

**Tuesday, August 13, 2024 • Read Psalm 119:97–104**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What does the psalmist love (v97a)? What does he do with it (v97b)? Who makes him wiser than whom (v98a)? Using what? With what result (v98b)? What does he have (v99a)? More than whom? How (v99b)? Whom does he understand more than (v100a)? How (v100b)? What has he done to his feet (v101a)? From what? In order to do what (v101b)? What hasn't he done (v102a)? Why not (v102b)? What is his experience of God's words like (v103)? What does he get, how (v104a)? Therefore, what does he hate (v104b)?*

**What is the best?** Psalm 119:97–104 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 **God's Word, by which God works, is the best**.

In this stanza, there are only two different ways that the verses begin: either with a word that means "How much!" (v97, 103) or a prepositional prefix that can mean "from" but in some cases, here, is being used comparatively ("more than!", v98, 99, 100). So, whether saying, "how much!" or "more than!", this is a stanza of great exuberance about God's law.

**Sweetness.** The two "how much" verses (v97, 103) express delight and enjoyment of the law and the words. But this is *personal* delight, not merely intellectual or moral: "Your" law; "Your" words. The joy is in meditating and tasting.

**Superiority.** The psalmist has more wisdom than enemies (v98), teachers (v99), or the aged (v100). That which is ultimately needed is not found in earthly resources, experience, or the passage of time, but in the Lord Himself. Although the means are emphasized in vv99–100, v98 points us to the fact that it is the Lord Himself Who employs them. It is the Lord Himself Who has taught him (v102). And to the Lord goes all the glory for any superiority.

**Success.** Since it is the Lord Who is teaching, it must be successful. But it still requires resolve and application. We must hate the false way (resolve) in order to get understanding through His precepts (v104). We must restrain our feet from evil (self-discipline) in order to keep God's Word. This is the manner by which the Lord gives success.

**What is your habit of meditation upon Scripture like? How does it taste to you? What false ways are you putting away?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, give us to love and delight in Your law as Yours. Teach us by Your own Spirit, and give us a life of devotion to Yourself; that we might be wiser than any mere man, we ask, through Christ, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP119M "O How I Love Your Law!" or TPH119M "O How I Love Your Holy Law"**

**(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 97-104. These are God's words. Oh, how I love your law? It is my meditation all the day. You through your Commandments. Make me wiser than my enemies. For they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers. For your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the Ancients because I keep your precepts. I have restrained, my feet from every evil way. That I may keep your word. I have not departed from your judgments. For you yourself. Have taught me. 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. So far the reading of gods inspired and And Aaron tort

This stanza of the, this great acrostic psalm. all of the verses begin with. The Hebrew letter men. which In six of the eight verses. Is a preposition. Attach the first word the, the Min preposition And, when the word Min is attached to the word, it just drops off the the n Sound the Noon sound, and it's just, And then the other two verses which are 97 and 103.

It's a standalone word ma, that means how much? So verse 97, how much I love your love verse. 103 how much sweetness are your words or how very sweet? Are your words? to my taste. And then the, the from preposition. Can also be used comparatively and do you see that?

From all my enemies, your Commandments make me wiser. From all my teachers, I have more understanding. From all the elderly, the when it says ancient ones, it doesn't mean people dead and long dead and gone. It means there's really old ones that other people think are super wise. from all the Ancients I have more understanding.

And so, there is this. comparative. That is emphasized. And then, In a couple of places. we have, for instance from every evil way and they're the word the preposition from is Being used in a more ordinary fashion. From every evil way, I have restrained my feet from your judgments.

I have not departed. And then from your precepts. No, this is not away from Like we had in this other two verses but in verse 104 from your precepts. I get understanding. Therefore I hate every false way. So, we've organized, taking the The literary composition of the stanza of the psalm.

As RQ, from From God. We have organized our thoughts about it in terms of sweetness, superiority and success. But whether it's the how much or more than we can see how The way that he has composed the way, the Lord has composed this stanza of the psalm for us.

