

# Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

## Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

### Welcome & Prayer

*"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God." (Psalm 42:1-5, NIV)*

Let us pray.... Dear Lord, our soul pants for you this morning. We long to be in your presence. We long to worship you with others in person but today we can't, despite all our good intentions and so we come to you by ourselves this morning or with our family around us. We need you. We need you like we need our food and drink. We need your presence, your forgiveness, your love, your grace, your help and power. So give us more of you today. Let us see more of your glory as we sing our songs. Let us hear more your character as we listen to your word. Let us experience more of your goodness as we pray. And draw us closer to your people as we sing the same song, pray the same prayers, listen to the same sermon, even if we are in different locations today. Help us this day to truly worship you in spirit and in truth. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Song – Only a Holy God

[Only A Holy God- City Alight - YouTube](#)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Who else commands all the hosts of heaven<br/>           Who else could make every king bow down<br/>           Who else can whisper and darkness trembles<br/>           Only a Holy God<br/>           What other beauty demands such praises<br/>           What other splendour outshines the sun<br/>           What other majesty rules with justice<br/>           Only a Holy God</p> | <p>3. Who else could rescue me from my failing<br/>           Who else would offer His only Son<br/>           Who else invites me to call Him Father<br/>           Only a Holy God<br/>           Only my Holy God!</p> |
|---|---|
- Come and behold Him  
 The One and the Only  
 Cry out, sing holy  
 Forever a Holy God  
 Come and worship the Holy God*
- |   |
|---|
| <p>2. What other glory consumes like fire<br/>           What other power can raise the dead<br/>           What other name remains undefeated<br/>           Only a Holy God<br/>           Come and behold Him<br/>           The One and the Only<br/>           Cry out, sing holy<br/>           Forever a Holy God<br/>           Come and worship the Holy God</p> |
|---|

### Bible Reading – Psalm 119:1-24 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart— <sup>3</sup> they do no wrong but follow his ways.

<sup>4</sup> You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. <sup>5</sup> Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying

*your decrees! <sup>6</sup>Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands. <sup>7</sup>I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws. <sup>8</sup>I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.*

### **א Beth**

*<sup>9</sup>How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. <sup>10</sup>I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. <sup>11</sup>I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. <sup>12</sup>Praise be to you, LORD; teach me your decrees. <sup>13</sup>With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. <sup>14</sup>I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. <sup>15</sup>I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. <sup>16</sup>I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

### **א Gimel**

*<sup>17</sup>Be good to your servant while I live, that I may obey your word. <sup>18</sup>Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. <sup>19</sup>I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me. <sup>20</sup>My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times. <sup>21</sup>You rebuke the arrogant, who are accursed, those who stray from your commands. <sup>22</sup>Remove from me their scorn and contempt, for I keep your statutes. <sup>23</sup>Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees. <sup>24</sup>Your statutes are my delight; they are my counsellors.*

## **Announcements**

**Focus for the month – Rest and Relax.** Let's take a holiday but not a holiday from God. Instead let's holiday with God. So, what might that look like in practice? Here are a few ideas.

- Why not start a Bible reading programme for the year?
- Why not create a daily/weekly/monthly prayer list that you can use throughout the year.
- Why not read a good Christian book and then pass it on to someone else with the aim of discussing it together?
- Why not create a household devotion time?
- Why not go prayer walking (going for a walk but using the time to pray through the things on your heart).
- Why not work out how you are going to serve the Lord and his people better this year?
- Why not rethink your finances and what you are going to give to the Lord's work this year?
- Why not...

I am sure you can all add to this list and seek to a couple of these things in January.

**School Holidays.** Our school children are still on holidays so that means the normal activities of the church will close down for the Summer School Holidays and will only start back after Australia Day 2022. There will be a basic Kids Church that will run each Sunday over that time

**Pandemic Prayers.** As a gift for every regular attender of the church, we have published a book called **Prayers from our People during the Pandemic**. This is a collection of prayers that we sent around during 2020-21 as a part of our paper and interactive services. Please find the copy with your name on it and use it as an encouragement to pray. Merry Christmas!

