

Psalm 119:29, 30

Pray

Context:

Vs.25-29 – David cries out in desperation because he sees his need. (v.25 – my soul clings to the dust)

Vs. 30-32 – David declares his commitment to truth. (v.31 – I cling to your testimonies)

Vs. 29-30 are the turning point!

Review last week: vs.27-28 “make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works. My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.” - Personal Application?

Today: vs. 29-30

“Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law!  
I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me.” (ESV)

“Remove the false way from me, and graciously grant me your law.  
I have chosen the faithful way; I have placed your ordinances before me (*accounted your ordinances worthy*).” (NASB)

“Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me and teach me your law.  
I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws.” (NIV)

v.29a – PUT FALSE WAYS FAR FROM ME

Strong's Concordance:

Put/Remove/keep – *Suri* – Hosea 9:12 “Woe to them when I depart from them!”

\*False / Deceitful – *Seqer* – “an untruth, a sham, a lie”

\*Ways – *Derek* – “a trodden road, a course of life or mode of action, manner”

Matthew Henry:

“The way of lying means all false ways by which men deceive themselves and others, or are deceived by Satan and his instruments.”

Treasury of David:

"Lying ways are all ways, except the ways of God's commandments (So any way you choose other than God's way is a lying way, this includes): (human) reason, sense, example, custom, event, deceivable lusts, these tell a man he is safe, or that he shall repent of them, and take no hurt in the end, and they promise ease and blessedness, but perform it not." – Paul Bayne

- The deceptive ways promise what they cannot offer, what only God can offer.

What are things that we are deceived by?

- Money, beauty, relationships, etc.

How can these things affect our course of life?

- We try to control them but they control us

PAUSE

*Deceiving ourselves:*

**Deuteronomy 11:16** "Take care lest your heart be deceived (*Pata*) and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them"

**Jeremiah 17:9-10** "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick; who can understand it? 'I the Lord search the heart and test the mind."

**Hebrews 3:13** "But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

**1 Corinthians 3:18** "let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise."

**Galatians 6:3** "For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives (*phrenapatao* – misleader, deluder) himself."

**James 1:26** "If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives (*apatao* – to cheat, delude, deceive) his heart, this persons religion is worthless."

**1 John 1:8** "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

- Disney movies tell us to "follow our hearts" but it is pretty clear from God's Word, that would be a bad idea because following our hearts leads us right down this path of deception.

*Deceived by the world:*

**Matthew 13:22** " As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and it proves unfruitful."

- The parable of the sower, the seed (which is the truth of the Word) falls but that person is deceived by the false promise of riches and the Word never bears fruit in their lives.

**Ephesians 5:5-6** "For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater) has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."

- We can be deceived by people telling us sin isn't sin, God's Word isn't sufficient, etc.

**1 John 2:16** "For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh, and the desires of the eyes, and pride of life – is not from the Father but is from the world."

- The world contains things that will be a temptation to our flesh, a temptation to our eyes and a temptation to our pride. If we are not on our guard we can be deceived by these things like Eve (I saw the fruit was good for food, a delight to the eye, and able to make one wise.)

**Proverbs 31:30** "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain but a woman who fears God is to be praised."

- As women we are easily deceived by these temptations but we quickly realize how empty the promises of "youth" and "beauty" and "charm" are.

*Deceived by Satan:*

**Genesis 3:13** "The Serpent deceived (*Nasa*) me and I ate"

- Eve is blame-shifting, she is responsible for her own sin, but Satan can deceive if we are not on our guard.

**2 John 7** – "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver (*planos* – misleader, corruptor) and the antichrist."

**Revelation 12:9** "And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver (*planos*) of the whole world – he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."

- Both the world and Satan have temptations to deceive us, but it is our own hearts that are deceived and we are responsible for guarding them.

Treasury of David, Thomas le Blanc says about our phrase, "Remove false ways far from me" – "It says, 'remove from me the way' and not me from the way (put false ways far from me, not put me far from false ways); because that way of iniquity is within us, for we are born children of wrath, and the passions innate in us run to the lie, and make the wretched way of crimes in our souls" – Thomas le Blanc.

Treasury of David – "although he (David) were already exercised in the law of God and in his knowledge, and that although he were a prophet to teach others, nevertheless he was subject to a number of wicked thoughts and imaginations which might always wickedly lead him from the right way, except God had held him with his might and strong hand." – Spurgeon

- No one is exempt from a deceived heart, not even a man "after God's own heart."

So what is David's solution?...

v.29b – AND GRACIOUSLY TEACH ME YOUR LAW!

Strong's Concordance:

Graciously/ Be gracious to me – *hanan* – "to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior"

Law – *Torah* – precepts, statutes, especially the Pentateuch

Let's look at a couple of passages that demonstrate this graciousness of God in giving us the law:

**Philippians 2:6-8** – "(Jesus) who, thought he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

- God's ultimate bending or stooping in kindness to an inferior was Jesus coming to earth to dwell with us.

**John 1:14** – "and the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- We have seen God answer David's prayer through Christ.

