

Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

AM-Psalm 119:11; PM-Pike Baptist Fall Worship

Psalm 119:11

I have hidden your word in my heart  
that I might not sin against you.

### **Main Point**

Psalm 119 calls God's people to delight in God's faithfulness and truthfulness as expressed in His Word.

### **Introduction**

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

If you could master one field of study, such as economics or engineering, what would it be and why?

How are the teachings of the Bible distinct from all other teachings we receive?

In your own words, what is the purpose of the Bible? Why is studying it important for the Christian?

In our information-driven culture, people want to know more about everything. People are interested not only in gaining new skills to use in a rapidly changing work environment, but in learning more to grow personally. Unfortunately, many people lack a spiritual hunger for God's Word, and many who do have the desire to study the Bible haven't developed the discipline to make Bible study as profitable and life transforming as it can be. Today we will see that pursuing God requires careful, dedicated study of His Word.

### **Understanding**

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

**Have a volunteer read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Hebrews 4:12-13.**

First Timothy 3:16 teaches us that all Scripture is God-breathed. What does this imply about Scripture?

Why is the divine inspiration of Scripture important? What would change if you didn't believe Scripture was divinely inspired?

Paul reminded Timothy that Scripture instructs Christians on how to believe, grow, and serve the Christian community. Paul appealed to Timothy concerning the inspiration and usefulness of Scripture in daily life. He noted to Timothy that Scripture is inspired by God. The complete contents bear God's stamp of approval.

What do these two passages teach us about the power God's Word can have in the life of a believer? How has God's Word proven powerful in your life?

The living God speaks His living Word. God's Word is not confined to a distant past but comes to us now with freshness, power, and clarity. God's Word judges the ideas and thoughts of the heart. It reaches into the center of a person's being and correctly perceives motives and intentions. God's Word lays bare any faithlessness, disobedience, and indifference or complacency in advancing toward spiritual maturity. Bible study is one of the main ways God speaks to Christians. It is the way we learn about God and His will for our lives. Bible study provides the spiritual food for growing believers into Christlikeness.

**Have a volunteer read Psalm 119:1-8 and 17-24.**

What does it mean to be blessed? What kind of relationship does the person who is blessed have with God's Word?

What is God's expectation for the psalmist in terms of how he studied God's Word (vv. 4-6)?

Why isn't it enough to merely read God's Word? Why is it important that we devote time and energy to carefully studying the Bible (v. 20; vv. 23-24)?

The psalmist recognized that God expects his Word to be obeyed diligently (v. 6) and prays that he would be consistent in keeping God's statutes (v. 7). These verses describe a deeper relationship with God's Word than mere comprehension. The power, inspiration, and truth of God's Word demand careful study and dedicated application. Thus, the psalmist speaks of meditating on and delighting in God's Word (vv. 23-24).

Why might verse 18 be an important prayer to make prior to studying God's Word? What keeps us from seeing the beauty of God's Word (see 2 Cor. 4:4; Jer. 17:3)?

As we study God's Word, we must be aware of our sinful nature lest we interpret the Bible to suit ourselves. We must also be aware of our adversary, the devil, who seeks to deceive us and distract us from putting God's Word into practice. Each time we study the Bible by ourselves or with others, we should pray that God would make us humble to receive it, "not as a human message, but as it truly is, the message of God, which also works effectively in you" (1 Thess. 2:13).

### **Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What steps could you take this week to study God's Word more carefully and thoughtfully?

What do we lose if we choose to only study Scripture on our own, rather than being an active part of a biblical community where we can be taught the Word of God? What do we lose if the opposite is true?

What spiritual benefits might come from making time to study God's Word with your family? How might doing so deepen your understanding and appreciation for God's Word?

What can our group do to be a community deeply rooted in the teaching, studying, and memorizing of Scripture?

### **Pray**

Close in prayer, asking God to increase our appetite for His Word. Pray that our group will be better students of God's Word, not just to increase our knowledge but to conform us to His image.

### **Commentary**

2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Bible is breathed out or inspired by God. Paul did not discount the role of human instruments in producing these books (see 2 Pet. 1:21), but God's role was primary. Paul identified several ways the Bible is useful or profitable for believers. Teaching refers to the Bible as the basis of sound doctrine. Because of the prominence of heresy among his readers, Paul emphasized the importance of sound teaching. Reproof may refer to both exposing the errors of false teachers (doctrinal) and also showing someone the error of his or her ways (personal). Either way, the Bible shows us our wrongs and leads us to forgiveness and peace. Correction suggests that God's Word helps people restore their doctrine or practice to the right state they had forfeited. Training in righteousness means the Scriptures act as a disciplinarian that leads people to a holy lifestyle. If Timothy would nurture his life in the Scriptures, he would be competent and equipped for every good work. He would be both prepared and qualified for every task God assigned him.

The Greek word rendered competent has the sense of being capable, proficient, or able to meet all the demands placed upon a person. In the Bible it carries the force of a person who, through diligent study of Scripture, has progressed spiritually to being able not only to discern the will of God but also to abide in it consistently. As a result, the complete Christian is fully engaged, either as layperson or leader, in serving God. Whatever God calls complete Christians to do, they are ready to follow because of their dedication to the study of the Word and their obedience to God's teaching.

### Hebrews 4:12-13

In the Greek text living is the first word in verse 12, making it emphatic. The living God speaks His living Word. God's Word is not confined to a distant past but comes to us now with freshness, power, and clarity. That Word is effective, energetic, and powerful. His Word causes things to happen. Additionally, the Word of God is active, an emphasis virtually identical in meaning with the term living. God's Word is not something we passively hear and then ignore. It actively works in our lives, changes us, and sends us into action.

The activity of God's Word is an extension of the activity of God Himself. The Word of God exposes our innermost thoughts and intentions. The Greek word translated exposed literally means "to grip the neck," "to bend the neck back," "to make bare the throat." We get the English nouns trachea and tracheotomy from the Greek verb. The term was used of wrestlers who seized opponents' necks and bent their heads back, exposing their throats. Basically, the word means "to lay bare to view." It conveys the idea of uncovering something. Here the term emphasizes that God's sovereign power brings a person's whole being into full view in God's eyes. Those who dare to examine their lives in the light of God's Word discover their true moral and spiritual condition.

### Psalms 119:1-8

To be blameless derives from the Hebrew word for "perfect, unblemished." The psalmist prayed for total commitment to obedience. His conscience reminded him of his weaknesses (vv. 5-6). The Hebrew word for sincere (yshr; v. 7) means "upright," or "straight."

### Psalms 119:17-24

Deal generously translates the Hebrew word for "recompense" or "benefit". Contemplate means "consider carefully" ("think about" in v. 15). The psalmist characterized himself as a stranger, a resident alien living on God's earth and dependent on Him. The purpose of rebuke is to correct and bring God's people back into relationship with Him (Mt 18:15).