

Psalm 119

Week 5, v.5

What are your ambitions? What do you aspire to?

Let's take a minute and go back to the beginning of this Psalm.

v. 1 we are to be blameless

we are to walk in the law of the Lord

v. 2 we are to keep God's testimonies

we are to seek Him with all our heart

v. 3 unrighteousness is not to be part of our life

we are to walk in His ways

v. 4 we are to keep God's precepts diligently.

As we read this list, what is your response?

Hopefully, the prayer in our heart in answer to the expectation before us is the same as David's in Psalm 119:5.

Ps 119:5 Oh that my ways may be established to keep Thy statutes!

In today's communication this may sound something like: "Oh, do I need help big time!"

O that <achalay> would that! – O that, would God

My ways <derek> course of life, journey

May be established <kunn> to be erect; confirm, direct, faithfulness, order

Established or directed in this sense means to channel; guided; pointed towards

To keep <shamar> to hedge about (as with thorns); guard, protect, attend to

Thy statutes <choq> appointment, commandment, decree, law, ordinance

This is the prayer of David's heart. What is your prayer in response to Psalm 119:4? Do you acknowledge that you are unable to do this without God?

"I have no greater wish than this; than all the actions of my life may be ordered and governed according to thy will." Patrick/Lowth/Whitby/Lowman Commentary

Ps 119:32 I shall run the way of Thy commandments, For Thou wilt enlarge my heart.

Ps 119:36 Incline my heart to Thy testimonies, And not to [dishonest] gain.

Ps 119:44-45 So I will keep Thy law continually, Forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts.

Ps 119:131 I opened my mouth wide and panted, for I longed for Thy commandments.

Ps 119:159 Consider how I love Thy precepts; Revive me, O LORD, according to Thy lovingkindness.

Ro 7:22-24 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

2Th 3:5 And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

Heb 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, [even] Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom [be] the glory forever and ever. Amen.

We must recognize the inability in ourselves to keep God's commands fully and with complete wisdom and understanding, and must desire God to work in us faithfully, trusting in Him for His grace to accomplish what He requires.

In recognizing our weakness to obey, hopefully like David, we are led to pray out to God for his direction. We don't give up, we seek Him. We don't become discouraged by our inability, instead we are encouraged by His provision to help us succeed. We must look to God not only for strength to follow His commands but for His direction in guiding us to know what they are and how to apply them.

We acknowledge, Lord, our obligation, but we feel our impotency. Lord, help us; we look unto thee. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. Charles Bridges, 1849.

Do you desire to be holy? To what extent? What does God require of us (see Ps 119:4)? Do you lean on His grace to fulfill His commands for obedience? Why is this necessary?

We cannot of ourselves keep God's statutes as he would have them kept, and yet we long to do so: what resort have we but prayer? We must ask the Lord to work our works in us, or we shall never work out his commandments. This verse is a sigh of regret because the Psalmist feels that he has not kept the precepts diligently, it is a cry of weakness appealing for help to one who can aid, it is a request of bewilderment from one who has lost his way and would fain be

directed in it, and it is a petition of faith from one who loves God and trusts in him for grace... Treasury of David

The *Treasury of David Hints to Preachers* sums up verse 5 this way:

1. **It is a noble aspiration.** There is nothing grander than the desire to do this except the doing of it.
 2. **It is a spiritual aspiration.** Not the offspring of our carnal nature. It is the heart of God in the new creature.
 3. **It is a practicable aspiration.** We sometimes sigh for the impossible. But this may be attained by divine grace.
 4. **It is an intense aspiration.** It is the "Oh!" of a burning wish.
 5. **It is an influential aspiration.** It does not evaporate in sighs. It is a mighty incentive implanted by grace which will not let us rest without holiness.
- W. J.

Observe --

Who does David cry out to for strength?

Whose commands does he desire to follow?

David desires his life to be changed – to establish something in our lives means to apply it regularly.

David's cry is to keep God's commands, to do more than observe them but to faithfully follow them.

David's example is not to cry out " God, let my desires, my plans, what I think is best to happen" . It is to cry out for what God has determined is best.

Ps 19:7-14 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them Thy servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern [his] errors? Acquit me of hidden [faults.] Also keep back Thy servant from presumptuous [sins]; Let them not rule over me; Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Application Questions

What do you do when things get really difficult? What have you done in the past?

Think of a time when you have tried to do what's right in your own strength. How was that time different than relying on God's strength?

How would you respond to someone who says, "it's just too difficult to do what God requires" ?

Consider what the greatest struggle against sin in your life is right now. Who are you relying on for change? Are you truly wanting change?

Will God give you what you need to please Him? read Heb 13:20-21

What additional questions and applications has God put on your heart in response to Psalm 119:5?