Is one of great enthusiasm. So we had kind of great distress in verses 80 81 through 88 and then we had Great thankfulness, and reverence in verses, 89 through 96 and now the tone changes Again to in enthusiasm, exuberance. coming from him about the sweetness. Of God's word, the superiority.

Of God's word as a means of Grace, or as a help benefit training. and then the success. Of God's word and actually changing him. And how a changed person and understanding of God's word have to go together. So first the sweetness and that's in 97 and 103. Oh, how I love your law.

It is my meditation. All the day. How sweet are your words to my taste sweeter than honey to my mouth? And so, His law. Just in the consideration of it. Is.

All right. Forgive the mundaness of the illustration. a piece of gthat you chew and it's better than any sort of food and it never loses, its flavor. In fact the more you chew on it, the better it gets and he's just trying to express. How much he loves.

hearing God's word and having God's word meditating upon God's word, All right, when we had a while ago, the Sabbath School trying to remedy or triage a A spiritual deficiency. In the area of meditation. Upon the word of God and upon the truths of God's word and upon God himself.

And even upon our sinfulness and how bad sin is and wanting to destroy it. And Righteousness and how good God's law is. And the sort of life, we ought to live To try to

recover what? What the psalmist is praying about here and praising about here. just the sweetness and the goodness.

Of having God's word, be the meat of our mind. the sustaining Pleasant delightful food of our mind. All the day long, so there's sweetness. Not just, Because, it is intellectually good. Not just because it is morally good because, but, because it is personally good, it is his law.

It is his words. And so their sweetness. In it to us, is also Superior for giving wisdom. the wisdom is necessary. The enemies seem Very threatening. and so we must have greater wisdom than they and whatever it is that they have studied that they have learned. Praise God through his Commandments, he has made the psalmist wiser than his enemies and we do want to be wiser than our enemies.

And so we want to see how do we use this Superior Source? The superior help for gaining wisdom verse 98 again. It puts this meditation idea in another way for they are ever with me that they here is not the enemies. It's a little bit, confusing in the English a little bit more obvious.

The original that they is his Commandments, your Commandments are ever with me. And he doesn't mean That he is wearing a little box. between his eyes are attached to his Temple or that he's got it tattooed on his hand or a little box with scripture and it attached to his hand.

He's talking again about that that meditation upon God's word, the Commandments being companions. The word of God being your companion. And many a Christian. Has felt lonely and the more Christian you are the more lonely. You may feel among people who are not But the last lonely, you will be overall.

Because the more you will have the Lord himself as your companion. And his word by his word. You have him as your companion, having the Lord yourself himself. As your companion isn't just a Psycho-Emotional trick that you play on yourself to feel like someone is with you. It is.

in part. Using the word and in part using prayer because those are the means that he has given us to have fellowship with him. Because in him we live and move and have our being. He is actually genuinely with us more than any created thing could ever be with us.

But it's on our end that we're unable to perceive that. And so, praise God, he's given us means. By which to relate to him. Whether it's lifting up our prayer to him and knowing that if we have Christ and we have eternal life, he is listening to us or Meditating upon his word and knowing.

That his word is not just a collection of phrases and ideas that is stuck in our head, but that it is living and active and he interacts with us by his word, That he gives us to meditate upon. And so, when he speaks of God's Commandments, as ever with me, is God's Commandments as his companions, he really means is that my means of the Commandments, God himself is his companion.

And so, superior to what his enemies to have superior to what the teachers have or can give him now teachers also are used by God, we see in scripture, the parents are appointed as teachers of their children and Elders are appointed at teachers as teachers of your church.

Of the church. And so you can't say, I have so much understanding that, I don't need parents or teachers. no, that just shows that you don't actually have understanding because God's testimonies. Which are ought to be our meditation. Teach us that we need Parents and that we need teachers but it is possible, isn't it?

