

25-0608p Transcript

25-0608p - *A Father's Instruction, Part 2, Jim Lokenbauer*

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

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A Father's Instruction, Part 2

Transcript (0:04 - 31:56)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

Psalms 119:18

(0:04) The scripture reading for tonight is taken from Psalms 119, verse 18, which reads, (0:20) Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from your law. (0:28)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(0:33) Well, good evening, everybody. Hope everyone had a pleasant day today. (0:39) Well, that psalm verse that Mike just read is one of my favorite verses out of psalms. (0:48) Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. (0:55) Holy Spirit reveals to us that the word of God is unique and that it has different layers of depth (1:03) to it, deep things that are hidden and only revealed if you ask God to open your mind up to (1:11) it.

There is some value to reading through the word of God, cover to cover, front to back. (1:18) You become familiar with the stories and with the characters in it, (1:22) but you don't get a deep sense of his word, the deeper teachings. If you really want to understand (1:33) the word of God and seek out understanding and knowledge and wisdom from his word, (1:40) it has to be done prayerfully and with great effort of study.

As an example, if you want to discover (1:51) the riches of gold, you just don't walk through the park casually looking along the ground for (1:57) something shiny and expect to hit the mother load. No, you got to learn about your subject (2:04) matter. You should consult with those who have wisdom and have had success at finding gold.

(2:11) It would also be helpful to study all of the resources available to you, (2:17) like reading books about gold and how to mine for it, consulting geological surveys and various maps (2:24) and know what tools to use. You have to plan for it and work hard for it. Then maybe you might (2:34) find your treasure.

That's how it is with reading and studying the word of God. (2:41) We should always consult our wise father in heaven and ask him to open our eyes that we may see (2:49) wonderful things in his law. This morning we examined one of the most basic learning principles (2:56) in the Bible.

We looked at the if then statements which illustrate the core idea of cause and (3:05) effect. As all responsible parents do, this is one of the ways we guide and teach our children. (3:13) We use this method in order to get them to think about what they are doing and to understand (3:20) there are consequences for their actions.

We saw that our father in heaven uses this method (3:27) throughout the Bible. As an example, early on in the Garden of Eden, God gave Adam the command, (3:36) do not eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, (3:41) for in that day you eat of it, you shall surely die. He told him, for that day you eat of it, (3:50) you will die.

That's the effect of the cause of eating. The cause, eating of the fruit, (3:58) and the effect is death. This is also repeated in Ezekiel 18.4, where Ezekiel says, the soul (4:07) who sins will die.

Again, the cause is the soul who sins. The effect is death. Very simple to (4:17) understand.

So God, through both Kings David and Solomon, who were inspired by Holy Spirit, (4:26) wrote valuable instructions for their children, and by extension, were writing us valuable (4:33) instructions as well. When Solomon gave instruction by saying, my son, heed my instructions, (4:42) he was not only instructing his son Rehoboam, but every man, woman, and child who reads those words. (4:51) And not only was Solomon the one instructing, God himself was actually instructing us (4:59) through Solomon.

Let's look at some of those instructions that we can apply to our lives (5:07) to make us better children of God. First, we'll look at God's, through King David's, advice to (5:14) people. Open your Bibles to Psalm 119.

We're going to look at verses 9 through 16. (5:26) We'll read it through, and then we'll examine it verse by verse. Now, this is what's called an (5:32) acrostic poem.

It's a very thoughtful poem in that each verse line starts with a specific letter (5:43) of the Hebrew alphabet. Like, if you'll notice in your Psalms 119, it'll start out saying Aleph, (5:54) and then next is Beoth, and then so on and so forth, all the way down through their alphabet. (6:02) But we're going to look at what looks like Beth.

But I remember Dan Collier instructing us in (6:08) Hebrew, and he said, when you say that word, you got to say it like a southerner. You got to say (6:13) Beth. It's like a two-syllable word of what normally would be a one-syllable word.

(6:22) Okay, verse 9. How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to your word. (6:32) I seek you with all my heart. Do not let me stray from your commands.

(6:36) I have hidden your word in my heart, but I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O Lord, (6:43) teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

(6:49) I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your (6:56) precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees.

I will not neglect your word. (7:04) But let's look at verse 9. How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your (7:14) word. That phrase, and that stanza, young man, is from the Hebrew word naar, which can mean both (7:25) boy or girl.

So this is an instructional song for boys and girls. And the his way (7:41) is from the Hebrew word orach, which is a well-worn path or a rut. And then in the definition it gives (7:52) an example like the path of a camel caravan mindlessly following the path.

