

# The Word of God Brings Blessing I

*Psalms*

By Mike Stewart

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**Heritage Primitive Baptist Church**  
390 Johns Road Northwest  
Huntsville, Alabama 35806

**Website:** [www.heritagepbc.org](http://www.heritagepbc.org)  
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On this first day of the new year, we're going to start looking at Psalm 119. As you know, the Psalms are hymns, prayers, and laments written by more than David; while he records most of the Psalms, they are written by different psalmists. Often we speak of Psalm 119 as composed by David, and technically we don't know so if I say David through this series, you'll know that I'm not sure, but often it is ascribed to David.

Psalms are meant by God to be sung. They are hymns. They're the ancient songbook of Israel. If you were listening carefully, most every song we sung this morning was either a direct psalm or it was composed from one of the psalms. As we studied Colossians, we learned in verse 16 of chapter 3, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody or singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." So the Psalms are meant to be sung and we sing them on occasion and we read them and we need to study them.

Well, Psalm 119 is poetry, and many commentators have pointed out that it is organized according to the structure of 22 strophes. A strophe, or if you prefer, a stanza in poetry is several verses that comprise a distinct unit. You will notice the 22 strophes or stanzas each have eight verses apiece, and all begin with the Hebrew letter consecutively in sequence, which makes this an acrostic poet or poem or psalm. The first Hebrew letter is Aleph, and then you'll see each of the eight strophes or eight verses in a strophe, 22 in all, begin with each Hebrew letter consecutively. And so as we look now at this psalm, we want to look at the first benefit of the Word of God, each strophe emphasizing some particular benefit of God's Word. Our title this morning is, "The Word of God Brings Blessing." It brings blessing.

Verse 1,

1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.  
2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

Well, first of all, what does the word blessed mean? If you want to be blessed or live the blessed life or to be blessed by the Word of God, what does that mean? Well, the word translated could mean, does mean happy. Happy is the man. Happy are the undefiled. Happy are those that keep. So the Word of God brings happiness. No, not the happiness that we think about in the world, but the happiness of the soul. The only way the soul can find its happiness is through the Word of God. It was the queen of Sheba in 1 Kings 10, verse 8, when she had to hear of the wisdom of Solomon personally, she had heard about it from others, and she traveled a great distance to hear of the wisdom of Solomon. She heard and asked him hard questions for which he answered every one. She saw his attendants, the food on the table, the ascent to the house of God, and she had no spirit left in her. Modern translation is, it took her breath away and she says in verse 8, "Happy are the men, happy are thy servants, which attend to you continually and that hear your wisdom." It's used there as an interjection when it's plural. Oh, how happy are your servants. Oh, how happy are the men.

Jesus said in the gospels, "The Queen of Sheba shall rise up in judgment against this generation and condemn it." Why? "For she traveled from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold, beloved, a greater than Solomon is here." I wonder if that queen today would rise up in judgment against not only this generation, but the culture of Christianity, because she would travel from the uttermost parts of the earth just to hear the wisdom of Solomon and yet today we have a greater than Solomon in the Word of Christ.

Blessed are the undefiled. It's this blessedness, this happiness that comes through the Word of God so as we take a look at this this morning, how does the Word of God bring happiness? Well, first of all, the psalmist will tell us is that it keeps us undefiled. The Word of God is going to keep us undefiled. Well, we first have to understand what that means. The word undefiled is a word that's translated to mean whole, complete, sound. It's a word that means totality. So blessed are the undefiled, blessed are the whole, blessed are the sound. It's like a person that has sound health. When your health is sound, when you get a sound bill of health, the whole person is healthy emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Well, this word is first translated 44 times in the Old Testament as "without blemish"; six times in the book of Numbers, "without spot." We see this word first mentioned in the paschal lamb of Exodus chapter 12. Each household was to have a lamb the night before they were to leave Egypt, the Passover. The lamb was to be a male of the first year. This lamb was to be without spot. Without spot. In Numbers 28, they were to day by day offer burnt offerings, a lamb, a male of the first year, that was without spot. So we have "without blemish, without spot" and, of course, we know the Paschal Lamb of Exodus 12 and the daily sacrifices of the burnt offerings were typical of the Lamb of John 1:29, when John declared, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Or Revelation 13, the Lamb of God that was slain before the foundation of the world. Peter in 1 Peter chapter 1 will take those two expressions and apply them to Jesus Christ when he says in 1 Peter 1:17, "For as much as you know, you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition of

your fathers, but with..." So, you were redeemed, but not like this, not using silver and gold, that's not the way of redemption. You have been redeemed from the tradition, the vain tradition of your fathers, in the Jewish tradition, that would be from the law, from self-seeking self-righteousness, which was handed down generation after generation by the Jews. They were redeemed. You have been redeemed from a vain futile lifestyle, passed on generation to generation. What are we redeemed with but with the precious blood of Christ as the Lamb without spot and without blemish.

