

**Tuesday, May 14, 2024 • Read Psalm 119:9–16**

*Questions from the from the Scripture text: About whom does v9a ask a question? What does it ask about him? What must he do (v9b)? According to what? What has the psalmist done, with what (v10a)? But Whose help must he have in order not to do what (v10b)? What has he hidden (v11a)? Where? To what end (v11b)? What sort of prayer is v12a? For what does he ask in v12b? What has he used to do what (v13)? In what has he rejoiced (v14a)? How much (v14b)? What will he do with the Lord's precepts (v15a)? And what with His ways (v15b)? What will he do with the Lord's statutes (v16a)? What won't he do with the Lord's Word (v16b)?*

**What can cleanse a sinner from sinning?** Psalm 119:9–16 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **only God Himself cleanses sinners from sinning, which He has appointed to do via His Word as the means of His grace.**

**Overcoming original sin.** A believer desires nothing more than to honor and obey his Lord, but he has a tremendous problem: that which is in him from his original nature must be cleansed (v9b). He goes astray easily from the Lord's commandments (v10b), sinning against Him (v11b). Unto this end, our Lord has given us His Word (v9b, 11a, 16b), commandments (v10b), statutes (v12b, 16a), judgments (v13b), testimonies (v14a), precepts (v15a), and ways (v15b). Nearly all of the synonyms for God's verbal revelation appear in this section. What must we do with His Word?

**Take heed,** v9b. The Word is not merely to be heard or remembered but kept. Be not hearers only, but doers (cf. Mt 7:24–27; Ja 1:22–25).

**Seek the God of the Word,** v10, 12. Beyond even learning and doing the Word, one must seek the Lord Himself by it (v10a). For it is He, by His grace, Who alone can keep us from going astray (v10b). He is the blessed God, Who instructs and trains us (v12).

**Hide it in your heart,** v11. This is more than just memorization. It is the installation of the Word as the controlling factor in one's thinking, feeling, and desiring.

**Meditate upon it,** v13, 15. The "declaring" in v13 is recounting. It is closely related to the word "meditate" in v15a, which is fundamentally to recount/mutter God's Word to oneself. v15b rounds out the description with "contemplate," a visual word meaning to look all across. God's Word is a communication of Himself to us, and He gives us contemplation of it as a means of communion with Him.

**Delight in it,** v14, 16. If the Word is indeed God's communication of Himself, taking proper heed of it means more than just meditating upon it and doing it. He is worthy of praise and delight, adoration and rejoicing. And if we delight in Him, then surely we ought to delight in His Word. It ought to be our special pleasure to enjoy it and Him.

Why do you need help not to sin? Into what particular sins are you most tempted to wander? What (Who!) can protect and spare you from this? How has He appointed to do so? How does your thought life, when you are going about your business, reflect that the Word is hidden in your heart? At what times, especially, is it your habit to meditate upon Scripture? What sense do you have of taking joy in this?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we have come now to seek You in Your worship, by Your Word. Grant that Your Spirit would make us to seek You with our whole heart. Give us joy in Your testimonies as much as in all riches. Make us to delight in Your statutes. As we come to bless Your Name and be taught Your statutes, give us to remember and heed Your Word, so that it would be hidden in our heart and shape our thoughts, feelings, and choices. Thus, be glorified in our worship, as You do us good by Your Word, we ask through Christ, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP119B "How Can a Young Man Cleanse His Way?" or TPH119B "How Shall the Young Direct Their Way?"**

**(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](http://hopewellarp.org))**

Psalm 119 verses 9 through 16. These are God's words. How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to your word. With my whole heart, I have sought you. Oh, let me not wonder from your Commandments. Your word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Blessed. Are you o Yahweh. Teach me your statutes. With my lips, I have declared all the judgments of your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of your testimonies as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your presets and contemplate your ways. I will Delight myself in your statutes.

I will not forget your word.

And then, in that sense, the reading of God's word Uh, this stanza all the verses start with bet. Um, And it begins with a question. That established has the thought for the stanza. How can a young man cleanse his way? This is not because an older, man. Um, young women.

