

Psalms 119

week 2, verse 102-103

Ps 119:102 I have not turned aside from Thine ordinances, For Thou Thyself hast taught me.

turned aside <cuwr> departed, to turn off, to rebel

Have you heard the expression, 'to turn a deaf ear'? It means to ignore something. Typically, to ignore something that you should pay attention to, that is necessary or that will help. It is common to turn a deaf ear to someone who is pointing out error or if change is required.

Ps 18:21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

Pr 5:7 Now then, [my] sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.

We can gain helpful truths from this verse and 'listen up' to God's commands. **And why are we able to keep God's commands?**

Because He is the One working on our heart enabling us to 'hear' His Holy Spirit.

Think of the word genuine or having integrity. When something or someone is not genuine it changes with circumstances. When something or someone does not have integrity it breaks or is different under pressure.

What happens to your faith when circumstances are challenging?

The Psalmist says God is His Teacher. Think! **How is God's teaching different than any other teacher? What other teacher is able to change a heart from the inside?** They may be able to change a mind and the way someone thinks but only God can direct a heart.

Jer 32:39-41 and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good, and for [the good of] their children after them. ⁴⁰ "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me. ⁴¹ "And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.

Eph 4:20-24 But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, ²² that, in reference to

your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and put on the new self, which in [the likeness of] God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

1Jo 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

Ps 119:33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall observe it to the end.

Look again at Psalm 119:101. Because the Psalmist turns away from sin, he keeps God's word. Then in verse 102 he does not turn away from God's word because God is working in him.

It's all about God and His glory! God teaches us to understand and He gives us the ability to follow that understanding.

God is our teacher. He knows if we stray from His side we will suffer calamity. He desires to bless us. Think of training a child or even a dog. They quickly learn that wrong choices lead to negative consequences and discipline. These results create a desire to follow what is good.

What does a young child do when they taste something sour? Our reaction to something that is not pleasant on our tongue is to spit it out. What is our reaction to a pleasant taste?

Ps 119:103 How sweet are Thy words to my taste! [Yes, sweeter] than honey to my mouth!

Many of us have a specific food item that will beckon us to sample it again and again. We refer to these foods as addictive. It may be a salty potato chip or some form of chocolate or cookies warm from the oven. The idea is, it is difficult to enjoy just one. When we taste one, we crave more. Is your craving for God's words strong enough to keep you desiring more? Does it leave you with a desire to taste it again and again? Do you thank God for giving you the desire to follow Him and keep His word? Does the sweetness of God's word lead you to share it with others?

Ps 19:9-10 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. ¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold,

yes, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Pr 8:10-11 "Take my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choicest gold. ¹¹ "For wisdom is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her.

Our ultimate satisfaction, our lasting pleasure, our true delight – where does it come from?

The word 'taste' in Ps 119:103 refers to our palate. A palate for different tastes can be developed. A good palate is appreciated in the culinary world. A good palate is discerning of many different nuances. What a fun way and a very personal way to express the delight and riches found in God's word!

But, God's word is not just for us to enjoy. It is for us to share. 'Mouth' in verse 103 means the spoken word. God's word is even sweeter when spoken to others. How inclined are you to share His truth? Do you get pleasure in speaking of God to others?

As He grows our heart in understanding, we enjoy more and more the value of God's word. God develops our taste for His word. The meaning for 'Thy words' in this verse include all God's words as a whole. His commands, His promises, His judgements, His instructions.

How wise it will be on our part to keep the word on our palate by meditation and on our tongue by confession. It must be sweet to our taste when we think of it, or it will not be Sweet to our mouth when we talk of it. Treasury of David

If we would taste the honey of God, we must have the palate of faith. --A.R. Fausset.

Most of us have had sweet words spoken to us. Perhaps from a loved one or praise from a colleague. But, these words are often quickly replaced by imperfections. They are rarely lasting just as eating something that tastes good to us is not permanent. The sweetness of Gods words remain the same forever. They are not replaced by fickle feelings; they do not subside when the moment is over. God's words are perfectly satisfying.

Is your appetite for God's word increasing? Is your soul filled with God?

Think of those experiences you have had where the pictures or explanations don't begin to really express the event. Pictures and descriptions may give an idea but true understanding takes in so much more. The sounds, sights, smells, temperature, etc. give you the full picture.

Think of your relationship with God. You can try to explain it but only a person who knows God can begin to understand how sweet God's words are to His children.

Think! Why would we not crave God's word? What would make God's word taste bitter to us?

Application Questions

What does it mean to turn aside from something? What evidences in your life would say you are following God's commands?

Our faith should have integrity, meaning it doesn't change when circumstances change. Do you see a continuous growth in your desire for God? Does it lessen when things are going well or when life is too busy?

Read Jeremiah 32:39-41. Who turns a heart towards God? God's commands are not always easy to follow. According to these verses, what is their purpose?

Are you more inclined to be taught by the world around you or by Christ in you? Read Ephesians 4:20-24. Does action need to be taken?

Psalm 119:103 says God's words are sweet. How would you describe your appetite towards God's word?

We typically share those things that are 'sweetest' in our lives. Are you lead to share the sweetness of God's truths with others?

What thoughts has God given you on Psalms 119:102-103 that you can apply to your life?