**Pledges.** Many thanks to all those who have pledged money for our Ministry Facilities Fund. When you come to pay your pledges, please can you mark the transfer or the envelope 'Building'

**ZOOM Prayer time.** There will be no ZOOM prayer time over the Summer School Holidays.

**Church Camp.** Please keep the weekend of 4-6<sup>th</sup> March free for next year's Church camp. The camp brochure and rego form are out for you to pick up.

### **Financial News.**

Offering Deficit Jan to Nov	14,049
Budget Offerings for December	24,005
Actual Offerings for December	28,039
Offering Surplus for December	4,034
Offering Deficit for Jan to Dec 2021	10.015

This has been a tough year for the Church in many ways, including financially. Over the last couple of months our people generously gave and that meant at the end of the year we were only \$10,000 short of our budget for offerings. But that also meant that we made a loss of around \$35,000 this year. Please continue to pray for the full scope of our Churches ministries including our finances. And maybe if you are behind in your giving you might seek to catch up sometime in January.

## Song – Your Word [Your Word \(Song Leading Video\)](#) [Emu Music.mp4 - Google Drive](#)

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|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your word is good, it's ever faithful<br/>Worth more than gold, the heart's delight<br/>Your word gives life to all who hear and obey<br/>Your word endures forever</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Your word transforms, it lifts the humble<br/>Rebukes the proud, protects the poor<br/>Your word discerns the mind and spirit of all<br/>Your word endures forever</li> </ol> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Your word is true, it never changes<br/>It formed the earth; sustains it still<br/>Your word defends;<br/>providing refuge and strength<br/>Your word endures forever</li> </ol>  |   |
| <p><b>Chorus</b></p> <p>Your word is a lamp unto my feet<br/>Your word is a light unto my path<br/>For your word is my hope,<br/>it's my joy and my song<br/>Your word endures forever</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Bridge</b></p> <p>Your word is more than just letters on pages<br/>It's life and it's love and it's freedom for us<br/>Your word is more than just wisdom of ages;<br/>Its treasures are endless, it's always enough<br/>Your word is more than just stories of old;<br/>It's the truth and the way and the story of love<br/>Your word is more than just breath into dust;<br/>It's your Son, as a man, come to dwell here with us</p> |   |

**Chorus**

## Pastoral Prayer Points

- Pray for safety on the roads
- Pray for all those who are working hard over this summer break to keep things going – especially our hospital workers, police and emergency workers. Pray they might be able to get a good break soon.
- Pray that we can use our ‘extra time’ to connect with neighbours and friends and be more hospitable. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with them.
- Pray for the country of Kenya ( Population 53 million, Christians 44 million) Please pray for the Lord’s continued grace for new believers in Kenya. Pray that through trials and persecution they would see the Lord’s faithfulness. Pray for Christians in the northeast who face threats of deadly attacks from al-Shabaab. Pray that the church in Kenya would be equipped to disciple believers, train godly leaders and effectively share the gospel with their neighbours.

## Bible Reading – Psalm 103:13-22 (NIV)

**T Daleth**

<sup>25</sup>I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your word. <sup>26</sup>I gave an account of my ways and you answered me; teach me your decrees. <sup>27</sup>Cause me to understand the way of your precepts, that I may

*meditate on your wonderful deeds.<sup>28</sup> My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.<sup>29</sup> Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me and teach me your law.<sup>30</sup> I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws.<sup>31</sup> I hold fast to your statutes, LORD; do not let me be put to shame.<sup>32</sup> I run in the path of your commands, for you have broadened my understanding.*

### **n He**

*<sup>33</sup> Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.<sup>34</sup> Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.<sup>35</sup> Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.<sup>36</sup> Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.<sup>37</sup> Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.<sup>38</sup> Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared.<sup>39</sup> Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good.<sup>40</sup> How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life.*

### **j Nun**

*<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.<sup>106</sup> I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.<sup>107</sup> I have suffered much, preserve my life, LORD, according to your word.*