Do not have a way to be cleansed, but this A reminder. That even after. The Lord had punished, the world had testified really his wrath against the world in the time of Noah. He said when it was just Noah and his family left. Um, the the Uh, the hearts of men are evil from their youth.

And so, the real question here, As how can be done in opposition to our original sin. How can it be that we whose hearts are evil from our youth? Could be cleansed, not just forgiven, but cleansed and abled to walk and fellowship with God. And according to his Commandments, The believer desires nothing more than to honor and obey his Lord but he still has that.

Which Uh, in him from his former nature. This of course is for ladies as well. We easily go astray from God's Commandments. Oh, let me not wander. He says in verse 10 but how often we make a good start. And just a couple days later, just a couple hours later, just a couple minutes later, sometimes, God have mercy on us.

A few seconds later. We have already discovered to become aware that we have wandered. So we go astray easily. Our sin is not just violation of a code or incurring a penalty. It's personal verse 11, that I might not sin against you. How our hearts ought to be grieved to sin against him.

And so what can we do? How can we be delivered from such a horrible thing as the sin that remains within us. In which we so easily, go astray in which we sin against him. The answer is God himself, actually Uh blessed, are you o? Yahweh? Verse 12. And so he says with my whole heart, I have sought you verse 10 So our sin is such Dreadful thing that it's not like God can give us a tool and say, here you go.

Go to work on yourself. No, praise God. It is he who works on us. Is he by his grace who upholds us and cleanses us. And so when he gives us the tool, he doesn't say here is your tool to cleanse yourself? He says, here is my tool. By which I cleanse you.

What a great thing, then the Bible is for us God's Own tool. Which God himself uses by God's Own power in God's Own Mercy. To cleanse us from our sin. And so, We have again, nearly all of the words all of the synonyms for God's verbal revelation in this section.

He refers to his word as his word. Now finally you remember that did not appear in verses one through eight. Well we've got it three times here. Uh in verse 9 verse 11 and verse 16, his Commandments, his statutes, his judgments, his testimonies his precepts and his ways. So this is a reminder not only that the Bible is God's Own tool but that it's a multi-tool as it.

It's got different sorts of blades on it that he uses or different sorts of attachments on it that he uses in different ways. The Bible is full of different parts of different types of literature and different ways that he addresses us and all of them. In all of them, the Living God, addresses us, engages our souls and works on us.

Lest we be helpless in ourselves which indeed, we sure would be And so what are we to do as we seek the god of the word by the word of God? Uh, well first we are to take heed Verse 9, there are actually going to be many. Um, Internalizing sort of words, sort of instructions in the rest of this stanza, this section, Of the giant acrostic poem.

Uh, but We do all of this internalizing, not merely so that we can enjoy the word like a pet in our heart but so that we may employ the word like a power in our life. And so this initial command take heed by taking heed according to your word.

Governs. The rest of the stanza of the poem. So, we are to take heed not be hearers only but doers Not be the foolish, man. Who hears these words of mine says Jesus. But then doesn't build his life on it. Make his life from it, tries to have it as a component.

Now don't have Jesus's word as a component in your life. Build your life. Uh, from it. Like the old joke, which you really can't do. Uh every time there's a plane crash, they look for the black box and The comedian says, well, why don't they make the whole plane out of the black box?

Well, praise God. The Christian Can make his whole life. Out of taking heed of God's word. Because, It is his word. It just breathed out by him. And so one of the great ways that we live in fellowship with him and Independence upon him and as worship unto him, is.

Continually living it according to his word building ourselves upon him. So how do we do this verse 11? Hide it in our hearts. Now does this mean memorize it? Yes. Does it mean more? Yes. The heart is the seat of the intellect and the affections and the will. Well he's saying here is install God's word as the operating system of your life.

Let it control how you think about everything, let it control how you feel, everything about everything, let it control your will and your desires? Hide it in your heart. Well, how do we hide it in our heart? Well, there are three meditation words here One does not immediately look like meditation verse 13 with my lips.