So you can picture (8:01) in your mind, you know, a long string of camels and the camel jockey is just sitting on the camels (8:08) and the camels knowing the way to go. They don't even have to think about it. They don't need to (8:13) be whipped to keep them on track because there's a well-worn path that they follow.

And so (8:22) it is like for us, the idea here is that it can guard us from getting into the rut of bad habits. (8:37) And conversely, if we find ourselves in a sinful rut that we mindlessly do over and over again, (8:46) it tells us how to be cleansed to get out of that rut and change our course. David answers that and (8:55) he says in verse 9, by keeping it according to your word.

So the answer is always getting back (9:04) to the word of God for course correction. If you see yourself straying, if you find yourself (9:12) in a bad habit, whether it's cussing or smoking or whatever it is you're doing (9:18) that you've allowed yourself to just get in this rut and you can't get out, (9:24) go back to the word of God. It'll purify your hearts.

It'll get you out of that rut. (9:33) David answers that for us and the Hebrew word for keeping it is the Hebrew word shamar. (9:43) By keeping it according to your word.

Shamar, your word. That's what that would be. And that's (9:51) to guard, to protect, or to put a hedge around.

I wish Roger was here. I could tell him that when (9:58) he gives the closing prayer and he says to put a hedge around the sick so the devil won't get (10:04) to him. He can say, Lord put a shamar around the sick.

That's what that word is. To put a hedge (10:11) around, to protect and guard. And so that's what God wants us to do with his word.

To guard it with (10:23) the word. Guards our heart and guards the word in our heart. And the Jewish version of the Bible, (10:34) the tree of life version, has it by guarding it according to your word.

So the word of God (10:42) does two things here. It can keep us in God's favor by being obedient to the word and following (10:48) it. And then it can put us back into God's grace by following it if we had gotten into a bad rut.

(10:58) Our attitude should be that we guard, protect, and put a hedge around the word of God in our (11:05) hearts. That's what keeps our way pure and clean. God's word in us.

That's what saved us. (11:14) We heard the word of God, repented from our unbelief by believing God's word, and changed (11:20) the way we live. It takes lots of effort to know God's word and to live according to it.

(11:29) And so we shouldn't throw it all away by slipping into sinful habits. When reading or hearing God's (11:37) word, the spirit convicts our heart of sin, and we repent. We think differently afterwards from (11:45) what we've read or heard, and we change for the better.

We make an effort to get off that course (11:52) we were on. We get off that path. We get out of that rut.

We do what God says to do by following (12:02) his word. You gotta make the choice. I gotta stop this.

I gotta follow God's word. (12:09) That's what gets you out of the rut. James, the brother of our Lord, says we must be effectual (12:17) doers of the word, and that suggests effort on our part.

Isn't your soul worth it? (12:27) If we want to enjoy the peace that only God can give us, we must repent of our old shameful ways. (12:35) Those separated us from God. We should follow God's instruction in Jeremiah 6. If we find (12:43) ourselves at that crossroad in the rut where suddenly we realize we gotta get out of this rut, (12:52) Jeremiah says, this is what the Lord says.

Stand at the crossroads and look. (12:58) Ask for the ancient paths. Ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest (13:06) for your souls.

Just like King David, the apostle Paul instructed Timothy to guard the word that was (13:15) in him. In 2 Timothy 1.13-14, Paul writes, what you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound (13:25) teaching with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you.

(13:35) Guard it with the help of Holy Spirit who lives in us. You know what that says? (13:43) We've got an advantage over the people from the Old Testament, and guess what that is? (13:49) We've got Holy Spirit in our hearts to help us to do this. God's there to help us get out of ruts.

(13:59) God's there to help us protect the precious deposit of his word in our hearts. (14:07) Let's look at the next verse, verse 10. I seek you with all my heart.

Do not let me stray (14:14) from your commands. You can say that David was all in for his God. He was a true believer (14:24) in our Heavenly Father.

In David's mind, his belief is reality, and isn't that what we should think? (14:33) That what we believe, this is real. It's not just nice stories made up to guide our lives. (14:41) This is real.

I see it as real. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here. I'd be out fishing, or better (14:47) yet, being in my lazy boy, being a bum.

It takes effort to come to church and be with the saints (14:56) and study the word. God wants us to do this. This is our moral booster shot to get us through the (15:06) week so that we can survive all the assault that Satan puts on us.

So what David chooses to do (15:23) is guided by his knowledge of our Father in Heaven's will, and this should be our attitude (15:31) as well. David's desire was to be true to his God. I seek you with all my heart.