"Without blemish," Jamieson, Faussett, Brown would point out that this could be referring to intrinsically. There is no blemish within Christ. No sin. He's whole. He's sound. He's perfect with regard to purity. "Without spot" could be referring to nothing without him infected him. There was no temptation, there was no sin outside of him that made him impure. He's without spot. He's without blemish. He is holy and completely pure. And what does Peter say? "As of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these times for you, Who by him do believe in God," that's you believe in God by means of Jesus Christ, who "raised him up from the dead," to what end? "That your faith and your hope might be in God."

So based on that, the first thing we conclude about being undefiled, being whole, being sound, is that all those who have faith in Jesus Christ are sound, are whole, are complete by virtue of the fact that you're united to the purity of Christ, to the soundness of Christ, to the wholeness of Christ, and you're holy and completely redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. But there's another direction this goes as concerns our practical daily lives. Yes, we're redeemed. Yes, we're justified. Yes, we've been united to the blood of the Lamb or to the purity of Christ and so we are whole in that sense before God. He sees us as whole, complete in Christ but notice what the undefiled are doing to bring this blessing. Blessed are the undefiled, the whole, those that trust in the paschal lamb that was coming and now he has come, who walk in the law of the Lord. The undefiled, those that are trusting in Christ, those that trust in God, they are walking in the law of the Lord.

Now the word walk is a metaphor that expresses what? Routine daily activity. It also expresses purpose, doesn't it? Every time you walk, there's some purpose or destination you're moving toward. Every time I walk to the kitchen, my destination, my purpose is to eat. You walk to the bedroom, likely you're going to go to sleep. You walk to the family room, perhaps you're going to watch the news. You walk to the car, you're going to get into the car to go to work, to school, to shop, to an activity or an event. Walking is a metaphor that expresses routinely, daily activity, but it also expresses what? Destination. We are walking. So whether you're walking north, south, east, or west, you're walking toward a destination. What is the destination the psalmist is walking toward? Blessing or happiness. The reality is, we are all seeking to walk toward the destination of fulfillment, the destination of happiness. Every New Year's resolution is aiming toward that end, is it not? Regardless of what the resolution is, you want to turn over a new leaf, you want some new direction in life, and that new direction, to some degree, you hope, you think, will bring you some level of increased fulfillment and so you set down the resolution and

you begin to walk in that direction. All your plans, your thoughts, you're aiming toward fulfillment of that resolution.

Well, how is it that the undefiled are happy by means of walking in the law of the Lord? What's the means of that? Well, the law is much broader than the Ten Commandments. It refers to instruction or training. So all of the Old Testament, the psalmist referring to here, is the law of the Lord. It is the instruction of the Lord and that instruction is what brings us happiness of the soul. Now think about the word instruction and what that entails. When you're instructed, what does that mean? Well, it means teaching, hearing, reading, thinking, studying and then applying. So the undefiled in the way who are seeking this happiness in the law of the Lord are being instructed out of that law. And through that instruction what are they doing? They're reading, walking, they're thinking, they're studying, they're meditating and they're making application because they're keeping his testimonies in verse 2. Let's think about that for a moment and let's see where now our faith meets the pavement or the rubber meets the road.

So if you're undefiled in the way, we've noted that you are trusting in Jesus Christ. You believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You trust in him for your salvation. You trust in him for everything he is. Now if you're trusting in Jesus Christ, the Paschal Lamb, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, you put your hope in him, you also then believe in his Word. The fact that you believe on Jesus Christ came through the Word of God. It came through the instruction of God. It came through his revelation. Now I suppose that if I were to ask every person in the room this morning, save except maybe one or two critics that may be here that I'm not aware of, I'm going to say that all of you would say, I believe the Word of God is true, without exception. Now, there may be a skeptic here, but 99.9% in this room are going to say, I believe the Word of God is true. Furthermore, you're going to say, I believe it's completely true. I don't believe there's any error there, notwithstanding the textual variance. I believe what we have is the Word of God. It is the law of God. It's the instruction of God and I bank my hope on it. I believe in it. If you're then undefiled in the way, which means you trust in Jesus, if you then believe his Word, which means you believe this passage, if you believe the Word of God, you believe verse 1, then you believe that if you walk in the Lord, you will be happy.