*<sup>108</sup> Accept, LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws.<sup>109</sup> Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law.<sup>110</sup> The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts.<sup>111</sup> Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.<sup>112</sup> My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.*

### **n Taw**

*<sup>169</sup> May my cry come before you, LORD; give me understanding according to your word.<sup>170</sup> May my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise.<sup>171</sup> May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees.<sup>172</sup> May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous.<sup>173</sup> May your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.<sup>174</sup> I long for your salvation, LORD, and your law gives me delight.<sup>175</sup> Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me.<sup>176</sup> I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands.*

## **Sermon: Your Word (Stephen T) <https://youtu.be/fNLTu1Spoic>**

I wonder what you think about meditation? It has become all the rage in our modern society, hasn't it? Life is too busy. The stress of it all is too great. You need to get away from it all. Clear your head. Empty your mind and concentrate your thoughts. And in modern day meditation, much of it derived from Eastern religions, the emphasis is on emptying. Clearing away the cobwebs. Spring cleaning those unhelpful thoughts and memories. So you concentrate on an object or a word or a thought by bringing this one thing into focus. And getting rid of everything else.

But that is not how Christians view meditation. It is not an emptying but a filling. Not a removing of the bad things but a focusing on a good thing. Like our modern-day view of meditation, it is not a microwave meal more a slow cooker. For it can't be hurried. It takes time. But the results are worth it, really worth it. Because they give us clarity of thought and heart and action.

Slide 2

And in Psalm 119 we see the writer meditating on God's law. Like a cow chewings its cud the writer will chew on God's word getting all the goodness out of it before sending it down into its stomach and picking up another morsel for consideration. Again and again the writer will take another look at the law, each time from a slightly different angle. In fact, he will use 8 other words for the law, precepts, testimony, statute, commandments, judgements, word, promise and ways. So much so that out of 176 verses in the Psalm all but 5 directly mention one of these words to do with God's law.

But it is not a statute book filled with law, it is more a love letter to the Lord of the Law. Because this is not about the law as an end in itself, but the law shows us the mind of the law giver. It is a testimony, a witness to the one who has given us life. So, it is not just a psalm to read or study. It is a song to sing. It is a subject to delight in. A God to hear and obey and to love and to surrender one's life to. This is not theory, this is

practice. A practical expression of how the writer loves God's law because through it he can love God Himself.

Slide 3

And he even uses a special form of words called an Acrostic. And you can see that in our Bibles how the Psalm is broken up. There are 22 paragraphs, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And 8 lines in each paragraph, each starting with the same letter. So, verses 1-8 each start with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph, followed by verses 9-16 where each line starts with the second letter of the alphabet Beth. Working its way through all 22 letters before ending with 8 verses of the last letter of the alphabet Taw.

You see even the alphabet itself was not long enough, or complex enough for the writer to properly consider God's law, God's word, what we might call today the OT. No, he has to repeat himself 8 times on each letter to meditate, fully meditate on God and his ways. So yes, if we were to read the whole Psalm it would take us about 20 minutes to go through the whole of it. But maybe that is something we should do later on today. Chew over the word of God. Look at it from every angle. With the aim of drawing closer to our great God. Because we desire Him. We want to seek Him. We love Him. More than anything else.

Slide 4

#### 1. Because in God's law we will have **A Blessed walk (verses 1-8)**

<sup>1</sup>"**Blessed** are those whose ways are blameless, who **walk** according to the law of the **LORD**.

<sup>2</sup>*Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart"*

You get it? Blessings, real blessing comes from God Himself. By seeking Him. By walking according to his laws. So often we think that law restricts us. It boxes us in. It stops us from doing what our hearts desire. So today we emphasise freedom, doing whatever we want, whenever we want it, with whoever we want to do it with. No rules. No restrictions. No law.

But the writer is saying that is a recipe for disaster. The road to real blessing is to live according to our master's instructions. To follow the ways of the one who made us and knows us and wants the best for us. That's where real blessings are found. Not just at the end of that road but even while you are walking down that road, blessings can be found.