Doesn't Christ (15:39) say, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you? God wants us to be seekers. Christ (15:48) wants his people to be seekers. We've got to diligently pursue God's

word and make it (16:00) absolutely real in our lives.

It's what we fill up on. It is like the bread of life. Fill up on it.

(16:12) But being a human, our attention can be drawn away from God. Our interests can become divided (16:20) by the cares of life. Oftentimes, that's when we sin, when our guard is down and our focus is not (16:29) on God.

We read in verse 176 of this psalm, and that's a long psalm, Psalm 119, which says, (16:40) I have gone astray like lost sheep. Seek your servant. So even though David right here (16:48) is at the zenith of his praising God for his word and exclaiming his devotion to God, (16:57) the reality is even the most devoted follower like David needs to be reeled in occasionally.

(17:07) I have gone astray like sheep. Find me, Father. Bring me back to the fold.

(17:20) And if we're honest with ourselves, can't we say the same thing? Peter says it for us in 1 Peter (17:26) 225. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and overseer (17:36) of your souls. We must be diligent in guarding the treasure we've been entrusted with.

And we (17:46) gotta be diligent seekers to not be satisfied with a, I don't want to say superficial knowledge, (17:55) but we don't want an infant's knowledge of God. We want to dig deep and get to know our God. (18:03) That's how we mature as Christians.

If we find we are drifting away from our Lord, (18:16) we've got to make immediate force corrections in our lives to get right with God. (18:24) Verse 11, I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (18:32) David hid God's word in his heart, not to be selfish and not share it with others, (18:40) but as to cherish it.

God's word is treasure and to intimately know and be familiar with it, (18:50) to value it as hidden treasure, hidden in our hearts so that it can never be taken away from (18:58) us. The heart in the old days was thought to be the center of thought rather than the brain. (19:07) And to hide God's word in his heart meant that it was there at the ready to recite back to those (19:14) who needed to hear it.

The main purpose for hiding it in his heart was that it would always (19:21) be there, something he could dish out, pull out whenever he needed it and to always reflect on. (19:31) You know, think about it. There's times we don't have a Bible at the ready.

You're in the doctor (19:37) office and you're thinking about the Lord and you're thinking, man, I'd like to read something (19:42) before I go in and maybe get some bad news. But if you've got it hidden in your heart, you can sit (19:48) there and dwell upon it, meditate on it and recite things back to yourself, getting your mind in (19:57) tune with God. So there's value hiding that word in the heart.

Verse 12, (20:12) Praise be to you, O Lord, teach me your decrees. Spiritually and emotionally, David bursts out into (20:20) praise here to God for sharing his very thoughts in the form of his law and his history. And they (20:28) are marvelous and immense and need to be understood when we read them.

And David asked the Lord (20:39) that the Lord teaches him. He understands that you just don't get it the first read through. (20:47) How can you? How can you understand the mind of God just with casual reading? David is really (20:55) seeking the Lord here.

Teach me your decrees. You know, he's at the feet of the master. Teach me.

(21:04) That should be our attitude, too. This is our example, and we need to petition God for the (21:14) ability to understand his words. How long did it take for us to finally kind of get grace down, (21:22) Scott? Not to pick on you, but it's a picking on us as the Lord's church.

(21:30) Baptists sure have that down. Good for them. That's great.

(21:36) But it took a lot of effort and petitioning God to get it, to finally get it. (21:46) One of my own personal treasures. I often reflect on Leviticus 17:11 that talks about the blood (21:56) and why that was so important.

You know, the shedding of blood. In my early Christianity, (22:04) I try to understand it, and it was like bullets bouncing off of Superman's chest. (22:10) I just didn't get it when I was a young Christian.

But the more I looked, the more I dug, (22:17) and pretty soon the God of the Bible turned on the light bulb in my brain, and it's like, (22:23) I get it now. And now it's one of my favorite go-to verses at the Lord's table. (22:33) That blood is precious, and it represents Christ's blood, who by virtue of the perfect life he lived (22:42) made him the perfect sacrifice.

Let's look at verse 13. With my lips, I recount all the laws (22:52) that come from your mouth. The product of making the effort to hide God's Word in his heart (23:00) was that he could defend the way of God publicly and privately.

He could use it for teaching (23:08) others the Word of God. David was so familiar with it, he could recite the law back to those (23:16) who needed to hear it, and to those who enjoyed hearing God's Word for pleasure. (23:22) David memorized God's laws, and being a musician, he incorporated it into the very psalms that he (23:30) wrote.

And much of what he wrote became Word of God, because he was controlled by Holy Spirit. (23:41) So he would use his harp and sing the psalms that he wrote. With his lips, he recounted.