Now let's see if your faith is hitting the pavement. How much do you read God's Word? How much do you think about it? How much do you study it? And how much do you apply it? Now that's your answer, not mine, and I'll have to ask myself the same questions. You see, real faith is not just mental assent. "I believe there's a devil. I believe there's a God. I believe there's a heaven. I believe there's a hell. I believe the Word of God is true." See, if you believe it, if you really, really trust it, then you will walk in the law of the Lord believing this will bring me the fulfillment that I'm after.

Blessed are the undefiled in the way. Who are they? Who are the undefiled? Well, yes, the believer, but who are they on a more personal level? It's all those who are walking in the law of the Lord. Are you walking in the law of God? Are you walking in the revelation of God? Are you walking in the instruction of God? Is the Word of God treasured? Is the Word of God embraced? Is the Word of God something you make part

of your thinking in your life? Is the Word of God dwelling in you richly? Well, that'll tell you whether you believe, really, that happy are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord or it's just something you give mental assent to. "Yeah, I believe that, but I really don't believe it because I'm not doing it," right?

Now, if you've wondered like I have, how could that possibly bring happiness? I never thought of reading a law book as to any measure of happiness. It's not the first thing that would come to my mind, and I'm going to guess it's not the first thing to come to your mind. How is it that he can say blessed are the undefiled in the way who walk in the law of the Lord? Well in Hebrew poetry, it's not like English poetry. English poetry will use the rhyme of words and sounds to place emphasis on a word, to maybe let that stick or ring in your mind. In Hebrew poetry, you don't rhyme words, you rhyme ideas. It's called parallelism. So listen to the rhyme, not of a word, but of an idea. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed," here's the rhyme, "are they that keep his testimonies, who seek him with the whole heart." All right, a couple of observations here and then a question. 1. We are not seeking the law. We're not seeking the Bible and we are not seeking Scripture as an end in itself. If you do that, two things are going to happen, you're going to be a legalist, or you're going to go into licentiousness because the Bible as an end in itself cannot bring happiness. It cannot and it will not. 2. We are seeking God as the blessing. We're seeking God as the happiness by means of revelation.

Notice the pair now, who walk in the law of the Lord, who seek him by that law, by that instruction, with a whole heart. If you really believe that it'll bring you happiness, you're seeking the God of the revelation by means of what he's revealed. The law is a revelation of God and so we're not going to rules and precepts and statutes and judgments, all the words that the psalmist will use to express the idea of the Word of God, the instruction of God. We're not going there just to find that. We're going to find God, and when we find him with a whole heart, then what flows out of that relationship is the keeping of testimonies and precepts, etc., etc. If we get that backwards, It's going to leave us just as empty in our walk as the day we started.

So we are seeking God for our happiness. He's the only one that can make the soul happy, happy in him, or can satisfy the soul as you just sang because you believe that, right? "Until my soul is satisfied, I will wait for thee," and that comes right out of the Psalms. So God is the great Satisfier of the soul. He makes happy the soul and therefore, the blessed are seeking him for what? Happiness, the kind that he gives, and we're seeking that where? In the law of the Lord, which means you're doing what in 2024? Well, you're walking, reading, thinking, studying, meditating, applying in your marriage, in your life, in your singleness, in your family, and in church life. That's why the Word of God must be center to everything we do as a church. Why? Because what are you seeking? Happiness. Isn't that amazing? It's not in the law, it's in the Christ of the law, and we seek him.

Now the third observation is in the form of a question. What does it mean to seek him with a whole heart? I don't know about you, but every time I come to that expression in

the Bible, I just automatically say to myself, whatever it is, it's probably not me. It just sounds so whole, doesn't it? So perfect, so complete, sound. See, this parallel is answering also the question of the word undefiled. Blessed are the whole because they're wholly seeking God. Blessed are the sound or the complete because with a whole, complete heart, they're after God.

