask it in the name of your son, the word made flesh.

Even our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.