(23:52) That also means that he was able to recite them from memory. There's value to that. (24:02) So treasure God's Word.

Hide it in your heart so that you can share it with others. You don't (24:08) always have your Bible with you. Doesn't it make sense to know God's Word so you can tell others? (24:17) Verse 14.

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. (24:26) It made David happy to know that he followed God's laws and statutes. God was pleased with him, (24:34) and that he could go about his day knowing that what he was doing was right.

He could be joyful (24:42) knowing that he was safe and at peace in God, his mighty rock. We should rejoice over the Word too. (24:54) Verse 15.

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. Do you meditate on God's Word? (25:03) I

mean, do you really meditate on it? I got to admit, this is something I've never set out to do. (25:13) I've never woke up in the morning with the intent to meditate on anything.

I've never said to my (25:21) wife, honey, today I think I'm going to meditate on God's Word. Leave me alone for a while. (25:28) Verse 16.

Do you have to contort your body in any strange way like yoga people do when they're (25:36) meditating on whatever it is they meditate on? Put your legs folded in some lotus position? (25:46) Is that what God wants you to do? I think the closest I've ever come to actually meditating (25:54) is just to think about God's Word. That I do often. If that's meditating, then I guess I do it.

(26:02) But I don't do anything fancy with my body. I don't chant any strange words to warm me up before I do. (26:15) Usually during my personal study of God's Word, I'll try to figure things out and how they relate.

(26:21) So I do hash things over in my mind. If that's what meditating is, I guess I do it. (26:31) The Hebrew word for meditate is syriac.

It means to ponder and converse with oneself. (26:41) To muse, pray, speak, talk. Well, I guess with that definition, I do meditate.

(26:49) But usually when I meditate, it's through spontaneity as I study. (26:57) But I've never really set out to sit down and I'm going to meditate. Maybe I should.

(27:06) I don't know. (27:11) But to meditate and concentrate on God's Word is something that David did do. Therefore, (27:20) there's our example.

We should do it. And whatever word you want to use, (27:27) think about God's Word. Look at some of the definitions.

Language, (27:34) muse, pray, speak, talk, converse with yourself. That's meditation. (27:45) In Psalm 1, David tells us how often we should meditate on God's Word.

In Psalm 1, verse 2, (27:54) he says, But his delight is in Yahweh's law, and on his law he meditates day and night. (28:05) By his words, here we can deduce that David set times in which he meditated (28:13) and give great effort to thinking about God's ways. (28:19) Remember, God is speaking through David.

David's God's anointed. He's the king. He was anointed (28:27) to be king.

And he's also a prophet. And so God is telling us, meditate on me. Do it day and night.

(28:40) This morning, I had mentioned how parents should be teaching their children and how it should be (28:46) something that's done throughout the day. When you lie down, when you get up, (28:53) when you walk along the road, write it on the door frames of your houses and on your gates, (28:58) tie them as symbols on your hands, bind them on your foreheads. In other words, (29:03) engulf yourself with the Word of God.

And here, meditate on it. Think about it. Make it yours.

(29:15) Verse 16, I delight in your decrees. I will not neglect your word. Do you delight in God's

word? (29:27) I sure do.

Whether I'm talking with friends or family, I get excited about talking about (29:33) the Word of God. I love talking about different scriptures, sharing ideas, (29:40) things that I've discovered, enjoying when people share with me things they've discovered in God's (29:47) word. There's great satisfaction in having a really good personal study session.

When I finish (29:57) a sermon, man, am I happy. Not just that the burden is over, but it's like, oh, I accomplished (30:04) something for the Lord. Well, that's how David was.

He was excited about God's word and following it. (30:18) David was an effectual doer of the word. But keep in mind, David had his flaws, (30:26) and yet God considered him faithful.

Why? Because when David did a gut check, (30:35) an introspective of his life, and when he found that he was outside of the law in a rut, in an (30:44) auroch, he repented and he went back to the word and he prayed to God and got right with God. (30:54) And that made him faithful. He saw the error of his way, admitted it, and got right with God.

(31:06) So David is such a great example to us. And so is Solomon. We're going to be talking about Solomon (31:13) the next time I'm scheduled to speak in, what is it, four weeks or so.

So this evening, I'll bring (31:22) this lesson to a conclusion, but there will be a part three of it, a fatherly instruction, (31:28) and we will examine some of Solomon's teachings and we'll look at the fundamental motivator (31:37) for the if-then statements, and that is fear, how fear plays into the believer's life and what it (31:47) turns into. So at this time, I offer the invitation. So come forward if you need the prayers of the (31:55) saints.