

Psalm 119 – Session 3 – Fall 2015

Week 1 v.33-34

What is required to teach something?

**From the teacher?** (knowledge, experience, authority) It also helps to have:  
passion for teaching  
love for students  
love for subject  
understanding  
diligence

**From the student?** (desire to learn, humility, )  
right attitude  
hard work

Who is the greatest Teacher?

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

Teach <arah> to point out, to teach, direct, inform, instruct

Ps 86:11 Teach me Thy way, O LORD; I will walk in Thy truth; Unite my heart to fear Thy name.

The request here is not merely to learn what God's commands are or what they say but how to live them – "the way". It's like saying show me how your precepts work in my life, how I am to respond and act, how I am to bring you honor. It's more than just knowledge or bookwork; it's life-work.

Isa 30:21 And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

Ps 119:112 I have inclined my heart to perform Thy statutes Forever, [even] to the end.

Psalm 119:33 also speaks of God's faithfulness to us. When He teaches us His ways, He will provide the way for us to keep His ways 'to the end'. Faithfulness on God's part allows us to be faithful to carry out His commands.

Following God's commands should be our habit, our daily desire, what we practice regularly, what we aim for in all circumstances.

Are you persevering in God's ways and God's strength?

Where does your instruction come from? Are you following your way or God's way; leaning on your understanding or His? How easy is it to teach someone who already 'knows everything'?

Ps 119:34 Give me understanding, that I may observe Thy law, and keep it with all [my] heart.

David not only requests that God teaches him but also that He gives him understanding. To ask for understanding implies that you are in need. Are you quick to acknowledge your need for understanding? What does it mean to understand something?

Understanding <biyn> to separate mentally (or distinguish), to generally understand; attend consider, be cunning, diligently, discern, eloquent, feel, inform, instruct, have intelligence, know, look well to, mark, perceive, be prudent, regard, to be skilled, teach; deal wisely

Think about what it means to be skilled in something. In other words, accomplished, competent, experienced, and proficient. The word eloquent is used in the above definition. To be eloquent in something means to be able to speak readily, clearly and effectively. To have an understanding of something is so much more than just having a knowledge of something. Knowledge alone is simply information that is intellectually stored. Information doesn't necessarily change our lives or thinking. Understanding God's word means we agree with it.

1Co 2:8 [the wisdom] which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;

Did they truly know that every sin is a provoking the Lord to jealousy, a proclaiming war against heaven, a crucifying the Lord Jesus afresh, a treasuring up wrath afresh unto themselves against the day of wrath; and that if ever they be pardoned, it must be at no lower a rate than the price of his blood -- *From the "Recommendatory Epistle prefixed to the Westminster Confession and Catechisms."*

Think about the things you would say you truly understand. **Why could you say this? How did you come to understand?**

Since God created us, He is the One who knows us best and knows His plan for us. Our best source of understanding is our Father who loves us.

Ps 119:73 Thy hands made me and fashioned me; Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.

Ps 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do [His commandments]; His praise endures forever.

Pr 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth [come] knowledge and understanding.

1Ki 3:9 "So give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?"

Heb 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Jas 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Pr 2:3-11 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the LORD, And discover the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth [come] knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; [He is] a shield to those who walk in integrity, Guarding the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones. Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity [and] every good course. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,

Where the Spirit of God gives a spiritual understanding of the Word, the whole nature is sanctified and set upon keeping the Lord's commands. This prayer is suitable for each one in the family; let us stop a moment, while we breathe it from our hearts. Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

Much understanding is needful in order to the observation of the law; that we may know what is commanded, and what is forbidden, and how far; that we may avoid the snares laid for us in the way of duty; that we may respect things according to their due rank and worth; that we may do good works in their proper place, time, and manner; above all, that the affections may be directed by the judgment, not the judgment by the affections.' — Bp. Horne.

This is the same prayer enlarged, or rather it is a supplement which intensifies it. He not only needs teaching, but the power to learn: he requires not only to understand, but to obtain an understanding. How low has sin brought us; for we even lack the faculty to understand spiritual things, and are quite unable to know them till we are endowed with spiritual discernment. Will God in very deed give us understanding? This is a miracle of grace. It will, however, never be wrought upon us till we know our need of it; and we shall not even discover that need till God gives us a measure of understanding to perceive it. We are in a state of complicated ruin, from which nothing but manifold grace can deliver us. Those who feel their folly are by the example of the Psalmist encouraged to pray for understanding: let each man by faith cry, "Give me understanding." Treasury of David

**What do we do when God is gracious enough to give us understanding?** We use it! We keep it, we guard it, protect it, preserve it! **In what manner do we do this?**

With our whole heart. Not just in conversation but with a loyalty towards Truth that leads to action. My whole heart means every fiber of my being – I think, eat and sleep with an awareness of God's commands. Everything I do is touched by truth and regulated by truth.

I will not trifle with my God, I will not divide my affections with the world; God shall have all. Adam Clarke's Commentary

**Ps 119:10 With all my heart I have sought Thee; Do not let me wander from Thy commandments.**

**Php 1:9-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which [comes] through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.**

**1Th 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Not only conscience, but will and affections, appetite and body. And you have given all to him for his use: Thomas Manton

We are not to seek this blessing that we may be famous for wisdom, but that we may be abundant in our love to the law of God. He who has understanding will learn, remember, treasure up, and obey the commandment of the Lord. The gospel gives us grace to keep the law; the free gift leads us to holy service; there is no way of reaching to holiness but by accepting the gift of God. If God gives, we keep; but we never keep the law in order to obtaining grace. The sure result of regeneration, or the bestowal of understanding, is a devout reverence for the law and a resolute keeping of it in the heart. The Spirit of God makes us to know the Lord and to understand somewhat of his love, wisdom, holiness, and majesty; and the result is that we honour the law and yield our hearts to the obedience of the faith. ... To observe God's law with all our heart at all times is a great grace, and few there be that find it; yet it is to be had if we will consent to be taught of the Lord. Treasury of David

The phrase, 'the whole heart' are words David uses several times in this Psalm: 119:2; 10; 34; 58. **What does this repetition signify?** It emphasizes an idea or topic; usually the crucial elements of the idea.

An action point we can take from Ps 119:33-34. It is imperative to keep and protect God's statutes to the very end with every fiber of our being. We can do this because of His grace and work in our lives.

## Application Questions

Consider using additional scripture references, your 'Apply It' bookmark, your journal notes and any other resource that will help you personally apply God's word to your circumstances as you ponder these questions. You will be encouraged to share your thoughts and any further questions God places on your heart in regards to this study.

Would you consider yourself a good student of the Word? Are you able to answer this question positively even when God's truth points you in a difficult direction? (Isa 30:21)

God is gracious to give us understanding. Are you seeking His strength to apply that understanding to your life? What does it look like?

Think of the most concerning element in your life right now. Are you following your way or God's way; leaning on your own understanding or His direction?

The Creator understands His creation better than anyone. Is God your point of reference for all life's issues? How is God able to help you?

See Ps 119:73:

Pr 2:6:

James 1:5:

Pr 2:3-11:

What does keeping God's commands with your whole heart mean to you?

What additional thoughts or applications has God given you?