So the question is, what's the dividing line? If we were to say the opposite of a whole heart is a half heart, it's a divided heart, then where is the dividing line so I would know when I'm seeking him that way and when I'm not? Well, the dividing line is not at the center of the heart, it's at the level of what's going on outside of you and what's going on inside of you. Look at the dividing line in the Psalm, verse 2 itself, "Blessed are those that keep his testimonies." Where is that? Outside of you. "And those that seek him with the whole heart." Where is that? Inside of you. So the dividing line is not taking a heart. You can picture a heart, we know the heart in the Bible is not the organ that pumps blood, it's the inner man. So the dividing line is not cutting a heart in two and you've got two equal parts. You know, I'm serving God, I love him, I'm seeking him, but sometimes I'm not doing so well. That's not what wholeheartedness means. The dividing line is between the testimonies you're doing outside and everything that's going on in the inside.

So let's look at a couple of places where we see this in Israel's history. Hosea, chapter 10, verse 1 and 2. God in the book of Deuteronomy continually told Israel, "Seek me with all your heart, all your soul. Love me with all your heart, all your soul. Serve me with all your heart, all your soul." And the history of Israel is one big witness to that failure and of course, we could look at ourselves and say, by nature, outside of Christ, we are in the same boat with Israel. And so now in the minor prophets, and in Isaiah and Jeremiah, the prophets are prophesying about the coming destruction to Jerusalem, and the prophets are warning them about this very issue of a wholehearted pursuit of God.

So in Hosea chapter 10 verse 1, this is what Hosea says, "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." Now, empty expresses the idea that it's empty because it had this luxurious fruit on it, but it's all been plucked off, not to the glory of God, the fruit has been used for self.

"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images." So as the fruit of Israel increased in prosperity, the idolatry increased with it. Goodly images, fruit unto their altars to the false gods.

What's the problem with Israel's hearts? Look at verse 2, "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images." Now what's the dividing line of the heart of Israel? It's not an internal division, it's an external-internal kind of division and this division is reflected in Hosea 1 when God told Hosea, "Go marry a harlot named Gomer and she's going to play the harlot with you." We don't know for sure if she was already a harlot or she became a harlot after she married Hosea, but we know that that's exactly what she did. She went after other lovers. Now she came back home and did what? With her mouth and with her bodily location, she

expressed much love for Hosea, but with her whole heart, see the connection, she sought after lovers.

So the outside of Gomer was saying and doing one thing with her bodily location with Hosea and with her words, "I love you," but inside her whole heart was seeking happiness in another man, or we should say, men. The divided heart of Israel is reflected by that reality and God is saying, "This is what Israel has done in playing the harlot towards me." So you see, the division is not inside of us. We have a struggle and so if you're having a struggle against sin, that's not an indication you're not seeking God with a whole heart, it's when the outside is saying one thing but the inside is completely going wholly after happiness and something else.

Ezekiel 33. Ezekiel was taken captive in the first deportment of Nebuchadnezzar when he went in to Israel and took captive a certain number of Jews. He left the temple in Jerusalem as it was. Ezekiel goes back and he receives a vision from the Lord in Babylon and he begins to prophesy by words and by signs. He did what would appear to be bizarre things to give symbolism to the people of God in captivity in Babylon. In Ezekiel 33, a man escapes from Jerusalem and comes back and tells Ezekiel the city is smitten. After 13 years, Nebuchadnezzar destroys the city, burns it to the ground. Upon this occasion, God is giving Ezekiel prophecy concerning Israel, and then says these words concerning Ezekiel's ministry we'll call it in Babylon. Ezekiel 33 and verse 30, "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking about you by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother," this is what they say, "Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD." In other words, let's go hear what Ezekiel has to say. Now Ezekiel taught the people, sometimes in public, but they would come to his house sometimes, it would tell us earlier in this prophecy of Ezekiel.

Now verse 31 tells us how they come, "they come unto thee as the people come, and they sit before you as my people sit," kind of like what you're doing. If I would represent Ezekiel, although they didn't do it in a building, this is what they looked like. They're doing, they did just exactly what you're doing now. "They come as the people of God come, they sit before thee as my people, and they hear your words," implied as my people, just like you're doing right now. Nobody was sleeping, I assume. They heard, which means they understood. Everybody was riveted on what he was saying, as much as I can tell, like you're doing right now. Now, your mind may be checked out, I don't know, but it looks to me like you're paying attention. I'm just gonna assume that. Now here's the problem, "they hear your words, but they will not do them." Why? Now here's a divided heart so we can understand what the psalmist is saying, "because with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Where's the dividing line? It's not in the heart. It's not a struggle inside. We all have that. None of us have a whole heart then, if that's the case. No, the dividing line is with the mouth and the entire, complete, sound heart is seeking happiness, seeking gain, seeking profit not in the God of the Bible, through revelations they had, but in what? Other lovers. Does that describe you this morning? You're here. You're listening. You're sitting as the people of God. I'm preaching as the person of God. I guess we could go there too, right? I'm not excluded

from this. And yet do we show much love with the place our body is now and with the words that we say, but our hearts are going after the game of this world?

