

Psalm 119
week 3, vs. 104-105

Read from the beginning of this section of eight. Ps 119:97-103.

Verse 104 restates the reason given earlier why the Psalmist loves God's word. He then gives us a result of loving God's word.

Ps 119:104 From Thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

In what ways does discernment benefit a person? It gives a clear view of something that might be obscure; it gives the ability to understand and appreciate a situation. When we can look beyond a circumstance to the benefits or consequences we are better able to make wise decisions and act in accordance with pleasing God.

A clear understanding of God's truths leads us to hate deceit. Read the second part of **Ps 119:104, therefore I hate every false way.**

Hate is a strong word meaning to personally hate the enemy or foe. We read the word odious in the Hebrew definition of hate <sane'>. Odious means detestable or abominable. These words describe the worst of the worst.

Hate is such a strong word that many of us rarely even use it. Instead we say we dislike something. **How do you react to something you hate?** Our writer is so in love with God and His truths that he literally cannot stand anything that leads to the path of sin. This same thought is reiterated farther down in this Psalm.

Ps 119:128 Therefore I esteem right all [Thy] precepts concerning everything, I hate every false way.

Spiritual knowledge increases while we tread in the path of obedience. Adam Clarke's Commentary

How have you seen spiritual understanding and growth change the way you feel about sin? Are there instances in your life you can look back upon and wonder what you were thinking (if you were thinking)? As God refines our understanding His truths become clear and our desire to live for Him in all areas increases. The promise of heaven and bringing God glory becomes our greatest pleasure.

Matthew Poole describes understanding as "true and useful and powerful knowledge".

God gives us His truth, shows us how to use it and then provides the way to put it to work. Praise His Name!

Spurgeon says about this verse, "May such a holy abhorrence of sin be found in each of us evermore".

Abhorrence is hate coupled with disgust. **Soooo, how do you feel about sin?** May we pray that God gives each of us a pure love for His law and a strong hatred for sin.

Ps 97:10 Hate evil, you who love the LORD, Who preserves the souls of His godly ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Am 5:15a Hate evil, love good, And establish justice in the gate!

Ro 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

Pr 8:13 "The fear [holy reverence] of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, And the perverted mouth, I hate.

A while ago I wrote the following words in my Bible. 'This book will keep you from sin; sin will keep you from this book'. When we get our truth and wisdom from God we will not tolerate sin in our lives.

To delight in good is better than the doing of it, and to abhor evil is better than abstaining from it. *Joseph Caryl, TOD*

Read Proverbs 2:10-11

With the next verse of this psalm we will begin the fourteenth section of eight. Psalm 119:105 is familiar to many of us.

Ps 119:105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.

Thy word <dabar> seems all inclusive when you read the definition. It appears to include God's spoken word, His written word, His commandments, His counsel, His judgment and His promises.

What does a lamp do? It shines in the dark. Think of something that glistens. It has the quality of shining with a bright reflected light. A lamp in the darkness is not difficult to find. God will show us the way in which we should walk. **Do we choose to follow?**

Ps 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The word for light is explained as illumination in every sense including happiness, brightness, clearness, morning and sun. Light cancels out fear. Difficulties for some

reason seem worse at night. Circumstances seem a bit better in the light. We have a clearly marked path to follow and a Guide who will cause us to recognize the way. Even His discipline to us is positive as He turns us from sin and destruction to peace and understanding.

Pr 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life,

Compare your understanding of God's word with someone who does not know God.

Not only does the Word of God inform us of His will, but, as a light on a path in darkness, it shows us how to follow the right and avoid the wrong way. ... The allusion is to the lamps and torches carried at night before an Eastern caravan.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary

God's word is to be used. It's not just a novel that you read and put down. It is our guide for how to live. It is a book we should refer to again and again and again. I pray we are never done with it so as to put it on a shelf and move on to something else. I pray we never feel that we've heard enough or studied enough of God's word. May our hunger for God never be satisfied!

Ps 43:3 O send out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Thy holy hill, And to Thy dwelling places.

Ps 18:28 For Thou dost light my lamp; The LORD my God illumines my darkness.

The word of God discovereth to us our errors; it showeth us where we have lost our way, and how we may recover it again. If we take this lamp in our hand, it will not only point out our course in general, but also direct us in every step, and guide our feet into the way of peace and holiness. —Bp. Horne

The metaphor is taken from a man walking on a dangerous road in the dark, except as he sees by a lamp or lantern where to set his feet, step by step, as he proceeds; but taking heed to his way by this friendly light, he passes on safely, and even comfortably, where otherwise he must have fallen into mischief or destruction. Such is this world, and our passage through it; such is man without revelation, or with revelation and without faith; and such is the use faith makes of revelation.

Thomas Scott

Eph 5:8-10 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light [consists] in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰ trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

In what instances would you use a flashlight? Why? What difficulties are present if you don't use one?

We live in a world where darkness and sin is ever-present. Going out into this darkness without a light is a recipe for failure.

Having no fixed lamps in eastern towns, in old time each passenger carried a lantern with him that he might not fall into the open sewer, or stumble over the heaps of ordure which defiled the road. This is a true picture of our path through this dark world: we should not know the way, or how to walk in it, if Scripture, like a blazing flambeau, did not reveal it. Treasury of David

Going two miles into a neighbourhood where very few could read, to spend an evening in reading to a company who were assembled to listen, and about to return by a narrow path through the woods, where paths diverged, I was provided with a torch of light wood, or "pitch pine." I objected; it was too small, weighing not over half a pound. "It will light you home", answered my host. I said, "The wind may blow it out." He said, "It will light you home." "But if it should rain?" I again objected. "It will light you home," he insisted.

Contrary to my fears, it gave abundant light to my path all the way home, furnishing an apt illustration, I often think, of the way in which doubting hearts would be led safely along the "narrow way." If they would take the Bible as their guide, it would be a lamp to their feet, leading to the heavenly home. One man had five objections to the Bible. If he would take it as a lamp to his feet, it would "light him home." Another told me he had two faults to find with the Bible. I answered him in the words of my good friend who furnished the torch, "It will light you home." --From "The American Messenger," 1881.

*Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead thou me on. The night is dark, and
I am far from home, Lead thou me on.
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.* --John Henry Newman (1801).

Do you use God's word as a guide to light your way?

Application Questions

Read Psalm 119:97-104. As you read each verse write what you learn about the value of God's word.

When we learn to appreciate the value of what is good, we more readily recognize that which is not good. What is your reaction to sin? What is the example given to us in verse 104 towards sin?

What does it mean to hate evil? Look up Psalm 97:10; Amos 5:15a; Romans 12:9; Proverbs 8:13. What action do these verses lead you to take?

Psalm 119:105 gives us an additional description of God's word. How is the word a lamp to your feet? How is the word a light to your path? What happens when you have no clear direction?

Read Proverbs 6:23. How often do you study your map of God's word? Are you content with a general direction of which way to go or are you intent on trying to avoid unnecessary detours also?

If we are following the light what actions will we take according to Ephesians 5:8-10?