Slide 5

The joy is in the journey as much as arriving at the destination. Because life is not just about the end goal, life is about minutes, hours, day, weeks, years seeking the Lord. Walking according to his law. And throughout this Psalm we will get a taste of what some of those blessings actually are. For through God's word, we find

- **Liberty** from sin. Verse 133 "*Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.*" And freedom from narrow mindedness. Verse 45 "*I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.*" Actually, it is sin that binds & it is God's perfection that perfectly frees us. And we find that in God and only in Him and His word.
- And we also find **light** in our darkness. Verse 130 "*The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.*" Without God's directions we are stumbling along in the dark but with them we have a torch that we can follow into the unknown.
- And we also have **life**. Verse 144 "*Your statutes are always righteous; give me understanding that I may live.*" There is something about God's commands that preserve life, restore life when it has been drained away and give us real life. For if God is the source of all life, connecting to him & following him is the way to find life.
- And there is comfort in affliction. Verse 71 "*It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.*" As many of the good things in life seemed far from him, he realised he was not alone. That God was indeed bringing good to those who loved him.

Slide 6

Who would have thought that life, light, liberty, comfort and so many other blessings would come from God's word? You see God's law is the one what makes us happy because God's law reflects a God who created us to live a life of blessing and happiness. Which means we can be joyful in all things because we know that the God of all things is in control of whatever has happened in my life.

Slide 7

Which just backs up the first words from Psalm 1. *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law, he meditates day and night."*

How do we do that? Psalm 119 talks about fully obeying God's precepts (v4). Considering all God's commands (v6). Learning about his righteous decrees (v7). And praising him with an upright heart (v8). But we need to be careful here. When I was studying Hebrew at theological college, we went to visit the Great Synagogue in Sydney and they began the worship service with the Torah, the Law being processed in with great fanfare and there were people bowing down to the law.

No we don't worship the Bible, we worship the God of the Bible. But if we want to seek that God with all our heart we will meditate on his word, his ways, his law. Our minds will think His thoughts after Him. Our mouths will express our praise in song and prayer. Our hands will want to do what we are being asked. Our feet will want to take us on the right paths. Our wills will be moulded to follow God's will.

Responding to God's word is going to take our whole bodies. Mind, heart, soul. Spirit. Or in the words of Spurgeon, *"God is not truly sought by the cold researches of the brain, we must seek him with all heart"* & as we seek him, we will enjoy the blessings of a God directed life.

Slide 9

And Ephesians 1, picks up this idea of God's blessings and helps us to count them one by one. <sup>3</sup>*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."* (In Christ! The most amazing blessings are all wrapped up in Him. But what sort of blessings are we talking about?)

<sup>4</sup>*"For he chose us... he predestined... he adopted us... he redeemed us... he forgave us... he made known to us the mystery of his will... he included us in Christ... we heard the message of truth... we were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit and we were guaranteed an inheritance that can never, ever be taken from us."* And that's just the first course of a 22-course feast that the writer of the Psalm is dishing up for us. The first few stitches of an embroidery that will dazzle all that see it. Because in God's law is a blessed walk and

Slide 10

## 2. A path of purity (verses 9-16)

<sup>9</sup>*"How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. <sup>10</sup>I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands."* There is before us a path of purity. And we find it when we live according to God's word. It is a path that a young man or woman should find early on in life because it leads to a life of blessing. But if you missed the early signposts when you were young, it is a path that you can join later on in life as well.

For the power of the word of God is such that it has the strength to purify, to get rid of the bad stuff in our lives and magnify the good stuff. It can restrain us from wandering which means that will enable us to stay on that right path. And it can keep us from sin for as the writer says, *"I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."*

Friends that is what happens when we read God's word, when we study God's words, when we memorise God's word, when we meditate on God's word. Spurgeon apparently said that every preacher should

memorise the whole of Psalm 119 and apparently the politician William Wilberforce and philosopher Blaise Pascal actually did do that. But the rest of us should be putting Scripture into our brains and our hearts whenever we can. Why?