I have declared But the word is actually, A hybrid of a math word and a language word. Uh, so Recount it. Uh, it is the Recounting of his word and it's actually very closely related to its sister word in verse 15, meditate. Which is a muttering, which is a repetition, it's more of a linguistic word than an arithmetic word, but the two, Uh, come from the same set of ideas.

And so, always be speaking, it always be recounting it the idea in verse 13 is very close to the one in Deuteronomy 6. Of what the dad and especially the mom, who's going to be spending so much more time with the children when they're going out and they're coming in the dad, you know would usually have more the lying down and rising up times when he's leading his family in worship beginning or end of the day.

But this recounting together. Of God's work. If it is part of our daily conversation, it ought to be part of our continual mental conversation. Uh, that ongoing inner Thread in your head, that is always going. But then also intentional times when you're more focused in repeating it to yourself and those are the meditation times.

And then the contemplation times, uh, which is a A lookout word. Where you look across the Entire scope, or Horizon of something like every once in a while, you'll be driving and there'd be a sign that says Scenic Lookout that The one who wants to be cleansed of his way will make stopping points and take a Scenic look out, not just Meditating upon immediate particulars, praise God.

That so helpful. Of his word to focus to drill down, deep on on one idea and mull it over before God. But also often, To consider the scope of the whole. To to take together what God has communicated about himself and about his world and about us. And about his salvation, take it all in.

So some wonderful meditation words, 1 and verse 13. And two of them in verse 15 that are a means by which it gets hidden in our heart. So, hiding his word in your heart is not merely. Learning chunks of it, which praise God. We get to do when we memorize the Bible.

Uh, but you, if Uh, learn the chunk and check the box. It's not yet really Shaping your thoughts? Or restraining and controlling and And directing your decisions, your will. Or inflaming and fueling and choosing, which affections you're going to have Now those things God gives to us by means of that fellowship with him in his word that we get through these meditation things.

But if it is a fellowship with him, Then this meditation is not a chore. It's not like going to the gym. And doing the weightlifting, I'm sure there are people who Uh, really enjoy that. Um I of course enjoy the endorphins that you get from that or used to when I used to go could help us Uh, but it's not.

In order to get gain its pleasure in order to get greater gain. The training of the body is a little bit of profit in this life. But the discipline, the training of the Soul. Is profitable not only for this life, but for the one to come the Apostle tells his Protege Timothy Well.

Uh, it is a delight. To meditate upon God's word to speak of it, with one another, to mull, over a particular part of it to take a moment and pull off to the scenic Outlook and take in the scope of the whole. That's all pleasure. How horrible is our original sin?

That we are sluggish towards such great pleasure. And so, he provokes us tempts us. Um, To this pleasure verse 14, verse 16. I have rejoiced in the way of your testimonies, As much as in all riches. Verse 16, I will Delight myself. In your statutes. How good our God is.

Not only that he has given himself to be our solution. And that he has. Given us and explained to us this multi-tool that he uses as the one who is the solution in fellowship with us. But who has invested it with such pleasure? And to displays to us, to analyzes us.

With the pleasure. So that we will seek him by his word. The one who is the Blessed, Lord. And who teaches us his statutes? May God grant to us the sort of That is contained in, just this 122nd, this eight verse stanza. From this wonderful song. Let's pray. How gracious God in our heavenly father?

Oh, how sweet how delightful it has been for us? Just now to spend a few minutes. Considering. Your word and how you use it. And the right way of depending upon you in it, And we pray that your spirit. Would cause us to take heed of this part that we have read.

And that he would. Write your word on our hearts and give us this fellowship with you. Pour out your love in our hearts. That you would do his blessed work for which he has come to dwell in uscent by whom. You and the son have come and made your home with us as well.

Uh, we thank you that you are the god of our household of our home together. We pray that you would make our hearts, your home. By the spirit's use of your word, each one of us. So grant it, we ask through the name of your son who himself is the word made flesh even Jesus.

Amen.