Now, how then do the undefiled seek him with a whole heart? It's not that they are without sin. Clearly, this dividing line doesn't mean sinlessness or no sin. It means a heart that is after God. It's on a pathway and the psalmist uses the word what? He keeps using the word "way. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD." They're in a way with God. Their whole heart is seeking God in this blessing and their whole heart is on a pathway and that pathway includes all the struggle and all the times that we see sin in our lives but we repent and we pursue. I think that's clear so that we are important so that we don't come away with a false idea of what it means to have a whole heart toward God, and you feel guilt that you shouldn't feel. On the other hand, if we are completely going after covetousness and using our bodies and our words as if we show much love to God, then God is calling on us to repent, beloved. And why is he calling on your repentance? He's calling on you to find real, lasting happiness through what? The revelation of his Word. And what did God say he would do to overcome the covetous heart? He said, "I will circumcise their hearts." If the whole heart is given to covetousness, we need a whole new heart. There's nothing in that heart that's any good, that we can just work out and start pursuing God. We need a whole heart. We need a new heart. We need a new birth. And the prophecy of Deuteronomy 30 says, "I will do that for them so that they will," what? "Love me with all their heart." Now we know what that means now. It doesn't mean you're not sinning anymore. It means now you see something, you know something that is far better than all the lovers of the world that we've all pursued.

Jeremiah 24:7. The prophecy of Jeremiah before they were taken captive in Babylon, God gives them the solution he's going to give for spiritual Israel. He would say this, "I will give them an heart to know me," I will be their God, "and they shall be my people." What does it mean for God to be your God and for you to be his people? "For," here's the answer, "they will seek me and find me, and they will return when they seek me with their whole heart." God overcomes spiritual Israel's covetousness, which is the shattering of the entire law. How does he overcome that? Revelation. He engrafts the Word in your soul, and then he brings the Word outside of you and the two together bring what? A wholeness by means of the revelation that puts us seeking God on the pathway of happiness because now we have a heart that can know him by the revelation that he's given us.

So in 2024, if you're resolved to be happy, you must be resolved to make this book the focus of your life and you do want to be happy because we're wired that way, and now God is revealing to us so graciously again and again that the happy are the undefiled who walk in the law of the Lord. The happy are those that keep his testimonies. That's on the outside. Why? Because the happy are seeking him on the inside with a whole heart and their whole soul. They are using revelation to discover who God is, what he's about, and then to discover the will of God or the testimonies of God because both of those together are the whole law. What? Love God and then love your neighbor as yourself. May we



apply the Word in 2024 in such a way that we are seeking this blessedness by the revelation of God that he's given us through the Word.

Number 2 begins in verse 3.

3They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

Now I think these have a relationship because once we're seeking God with a whole heart, we're on the pathway of seeking him with the heart and keeping his testimonies, the result of that is that they also do no iniquity. They what? Walk in his ways. Now what does that mean? Now again, we look at that and say, okay, that's what it means to have a whole heart, again, that does not include me. But the word "do" expresses practice and a commitment to something. If you read Psalm 119, you know that the psalmist struggles with sin, so he would be excluding himself. So what does he mean when you say "they do know iniquity, they do know sin"? He means they don't practice it. Think about when you practice something. You're committed to it. You plan it. You seek it. You go after it. You grow in it. You get better at it. The undefiled in the way who are seeking, now here's a connection here, don't miss it, when they're seeking over the whole heart, then they are not practicing sin. If you stop seeking what happens? You start reverting back to the practice of sin because the revelation of God is the means by which this happiness comes that helps us what? Guard against the temptation of being a practicing sinner. We all still struggle with sin, but the psalmist means practicing.