Because according to verse 13 we want our lips to recount all the laws that come from your mouth. We should rejoice in following God's statutes. We meditate on God's precepts and consider all his ways. We delight in His decrees and because of that we have decided not to neglect his word. Have you ever had such a good novel that you haven't wanted to put it down? Or been binging on a series that you watch episode after episode?

How about binging on the Bible? How about eating up its words. How about singing the truth found there in song? Writing our own acrostic and thinking through the A to Z of reading God's word. All because we are not just looking at the print on the page, we are looking to find God there and grow in his grace and have his godliness rub off on us.

Slide 11

Friends we are so fortunate to have God's word in our language. In our hands. Remember how Paul put it? <sup>16</sup>*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,* <sup>17</sup>*so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" So don't have a holiday from God's word. Don't take a vacation from God Himself. Use your extra time to meditate, ponder, write, sing! Delight in it. Long for it. Allow it to correct you & train you in right living. Hide it in your heart because

Slide 12

### 3. It is a Wonderful Companion (verse 17-24)

<sup>17</sup>*Be good to your servant while I live, that I may obey your word.* <sup>18</sup>*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.* <sup>19</sup>*I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me.* <sup>20</sup>*My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.* <sup>21</sup>*You rebuke the arrogant, those who stray from your commands.* <sup>22</sup>*Remove from me their scorn and contempt, for I keep your statutes.* <sup>23</sup>*Though rulers sit together & slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees.* <sup>24</sup>*Your statutes are my delight; they are my counsellors."*

God's word is a wonderful travelling companion along the path of life. If we have hidden God's word in our heart, it is always there whenever we need it. If we haven't neglected it, there is a treasurer of good advice waiting for the Spirit of God to draw to our attention.

Slide 13

You know when I am on holidays, I always make sure I have a map on my phone or on paper in front of me. I am a stranger in these parts and you can't always trust the locals to give you good advice. But if you have a map, you can find the right path to where you want to go. And we are strangers here on this earth. This place is not our home. But we are heading home. Our journey is taking us from where we are to where God wants us to go. And he has prepared a place for his children. And so, God's word helps navigate God's children through God's world.

Slide 14

Remember the two people trudging on the road to Emmaus after the death of Jesus on Good Friday? They were talking and discussing what had happened, with their faces downcast when they were joined by another traveller. Who said "*How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!*" <sup>26</sup>*Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"* <sup>27</sup>*And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he (Jesus) explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."*

Having the Scriptures is like having God Himself walking with you, what a life companion to have! Remembering God's promises is like having the yes to those promises, Jesus Christ with you along for the ride. What a friend we have in Jesus. Someone who will be there throughout

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#### 4. A Dangerous Journey (verses 25-32)

*25 "I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your word... 28 My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word. 29 Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me and teach me your law. 30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws."*

The writer's life has been far from easy. At times he has been down but not out. Because God's word has always been with him. In the ups & the downs. The good times & the bad. It is not just a fair-weather friend, only there when the days are sunny. God's word is also there when the rain is pouring & you are slogging your way through the mud and the muck. The writer knows that when he gets stuck in the mud, he needs to get stuck into the Bible.

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Isn't that how Paul felt in 2 Corinthians 11-12? He had suffered much, shipwrecks, persecution, thief, thirst, sleeplessness and the difficulty of running a number of Churches. Even a thorn in the flesh that God wouldn't take away. But God's word said to him "*My grace is sufficient for you; my power is made perfect in weakness. For when you are weak, then you are strong.*"

What a dangerous journey we are on as Christians. Denying ourselves. Taking up the cross and following Jesus but we are not alone. We have a wonderful companion, a path of purity, a life of blessing amidst this dangerous journey. What's more we have a light for our paths

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#### 5. A light for life (verses 105-112)

If we kept working our way through Psalm 119, we might not have room for anything else today. So, I am skipping a few verses here. *105 "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. 106 I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws."*

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The ancient world didn't have street lights or powerful torches to know which way to go. But people would carry a little clay dish containing oil and when lit that would shed light enough to illuminate the path ahead but only for the next step or so. Likewise, God's word is not a lighthouse showing the dangers well in advance or a headlight where we can flick high beam and see a kilometre or so into the darkness. But it does allow us enough light to walk by faith. To take the next step of faith.