About this phrase "God graciously grant me your Law, Calvin says, "Next, that (David) may be kept from falsehood, he prays to be fortified with the doctrine of the law." – John Calvin

- The first five books that David is referring to aren't exactly books we think of God as being gracious to give us (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) however David understands these laws are the truths that God uses to keep him from being deceived.

How do we view God's "rules" or the "do's and don'ts" of the Bible? How do we view the study of doctrine and theology? How often do we ask for his mercy to teach us holiness/ set apartness/ obedience?

- Sometimes we view them as boring, divisive, or "the pastor's job."

It is the truths of theology and doctrine that protect us from the way of lies. Do we love them and appreciate them? How?

- We should study them, come to our own convictions of matters of theology and doctrine, ask our growth group leaders or pastors about concepts we don't understand, look for books in the church library on the, etc.

Treasury of David:

"David had ever the book of the law; for every king of Israel was to have it always by him, written with his own hand. But 'grant me thy law graciously;' that is, he desires he might have it not only written by him, but upon him, to have it imprinted upon his heart, that he might have a heart to observe and keep it." – Thomas Manton

We are blessed to have more than one copy of the Bible in our homes; do we demonstrate a desire to have it written on our hearts? What does that look like?

- Meditating on it, memorizing it, studying to understand the hard things.

"We ought to reckon God's law a grant, a gift, an unspeakable gift, to value it, and pray for it, and to give thanks for it accordingly. The divine code of institutes and precepts is indeed a charter of privileges; and God is truly gracious to those whom he makes gracious by giving them the law." – Matthew Henry

- David values the law highly when he asks for God to graciously give it to him because he knows it is the only thing that will keep him from the deceived way of life.

Next we see the transition in verses 25-32 as David begins to choose truth...

v.30a – I HAVE CHOSEN THE WAY OF FAITHFULNESS

Strong's Concordance:

Chosen – *bahar* – "chosen"

Way – *Derek* - "a trodden road, a course of life or mode of action, manner"

Faithfulness – *Emunah* – "literal: firmness; figurative: security, stability, truth, steadfastness"

- Rich description of the Christian life, "firm, secure, stable, true, steadfast, faithful"

"The choosing Christian is likely to be the steady Christian; while those that are Christians by chance tack about if the wind turn" – Matthew Henry

- What I know about sailing I learned from my husband so Miriam could probably give us a much better explanation but I know that when you are tacking you are at the mercy of the wind and this is no way to live the Christian life.

Let's look at what God's Word says about this:

**James 1:6-8** - "For the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double minded man, unstable in all his ways."

- If we are not sure in our decision as Christians we will not be sure / steadfast in our way of life.

David makes a conscious choice to follow Truth. It seems like many Americans answer the question, "when did you become a Christian?" with, "O I was born Christian."

Have we made this choice in our lives or were we "born Christian?" How do our lives look different when we are purposefully choosing God's way and when we are just floating along with the direction all of our Christian friends and family members are going?

- We are confident and sure of our way of life versus anxious and fearful, grasping for control.

So again about our phrase, "I have chosen the way of Faithfulness..."

Treasury of David:

"This is more than sitting and hearing the word – having no objection to what you hear. Such hearing is all that can be affirmed of the generality of gospel hearers, except we add, that none are more ready to be caught by false and easy ways of salvation, for they assent to all they hear. The man of God strikes a higher and more spiritual note – he goes into the *choice* of the thing; he chooses the way of truth; and he cannot but choose it; it is the bent of his renewed nature." – John Stephen

- Dale's warning from Hebrews to be active listeners:
- **Hebrews 5:11-14** "About this we have much to say, and it hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

What does it look like in your life to be actively choosing a lifestyle of Truth, Steadfastness, & Firmness? How have you acted on Dale's encouragement to work hard at learning Truth?

- Choosing this steadfast way of life is where we will find satisfaction and joy in life.

- Dale's "Worship" model: Choosing the way of Truth is bowing.
- **Psalm 16:8-11** "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forever more."

In light of David's choice to follow Truth we see him begin to act on this choice...

v.30b – I SET YOUR RULES BEFORE ME

Strong's Concordance:

Set – *Sawa* – "to level, to agree with, to make/be like"

Rules/Ordinances/Laws – *mispat* – "a verdict pronounced judicially, formal decree, divine law"

Analogy of the level: When we are hanging pictures, we get out our level and use the level to determine what is straight, then we line up our pictures with what the level has told us is straight. God's law is the level, we set it before us and then hang our life up in agreement to it to line it up with it.

Where do we see this in the New Testament?

**Romans 12:2** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

How does your life reflect an acceptance of God's righteous judgments and a desire to be conformed to them?

- Repentance of sin, being teachable, accepting correction from others.

In conclusion

"Keep me from a deceived way of life and graciously give me your law!  
I have chosen the firm/steadfast way of life; I agree with your judgments."

New Testament summary of our Truth:

**2 Timothy 3:12-17** "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and

for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

- There are people in the world today who are living deceived lives but we have the Truth and we are called to line up our lives with it.

Contrast between vs. 29 – the “way of lies” and vs. 30 – the “way of truth”

- “Lord help us to desire to discern through these two paths of life and to choose Your Truth.”