

## Psalm 119

Week 5, v.40-41

**What does it mean to long after something?** The phrase 'to desire something strongly and persistently' is used to define this word in the dictionary. Describe what this looks like. **What types of things might we long after? What causes our desire for something to lessen?** The Disney movie *The Little Mermaid* comes to mind when I think of a picture of longing. The movie is based on Ariel's longing to 'be where the people are'. She goes to great lengths to satisfy her desire.

**Ps 119:40 Behold, I long for Thy precepts; revive me through Thy righteousness.**

We struggle with consistency in following God because we are selfish and weak. But God knows our heart and our honest desire to follow Him and will help to bring us back to His ways. Our desire to follow God may be strong, but it is God who allows us success in pursuing Him. We desperately need His work in our lives! The Psalmist knew this. We see this concept over and over in God's word.

**Mt 26:41 "Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."**

**Ro 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?**

**2Co 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

**Ps 119:88 Revive me according to Thy lovingkindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Thy mouth.**

Spurgeon says we can "long after the promises, but genuine saints long after the precepts also".

"Doth not my heart thy precepts love,

And long to see thy face?

And yet how slow my spirits move,

Without enlivening grace!"

—Watts.

There are many things we can do when we feel weak. **What is David's example? Do we follow what has been shown to work – going to God for strength – or do we follow after our own devices?** Think about where people go for strength. I googled the question, "Where do I find strength"? The answers were varied including use of medication and going to the gym. It was somewhat encouraging to also read several suggestions on going to God and/or the Bible. Medication has a shelf life and only temporarily alters our discouragement, and the benefits of working out can't cure all physical weakness. God, however, is beyond a pill or muscles: His strength can revive anyone at any time and lasts as long as we seek Him. When things are easy, He is there: when things get really difficult, He is there. The beginning of **Psalm 119:40** can be reworded to say, **"Look! I have desired Your commands"**. **When God looks at our heart, what does He see?**

We can desire something with every fiber of our being yet, with no action, our desires remain unfulfilled. Think about this concept. I may long to lose weight but without a plan of action and effort on my part, it won't happen. I may desire an education but unless I enroll in school and do the work, my desire cannot be met with fruition. The example we have in Psalm 119:40 is a heart that longs for God and the understanding of His commands. But without the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives we cannot grow in our relationship with God. There is this sense of pleading with God that He continues to work in the heart of His children. Once we have truly tasted of His goodness, we can never be satisfied but should desire more and more.

" I have longed after thy precepts, not only loved them, and delighted in what I have already attained, but I have earnestly desired to know them more and do them better, and am still pressing forward towards perfection." Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible

When David says "revive" me, he is saying quicken me: Keep making me alive; preserve me; recover, repair and restore my life. This is a continuous work that will not see completion until we are seated before God in heaven.

**Who is the keeper of your life, both physical and spiritual? How strong is your desire for God? Can we ever get enough understanding or teaching of His word? What does your plea to God sound like -- is it getting stronger as you understand more?**

Psalm 119:40 ends the 5<sup>th</sup> group of 8 verses. Psalm 119:41 will begin a new section of 8.

Ps 119:41 May Thy lovingkindnesses also come to me, O LORD, Thy salvation according to Thy word;

lovingkindness <cheched> kindness, favor, mercy

Take a minute and think of who you are then think of Who God is. **What are your thoughts towards the fact that God would show His lovingkindness to you?** God's kindness toward us is motivated by His great love for us. It is mind boggling to think of the love God bestows on His children. Think of the favors He grants us. Think of the mercies He shows us.

Ge 19:19 "Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; ...

Ge 32:10 I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which Thou hast shown to Thy servant; for with my staff [only] I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies.

Ex 15:13 "In Thy lovingkindness Thou hast led the people whom Thou hast redeemed; In Thy strength Thou hast guided [them] to Thy holy habitation.

Nu 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear [the guilty,] visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth [generations.]'

1Ki 8:23 And he said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven above or on earth beneath, who art keeping covenant and [showing] lovingkindness to Thy servants who walk before Thee with all their heart,

1Ch 16:34 O give thanks to the LORD, for [He is] good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

God's children have the certainty of His mercies. We have a hope for our future. Because of His love. **Do you depend on His promises and not your own works?**

Psalm 119:41 says according to God's word we can expect His lovingkindness and salvation. We can pray with assurance: 'please give me Your strength; please grant me Your wisdom; please fill me with Your peace' according to God's promises.

Ps 119:58 I entreated Thy favor with all [my] heart; Be gracious to me according to Thy word.

Ps 119:76-77 O may Thy lovingkindness comfort me, According to Thy word to Thy servant. 77 May Thy compassion come to me that I may live, For Thy law is my delight.

Ps 69:16 Answer me, O LORD, for Thy lovingkindness is good; According to the greatness of Thy compassion, turn to me,

Take a minute to think of what your life would be like without the love of God. In the previous section of 8 verses in Psalm 119:33-40, David repeatedly requests of God understanding and teaching of His commands. Now David moves towards claiming the promises of God. He knows God's mercies are the key to his understanding.

Ver. 41. Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord. The mercies of God everywhere meet the man whom God quickens (Ps 119:40). David understood that God blesses the soul, the body, the household, the ordinances, and all things else that belong to his servants; the whole of which blessing is flora mercy, without merit, bestowed largely, wonderfully, etc. Martin Geier.

The chief outcome of God's mercies is his salvation. It is our greatest need; it is his greatest gift. Treasury of David

Do we claim God's promise of His mercy and salvation? How has His promises changed the way we think, the way we act, the way we speak?

## Application Questions

What do you long for? What are you willing to do to satisfy your desires?

In David we have an example of longing after God and His truths. He pleads with God to help him follow. Why?

How good is a strong desire for something without action accompanying it? Read Matthew 26;41 and Psalm 119;88.

What do you do when you feel weak and incapable of following what God wants? Where does your strength come from?

God' s lovingkindness towards His children means he bestows kindness, favor and mercy on us as a testament of His love for us. How has God blessed your life? Look at Genesis 19;19 and Numbers 14;18.

How have God' s promises changed the way you think, act and speak?

What is God saying to your heart through Psalm 119;40-41?