

Text: Ps 119.9-16

I'm thinking about Psalm 119 for communion meditations. The Psalm isn't a redemption psalm in its essence, but it reflects the product of redemption.

We are in the *Beth* section today, perhaps the most familiar section of the whole Psalm. I can't recall how many different classes required me to memorize vv. 9-11. It seems I learned them in Sunday school also.

Read Ps 119.9-16

Who is the young man? Kidner suggests he is the Psalmist himself. The many prayers recorded in this psalm make it *personal*. Kidner says, "He is praying rather than preaching."¹

Before we think about the prayers in this section, let's ask this question: What kind of man has this kind of interest in God's word?

I've noticed a few recent visitors to our services seem to have very little Bible background, if any. Their response to the messages is polite, but they haven't connected with the message.

One fellow told me, "I enjoyed that presentation." Another said, "Thanks for the nice talk."

I'm glad these fellows came at all, but more than anything else, I wish they would open their hearts to what I am saying and a real change would take place.

They would become this young man.

This young man is the way he is because he is redeemed. His interests are those of the redeemed.

- Cleansing
- The cleanser
- The cleansing agent

If you are redeemed, you are interested in the same things.

Proposition: Salvation delights in God's word and steadily conforms to what it says, cleansing one's ways, growing in the Lord.

¹ Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 424.

I. The question of sanctification (9)

- A. Concern for the way: keep way pure
- B. Boundaries of the way: keeping it acc. to word

The lost person doesn't ask this question.

Young Christians may sometimes forget the question, but they keep coming back to it.

II. The heart of growing faith (10-11)

- A. Whole-hearted seeking God
- B. High value on God's word: treasured in the heart

"Proverbs 2.10-12 and Colossians 3.16 show that the mind which stores up Scripture has its taste and judgement educated by God."²

Pr 2.10-12 For wisdom will enter your heart And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;¹¹ Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,¹² To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things;

Col 3.16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

III. The growing commitment to stored treasures (12-16)

- A. The prayer for more (12)
 - 1. Presumably the believer has already encountered the word
 - 2. Yet the Spirit working in the heart produces a desire for more
- B. The recitation of Bible lessons (13)
 - 1. Must begin with memorization

² Kidner, 424.

2. But will produce recitation: in some way, you will speak of His word to other people

C. The concentration of the mind (15)

1. The phrase “concentrates the mind” comes from life of Samuel Johnson

A clergyman named Dodd was sentenced to hang for a loan scam. The sentence seemed unjust to many, including Samuel Johnson. He wrote an appeal to the court in Dodd’s name. Many suspected the appeal came from someone else (some suspected Johnson).

Johnson’s biographer asked about it, and Johnson denied it, saying, “Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.”³

2. Here the mind concentrates on God’s word and God’s ways
 - a. Not because he is about to hang
 - b. But because he is redeemed

D. The joy of the word (14, 16)

1. Two words for joy
 - a. In v. 14, the joy of festival and exultation
 - b. In v. 16, the settled joy of one sitting at peace at home
2. This joy is in the believer’s heart

“This is not merely the scholar’s pleasure ... but a disciple’s, whose joy is in obedience.”⁴

Conclusion:

Proposition: Salvation delights in God’s word and steadily conforms to what it says, cleansing one’s ways, growing in the Lord.

³ Robert Deis, “Hanging ... It Concentrates the Mind Wonderfully,,” accessed August 6, 2023, <https://www.thisdayinquotes.com/2009/09/hanging-it-concentrates-mind.html>.

⁴ Kidner, *Psalms 73-150*, 420.