You see I don't know how my life is going to end. I don't know what tomorrow will bring. But God's word gives me enough wisdom, enough knowledge, enough advice to take my next step. Not my next 5 steps. Not my plans for the whole of the year. But my next step. And so when I listen and obey the word of God. When I am aware of its path of purity and how great a companion it is in the midst of a dangerous journey then there is light for my path.

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And of course, isn't that what Jesus said as well. "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" Jesus is the Word. The word that was there in the very beginning. Jesus is the companion that will help us in the midst of our dangerous journey. Jesus is a wonderful travelling companion. In Jesus there is every blessing that comes from the hand of God. So, Jesus is all that we need. And the writer points us to him at the very end of the Psalm.

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#### 6. A good shepherd (verses 169-176)

Remember how the Psalm started. *1 "Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD."* And the impression throughout the Psalm is that the writer is the one who is

blameless who has walked according to the law of the Lord. But the last verse changes everything. <sup>17<sup>6</sup></sup> / have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands."

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The writer isn't blameless. He is like a lost sheep, who needs a shepherd. A good shepherd. So he seeks God's servant. He asks for a shepherd. He is looking for a Saviour. And he finds all three in Jesus. Who tells us, "*I am the good shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep. I am the good shepherd who knows my sheep and my sheep know me. The sheep will listen to my voice and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*"

You get it? The writer of Psalm 119 has locked at God's word from every angle, he has meditated on the A to Z of God's law and he comes to this conclusion. I am prone to wander Lord. I can't do this without your servants help Lord.

### Slide 22

So, <sup>16<sup>9</sup></sup> *May my cry come before you, LORD; give me understanding according to your word.* (He needs God's understanding!) <sup>17<sup>0</sup></sup> *May my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise.* (He needs God's deliverance). <sup>17<sup>1</sup></sup> *May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees.* (He needs help to praise God all day every day.) <sup>17<sup>3</sup></sup> *May your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.* (He needs God's help). In short God's word has led Him to God Himself. And looking through the lens of the NT, it leads him to God Emmanuel, God with us, Jesus.

### Slide 23

And that all came from meditating slowly and surely on the word of God. Not emptying your mind but filling it with Scripture. Not taking a holiday from God but resting him and looking to him for all that we need at this time of year. Not doing something just for the head but having the hands and the heart and the will and the mind all working together. So that our whole being grows in its love for God. And for his son Jesus Christ.

For the unsaved sinner, meditating on God's law would show them that their sin condemned them and their need for a Saviour in Jesus. For the legalist, the law shows them that law binds but faith and trust in God leads to true freedom. And for the believer, the law is a servant and helps them see the character of God and the work of Christ.

### Slide 24

What do you see? For me I can see that "*Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path... Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end... But I have strayed like a lost sheep. So I seek your servant.*"

## Song – Standing on the Promises

[Christian Gospel Choir - Standing On The Promises \[with lyrics\] - YouTube](#)

1. Standing on the promises of Christ my King,  
Through eternal ages let His praises ring,  
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,  
Standing on the promises of God.

### Chorus

3. Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,  
Bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord,  
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,  
Standing on the promises of God.

*Standing, standing,  
Standing on the promises of God my Saviour;  
Standing, standing,  
I'm standing on the promises of God.*

2. Standing on the promises that cannot fail,  
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living Word of God I shall prevail,  
Standing on the promises of God.

4. Standing on the promises I cannot fall,  
Listening every moment to the Spirit's call  
Resting in my Saviour as my all in all,  
Standing on the promises of God.

**Closing.** *"Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path... Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end."*