Turn to 1 John chapter 3. I want you to see the New Testament parallel where the Apostle John makes the same point in his small letter in 1 John chapter 3; you'll see how the language parallels, and we'll see how John uses a similar expression in the New Testament. He would say in 1 John chapter 3 and verse 6, "Whosoever abideth in him," that's in Christ, "sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him." They also do no iniquity, they walk in his ways. Whosoever abides in him, they do no sinning. Sounds the same. What does John mean, "they do no sinning," because again, that would exclude me. Would it exclude you? Well, certainly if there's this zero tolerance, no sinning. But look further, verse 7, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil." Committeth is a similar word to the word "do" in our text. He that practices sin, he that works it, he that plans it, loves it, pursues it, committed to it, is of the devil. Now how do we know that's what John means? Not just the word, but with the next statement, "because the devil sinneth from the beginning." I take the beginning to mean the origin of his fall. So from the origin of his fall, how long has he been sinning? Till now and he's going to keep doing so. His nature determines who he is and what he does. He practices it. He likes it. He's committed. He plans it. He's after it.

So now see how John's using the word? Whosoever commits sins is of the devil because the devil sinneth from the beginning, and he keeps right on sinning. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." How will he do that? Now remember, we're talking about revelation. Just keep that in the back of your head. Well, we know he's manifested on the cross, so Jesus' cross breaks the power of

canceled sin. The devil is the power of darkness. He's the prince of the power of the air. What are the works of the devil? That's sin. That's all the works in a person's life that's sinful. But what's the power of the devil's work that the cross came to disarm, Colossians chapter 2? Making a triumph over them openly. He disarmed all the devils of hell.

So what is that power? Well, the same writer in John 8:44 says this about those that are of the devil, "You are of your father the devil." Now we expect John to say, based on 1 John 3, we expect him to say, so the sin of your father you would do, or the works of your father you would do. You remember John doesn't say that. What's the word he uses? "The lust of your father you will do." Why does he say that? Because the root of every sin you'll commit is lust. You want something. You desire something. You're after something and that something, beloved, is happiness. And so we're deceived into thinking this object, this event, this relationship, this experience is going to bring me that happiness and so if it's sin that we're doing then, it's because of lust. "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, he didn't abide in the truth because there's no truth inside of him." There's no revelation inside of him.

So if Jesus is going to break the power of cancelled sin, what must he break in your life? The power of lust. If that's not broken, we are committed sinners no matter what we say, no matter where we go on Sunday, no matter what we do with our bodies. He breaks the power of canceled sin, he sets the prisoner free from the dominion of the power of the prince of the air, which is the power of desire, unfulfilled desire, because lust will never bring it.

How does Jesus do that? Well, the same people in John 5, Jesus would say about those that are the father of the devil, which is those that did not have the works of the devil canceled or broken in their lives, what did he say? You do not have the Word of God living in you, because whom God has sent you do not believe. Who are the undefiled in the way? They believe in the revelation of God. They seek God with a whole heart.

So what do they do with Scriptures according to Jesus? You seek the Scriptures, "for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." They're not using the revelation of God as a revelation about God, they're using it as a means to their own self-righteousness. They're legalists in a total sense. They just use the Bible to try to satisfy their lust for your praise. Furthermore, Jesus says, here's the problem, you don't have the word of God abiding in you, that's why you don't believe, you don't have the love of God abiding in you. When Jesus breaks the power of canceled sin, when he breaks the power of lust, how does he do it? With the revelation of God and the supremacy of his love in your soul by means of revelation.

Verse 9, I'm back in 1 John 3 now. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed," that's the Holy Spirit, "remaineth in him: and he cannot sin," like the devil. If you cannot sin, meaning you cannot sin, then we're goners. No, you cannot sin like the devil perpetually practicing it forever without repentance. Why? The Holy Spirit remains. And what does the Holy Spirit do to rescue you from sin again and again and again?

Revelation. The testimonies. The Word of God that brings happiness brings it because when we're seeking God as the end of revelation, the love of God in our souls is doing something by that revelation that empowers us to say no to the temptation of the devil. No, with a root that says, "The love of Christ is better in my soul than all the trinkets of the world you could offer me." That will not happen in a vacuum or some magic wand. How does it happen? When you seek the Lord by revelation with a whole heart, then you do no iniquity, then you're not a practicing sinner, then you're not committing sin like the devil because the revelation is doing something.

