

Session 9: Psalm 119:153-168

- **Have you ever been so distracted that you forgot to pay attention to where you were going?** (Texting while walking, changing the radio while driving, etc.)
- **How was that distraction dangerous for you? How was it dangerous to those around you?**
- With texting and many other distractions we deal with on a regular bases, we can often lose sight of where we're heading. At times, it can make for a funny YouTube video, but it can also put our lives at risk as well as those of others if we aren't disciplined about looking up. As we'll see in our session today, that's true of our spiritual lives as well. We have to be disciplined about lifting our perspective and fixing our eyes on Christ.

READ 153-168

v₁₅₃ Consider my affliction and deliver me, for I do not forget Your laws.

v₁₅₄ Plead my cause and redeem me; Revive me according to Your Word.

v₁₅₅ Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek Your statutes.

- v 156 Great are Your tender mercies, O Lord; Revive me according to Your judgements.
- v 157 Many are my persecutors and my enemies, yet I do not turn from Your testimonies.
- v 158 I see the treacherous, and am disgusted, Because they do not keep Your Word.
- v 159 Consider how I love Your precepts; Revive me, O Lord according to Your lovingkindness.
- v 160 The entirety of Your Word is truth, and every one of Your judgments endures forever.
- v 161 Princes persecute me without cause. But my heart stands in awe of Your Word.
- v 162 I rejoice at Your Word As one who finds great treasure.
- v 163 I hate and abhor lying, but I love Your law.
- v 164 Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments.
- v 165 Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.
- v 166 Lord, I hope for Your salvation, and I do Your commandments.
- v 167 My soul keeps Your testimonies, And I love them exceedingly.
- v 168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies, For all my ways are before You.

SHOW VIDEO

DISCUSS

- The section of Psalm 119 that we'll be studying is one where David feels surrounded by those who hate God and His ways. Despite the disobedience of the wicked, everywhere he looks it seems as though they continue to flourish and David begins to wonder where God is in all of it. **[Who has verses 153-160.?)**
- **How does David describe his circumstances?** (Affliction, persecuted, facing adversaries, etc.) **How does he describe himself?** (Consistent, obedient, righteous, etc.)
- In other words, David has remained committed to God's Word and strives for obedience, yet he looks around and finds his enemies succeeding in their plots against him, which causes him to cry out to God.
- **In what ways can you relate to his sentiment? What are some ways you are prone to similar discouragement? What causes you to wonder where God is at work?**
- **How do you tend to react during those times? Where do you turn for hope and encouragement?**

DISCUSS

- Our tendency many times is to numb the feelings through relationships or substances. Other times, we simply commit to the "moral betterment." Matt described, attempting to improve our performance. But neither is a sustainable solution.
- **Where does Matt say we find true encouragement in times of doubt?** (By getting our eyes off of ourselves and on the King of Glory.) **[Who has verses 161-168?]**
- **What concept does Matt say these verses introduce?** (Awe.)
- **How does he define "awe"?** (Awe is the feeling of worship that occurs when you feel small in the presence of something that feels big.)

GO DEEPER

Learn more about growing in an awe of God from the following passages.

Deut. 29;29; Ps. 46;10; Prov. 25:2; Is. 6:1-7

In addition to feeling small, what does Isaiah 6:1-7 add as part of the experience of encountering God? (A deep awareness of our own sinfulness in contrast to God's holiness)

What would it look like practically for you to put Psalm 46:10 into practice?

While we cannot know everything about God, what are we to do with what He has revealed of Himself? (We are to seek it out and organize our lives in obedience to it.)

DISCUSS

How have you experienced awe in your own life? (seeing the Grand Canyon, swimming the ocean, staring at the stars, witnessing the birth of a child, etc.)

Despite his discouraging surroundings, David finds awe in the Word of God (v. 161). As he studies and reads, he is exposed to the glory of God. Throughout this study, we've said multiple times that the true treasure of our faith is that we can get God. He is the primary source of our awe and He transcends our circumstances.

How have you experienced awe in your spiritual life? In what ways did it affect you?

What about God inspires you to worship Him?

Throughout Psalm 119, David declares his love for scripture because of how it leads him to an awe-inspired worship of God. There is an intimacy with God through His Word. When the New Testament introduces us to Jesus, He heightens that intimacy by teaching that God is not only the Lord of those who believe, but he is also their Father. **[Who has Romans 8:15-17?]**

What spirit does this passage say we have received in Christ? ("The Spirit of adoption")

According to verse 15, if the end result of the spirit of slavery is fear, what is the end result of the "Spirit of adoption"? (Sonship to our Father)

- **How did Matt's explanation of "Abba" change any views you previously had about the term?**
- **Bearing in mind that you are a child of strong and caring Father through faith in Jesus Christ, how should that truth change your response to difficult times of life? How should God's protective care encourage a greater boldness within you?**
- As we've seen throughout this study, David delights in the Word of God, but not merely as an end in and of itself. He delights in God's Word because it leads him into a deeper relationship with his Lord by displaying the character of God and teaching how to live in obedience to Him.
- Like Matt said, we have to learn how to stir up our affections for Jesus. **While it begins with God's Word, what else stirs your affections for Jesus? What causes your perspective to lift so that you see and savor your Father?**
- **What distracts you from focusing on Christ?**
- **As you consider your answer to these questions, has the Holy Spirit convicted you of any ways that you need to be more intentional about pursuing the things that deepen your love for Christ? What changes will you make as a result of this session?**

LAST WORD

- One of the constant temptations in our walk with Christ is to focus on our performance and lose sight of the righteousness we have been given through the death and resurrection of Jesus, Whatever doubts or fears we face cannot be defeated through our own efforts. They fade only when we see the beauty of our Savior.
- God's Word is a means to that end. It leads us to Jesus and helps us to walk in a deeper relationship with Him. Let scripture lift your gaze. As you seek to obey God's Word, allow it to fix your vision on Christ who is your righteousness by faith.

LIVE IT OUT

Pray: Each day this week, ask God to lift your perspective to fix your eyes on Christ rather than your own performance.

Detox: Make time this week to spend at least one hour in nature to disconnect from the busyness and distraction of life.

LIVE IT OUT

- **Encourage:** Reach out to someone you know who feels discouraged because of their performance and help them to focus on righteousness they receive through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Reflect:** Spend some time this week reflecting on what God has you from through his Son, Jesus Christ and let that lead you into a greater awe of your Savior.
- **Surrender:** If the Holy Spirit has convicted you of any unhealthy fear that remains in you, be intentional about surrendering that to God and asking Him to help you embrace His Spirit of adoption.

TABLE TALK

- **How have you experienced awe in your own life?** (seeing the Grand Canyon, swimming the ocean, staring at the stars, witnessing the birth of a child, etc.)

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- **What about God inspires you to worship Him?**

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