

Text: Ps 119.97-104

Today we return to Ps 119 for communion. Our stanza for this message is the *Mem* stanza, every verse begins with the “m” sound.

The stanza is one of the most well-known in Ps 119. You may have most of it memorized, albeit perhaps in the KJV.

Read Ps 119.97-104

O How I Love Your Law

This is the song of a soul set free, a redeemed soul.

I. The loving testimony

Can someone really love the law?

A. What is the law?

1. The words in our text

- a. Law = *torah* (97)
- b. Commandments (98)
- c. Testimonies (99)
- d. Precepts (100)*
- e. Word (101)
- f. Ordinances (102)
- g. Words (103)
- h. Precepts (104)*

These cover most of the synonyms for “word” or “law” in Ps 119. The testimony of the first verse overflows with appreciation for God’s word in all its conceptions.

2. The first term reminds us of the Torah (Genesis-Deuteronomy)

- a. There is a *lot* of law in these books
- b. We studied through Deuteronomy recently

Would you say that our study made you *love* Deuteronomy? (Deuteronomy = second law)

“In his short study of the psalms, *Reflections on the Psalms*, C. S. Lewis has a chapter on the love of God’s Law that the various psalm writers express. He confesses how strange this seemed to him when he was starting to study the psalms. He understood how a writer could respect a good law and try to obey it, but to love it or delight in it seemed to him a bit like loving the instruments with which a dentist pulls out teeth or loving the front line of a battlefield.”¹

- c. Yet love for the law is the consistent testimony of the Psalms, not just 119

Somewhere I read that the Psalms are a meditation on the Law, and we can certainly see this in many psalms.

As we work through the two big themes of this stanza, we will see where the love comes in

II. The inner focus

A. The law transforms the mind

1. “Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies” (98)
2. “I have more insight than all my teachers” (99)
3. “I understand more than the aged” (100)

B. Note the progression of insight: enemies, teachers, aged

C. Also note the heart for God’s word

1. Commandments ... are ever mine (98)
2. Your testimonies ... my meditation (99)
3. I observed your precepts (100)

All of these testimonies have to do with the inner life, the life a redeemed person who comes to God’s word to get his head and heart right.

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms 107-150: An Expositional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 2005), 1018.

Bob Jones, Sr.: “Give God your heart and he will comb the kinks out of your head.”

III. The regulated life

A. Turning to the outside life

1. “I have restrained my feet from every evil way” (101)
2. “I have not turned aside from Your ordinances” (102)

The inner life produces the outer discipline

B. The consequences

1. The word of God is sweet (103)
2. The false ways are hated (104)

Conclusion:

I mentioned C. S. Lewis earlier. Here is what Lewis learned to prize in the Psalms and the Law:

“The Order of the Divine mind, embodied in the Divine Law, is beautiful. [Therefore] what should a man do but try to reproduce it, so far as possible, in his daily life? His “delight” is in those statutes (16); to study them is like finding treasure (14); they affect him like music, are his “songs” (54); they taste like honey (103); they are better than silver and gold (72). As one’s eyes are more and more opened, one sees more and more in them, and it excites wonder (18). This is not priggery nor even scrupulosity; it is the language of a man ravished by a moral beauty. If we cannot at all share his experience, we shall be the losers.”²

The order of the divine mind — when we become Christians, follow Christ, this is what becomes the object of our love.

If we love God, we love his word, and his word changes us.

² Lewis, Reflections on the Psalms, 59–60. The whole discussion is on pages 54–65, quoted in Boice, 1018.