Verse 6 again, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." Jesus said in John 15, same writer, "If you abide in me, my words abide in you." How do we keep from being practicing sinners where we do it regularly and continually without repentance? When his words are abiding in you. Revelation. When his words are abiding in you, what's the experience? "If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in me as I kept my Father's commandments and abide in him. These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you and your joy be full." What's the joy that comes from abiding in Christ? It's the words abiding in us that produces a joy in what? The love of God for you.

How does that happen? The seed, the Holy Spirit that remains in you is the agent of love. He makes this happen. He produces it as we what? Think, study, read, meditate, and apply. Based on this, if I am not reading, studying, meditating, and applying, and looking for Christ in the revelation, what's my experience going to be? No happiness. No joy. No fulfillment. The seed remaining in you doesn't mean just because the Holy Spirit is there, it kind of happens. No. They do no practicing iniquity because they are seeking the Lord. Are you seeking God? Now if you're not, here's why: you don't want to be happy. You really don't want to be happy. You want to be unfulfilled, empty, hollow, and left guilty, because that's where you're going without Jesus Christ. And the revelation of God, the revelation that the psalmist speaks about, of God's glory, we are seeking revelation or the revelation of God, and when we do that, the promise of the Scripture when we call out to God is Jesus' own words, "My joy becomes part of you more and more. My fulfillment becomes your fulfillment. My love is what sustains you, like the Father's love sustained me." And the keeping of the commandments then, or as the psalmist says, what do they do? They keep your testimonies, flows out of a relationship with God by means of the Word of God that then empowers us to resist temptation.

So beloved, what that means for us in 2024 is the words the psalmist used, diligence, seeking, finding, searching, going after God, looking for God, praying to God. Why would it require any less diligence than it does for you to to implement your plans, what you seek in 2024, what you want to do at work, what you want to do in your family? It takes no less diligence but the rewards are far greater because we're seeking Christ.

So we're going to end here. We've covered two points so far in this Psalm 119, Aleph, or the Word of God brings blessing. Who does it bring it to? The undefiled. Who are they? Trusting in Jesus Christ. They are the whole and the sound and complete. And what is this wholeness working toward? The law of the Lord or seeking God with a whole heart. That's where the outside and the inside are aligning together so that when I say I love

God in my heart, I'm seeking the love of God. When I say I trust Jesus in my heart, I'm actually moving in the direction of trusting Jesus. When I say I treasure his Word, and I sing that every Sunday, then in my inner heart and my life, the two are aligning. It doesn't mean you don't have any sin, it means they are aligning in a man and a woman of integrity, wholeness, because in your heart you really are seeking God. And in seeking God, then what? You really are seeking happiness and you don't need to feel guilty about that, right? It's all you can think about is yourself, seeking God and trying to be happy in God. That's right. But when you think of yourself like that, what's the upshot? You're going to be thinking about other people because what is the commandment? Seek God with your whole heart. Now, seek the good of your neighbor. You will never be seeking the good of your wife more than you are when you're seeking your happiness in God. You will never be seeking the good of your husband more than you are when you're seeking to be happy in God. You will never be seeking the good of your neighbor more than you will be when you're seeking your happiness in God. Therefore, if you're not seeking your happiness in God, what's the upshot? You're not seeking the good of your wife. You're not seeking the good of your husband. You're not seeking the good of your neighbor. You're not seeking the good of the church member because you're not seeking the good of your own soul in the revelation of God. So let us be a people of the book in 2024 and let us go hard after our God.

Let's pray.

*Father, thank you for your Word. We just first want to confess our sins, Lord. We have devalued your Word. We have sought our happiness in other inventions and other things and we would confess, even with a whole heart that seeks you, we still have that struggle. So thank you, Lord, for the clarity of what it means to have a whole heart, because we would assume none of us have that new heart if it meant struggling, but we know from your Word, it means when our heart is totally, fully consumed with something else, and yet we gather as the people of God, we hear as the people of God, we even speak as the people of God, but our heart is gone fully after other lovers. So Lord, we ask you to forgive us if anyone here has that testimony, if anyone here has that experience where they've been speaking words that appear that they seek you, but they have not, then Lord, just bring grace and repentance. You're the God of forgiveness, and there's forgiveness upon confession. May they today, may we all today, pursue to be happy in our souls by the revelation of the true and living God and may you get glory out of us through that as we strive to be a happy, a satisfied, a contented people in the book, in the Word of God. We ask you all this in Jesus' name, amen.*