

Have you been in a circumstance where you feel you are surrounded by sin? Do you 'put' Truth in your back pocket because it doesn't fit in or do you remember and act upon God's ways?

Ps 119:61 The cords of the wicked have encircled me, [But] I have not forgotten Thy law.

Think of the word steadfast. To be steadfast means you are marked with a firm resolution to be unmovable no matter the circumstances. This is the example we are given. Even when evil surrounds us, we can continue to look to God's ways. Circumstances should not cause us to act differently.

David was hated because he followed God. Refer back to Ps 119:51; 1 Sam 23:26. The circumstances around him did not cause him to change how he thought or what he followed (1 Sam 24:6-7). Job also showed resolute steadfastness when others were against him in Job 1:17 and 1:20. Have you heard the question, 'Why would God do this'? Many difficulties come to us because of man's sin; God allows difficulties to grow our trust. It is not our place to question – it is our place to remember whom we serve and be steadfast in following God's commands.

Ps 119:95 The wicked wait for me to destroy me; I shall diligently consider Thy testimonies.

Ro 12:17-21 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. 19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath [of God,] for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. 20 "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS UPON HIS HEAD." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

But I have not forgotten thy law. This was well. Neither his sense of injustice, nor his sorrow at his losses, nor his attempts at defence diverted him from the ways of God. He would not do wrong to prevent the suffering of wrong, nor do ill to avenge ill. He carried the law in his heart, and therefore no disturbance of mind could take him off from following it. He might have forgotten himself if he had forgotten the law: as it was, he was ready to forgive and forget the injuries done him, for his heart was taken up with the word of God. The bands of the wicked had not robbed him of his choicest treasure, since they had left him his holiness and his happiness. Treasury of David

Remember what Psalm 119:57 tells us? If God is our portion, then others may take our earthly possessions and worth but what have they really? Our treasure is in heaven.

So when evil surrounds us, in any manner or form, why would we choose to act ungodly? What have we forgotten?

Ps 119:62 At midnight I shall rise to give thanks to Thee Because of Thy righteous ordinances.

In the middle of the night or in difficulty we can continue to worship God. Why? Because He is altogether just. The definition of His righteous judgments includes " the act, the place, the suit, the crime, the penalty, the charge, the manner, the sentence" . What does this mean for His children? God is in control; He is fully aware of all things therefore He sees all things just as they are clearly; God understands perfectly! Doesn' t that cause thankfulness in your heart even in the midst of hard circumstances?

Ac 16:25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

He does not say, " I will give thanks because of thy favours to me, which I have the comfort of," but, "Because of thy righteous judgments, all the disposals of thy providence in wisdom and equity, which thou hast the glory of." We must give thanks for the asserting of God's honour and the accomplishing of his word in all he does in the government of the world. Matthew Henry' s Commentary on the Whole Bible

A thankful heart is such a blessing that it drives out fear and makes room for praise. Thanksgiving turns night into day, and consecrates all hours to the worship of God. ... "Thou art my portion," and if anything can make a man sing in the middle of the night that is it. Treasury of David

We can be thankful because we know God' s judgments are righteous and we are His children. Remember, God is in control and understands all hearts perfectly. To a believer this brings peace. What does God' s righteous judgments mean to those who don' t follow Him?

Look again at Ps 119:61-62. David is devoted to God whether he is in the midst of persecution, feeling surrounded by those who hate him, or in circumstances of adversity and even just when up in the middle of the night. Are we zealous in our devotion to God at all times and in all conditions?

That which hindereth the sleep of ordinary men, is either the cares of this world, the impatient resentment of injuries, or the sting of an evil conscience: these keep others waking, but David was awaked by a desire to praise God. Treasury of David

Something else we see in David is the humility of his prayer. He prayed when no one was watching, in the middle of the night. Prayer is not just an outward display done in public; it is a personal and sincere praise to God in secret. The Pharisees were grand with their outward appearances of holiness but this was not devotion to God it was devotion to themselves – their actions brought notice to them.

Mt 6:5-6 "And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Think! If we only praise God on Sundays at church or at Bibles Studies or prayer groups and then our prayer to God and study of Him is ' put away' until the next meeting, what does this say about our devotion?

The following application is from *Hints to Preachers in The Treasury of David* :

1. The duty of gratitude: " give thanks."
2. The subject for gratitude: " thy righteous judgments."
3. The season for gratitude: at night as well as in the day.

Application Questions

You' ve heard of ' peer pressure' . What happens to you when you are in a situation where others are not honoring God? Do you join in, do you leave, are you able to stand firm and shine light?

Most of us don' t have people chasing us and robbing us, trying to hinder us because what we believe is a threat. Put the concept of David' s extreme conditions in today' s terms, in your own circumstances. For example, how do you respond when others are complaining? Refer to Romans 12:17-21.

How does David fight evil according to Psalm 119:61? What is imperative to not forgetting something?

The word ' midnight' in Psalm 119:62 can mean two things. First it can literally mean the middle of the night; second, it can refer to difficulties. In either instance what is our example of action? (Acts 16:25)

When you can' t sleep for whatever reason, what is a good practice according to the word of God?

How is it possible to give thanks to God in the middle of difficult circumstances? The last half of Psalm 119:62 gives us our answer.