We pray for it for your children that your understanding would come to exceed the understanding of your parents. I certainly hope that. the congregation will come to exceed the understanding of their Elders. And the way that this happens, Is by the Lord who uses parents and who uses teachers also, using this meditation that he has commanded upon his word.

and of course, if there is real wisdom and understanding here in verses 98 through. A hundred it doesn't end up in Pride like saying ah I am so much better than my enemies or my teachers or the aged. That's not what he's saying here. There's amazement Wonder the praise of the superiority of God's word and God himself as our teacher by way of meditation upon his word.

And so, the last The last verse. As far as superiority, the superiority section of this Psalm I understand more than the Ancients and notice. At this time, it's not meditation. It's because I keep Your presets. So, understanding the Bible is something that Cannot be fully done. Merely. the study.

Merely in prayer. Merely on your knees. Merely in contemplation. There is a place for that. It's commanded. We've been noticing the last several minutes that it's commanded. And that it's needful. And that, without it, you Not going to increase in wisdom and understanding like, you ought to But there is an experiential experimental component.

To understanding God's word. And having his Spirit apply his word to you. To control how you feel in a particular situation. How you understand or think about or analyze, a particular situation? The choices you make the decisions you make in particular situations, these These situations in which you keep God's precepts is also a means by which the Lord gives us understanding You know, the Scott's abbreviation of that section of James chapter 1.

It's a doing book. It's a doing book. Not just because we must not be hearers only but doers also. But because God has given a place to Making application of the scripture independence upon the spirit in the course of real life. He's given that a place in how he enables us to understand him and his word better.

In other words, if you think of understanding scripture, there's not just the lecture, and the homework component of the class. There's a lab component of the class. Where you understand the concepts better? By putting them to practice. In real life. And so there's this superiority of the school of God as it were.

meditation and practice, especially for understanding his word and then there's success. The Lord of course, is our teacher. Verse 102. You yourself have taught me. And because the Lord is our teacher and he teaches us, we see a couple of different ways that he gives us success in learning.

And, These are. By resolve. And by self-discipline, you see the resolve in verse 104 through your precepts. I get understanding. Therefore I hate every false way. You must resolve against every false way. in order. to turn your attention to his presets. You can't keep wrong ways of thinking and wrong ways of living and give your attention to his precepts at the same time.

so through your precepts, I get understanding. Therefore I hate every false way you must resolve against your sin. and give yourself in instead. to what God's word says. And then there's not just the resolve, but the follow through the self-discipline. which you see in verse one.

sorry 101. I have restrained my feet from every evil way that I may keep your word again. it's not like you can keep sin and add righteousness. In order to keep his word that I may keep your word, he had to restrain his feet from every evil way and so there's the Self-Discipline.

Forcing his feet into the path. That God's word says. And so first four together with that, forcing his feet out of the path. Of evil out of the way of evil I have. Restrained my feet from every evil way. That I may keep your word. And so, praise God.

For the sweetness of his word and its superiority in giving us real wisdom and real understanding. And may he give us to follow his prescription for Success. And using his word, particularly resolving against sin, restraining ourselves from sin. So that this that we meditate upon, we can put to practice in our lives from his word.

Let's ask him to help us do that. Let's pray. Father, thank you for this portion of this, Psalm, and thank you for your word and please grant that your spirit. Who caused it to be written for us and who has helped us? As we read and explained and heard and heard it explained in worship that your Same Spirit.

Now, Be conforming us to Christ. And, making us. Be those who meditate on your word and who. Holy resolutions in our hearts for following it. And for hating our sin. And that your spirit would give us to follow through. On those resolutions as well. We thank you that.

You have given us. Not only the spirit of your son. But your son himself to be our life and our righteousness, And so not only do we ask the spirit would give us from him. In order to live this way. but that you would even receive Us in him and hear us through him.

And whose name, we ask it. Amen.