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How God's Word Works for Our Good; Psalm 119:33-40

GPBC

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Introduction – Psalm 119 is the largest chapter in the Bible and it is totally dedicated to instructing us about the Word of God and inspiring us to devote ourselves to the Word of God. This must be of the utmost importance and top priority of God since it is located in the center of the Bible and is the longest chapter. It's as if God is saying, "I am speaking to you – listen!" So at the beginning of each year, we take a look at a section of Psalm 119 that we might prioritize God's Word in our lives as our first and foremost New Year resolution. We have worked our way to vv33-40 as our jumpstart for 2023. Today is January 1. We simply cannot make a better plan for our lives than committing to saturate our hearts on a consistent, regular basis for the next 364 days. Here are 4 reasons why as your pastor, my greatest desire for you in this coming year is that you would join me in exposing our hearts to the light of Scripture throughout the year.

1. God's Word is absolute, ultimate, objective Truth. Since we are sinners, we view the world through tainted, corrupted eyes. The worst advice the world gives us is to follow our heart. The best advice we could ever receive is to follow Scripture. The Bible is truth, and the truth will set you free. Don't allow the world, or your peers, or influencers and trends, or your desires define reality for you or you will live in deception – let God define reality for you and you will live in truth.
2. God has spoken loudly and clearly and graciously in His Word. If you want to hear a word from God, open your Bible and open your heart. He hasn't left us in the confusing chaos of a thousand voices or in an awful dead silence. He has broken through the fog and haze of this fallen world with crystal clear wisdom and direction for life and salvation – He has spoken and He still speaks. If you will devote yourself to God's Word, you will find it sufficient for every situation you face and every ultimate question you have.
3. God's Word will transform your heart, your mind, and eventually your life. The more you are in the Word, the more the Word will be in you. And just as we will discover from our text today, when the Word gets in your life, it gets to work making us more and more like Christ.
4. God's Word has been the most valuable treasure in my life now for 35 years. It has been my comfort, my strength, my stability, my restraint, and

my joy. And what God has done for me through His Word, He can do for you!

- I. 3 Things God Does For Us From the Word
 - a. He teaches us. As believers we never graduate from God's school of growing in Christ. Learning the ways of God is a lifelong endeavor. There is always something new, something fresh for us from God's Word.
 - i. Notice in particular what the psalmist says here that God teaches us from the Word. He teaches us the way of His statutes. Not just His statutes, but the way of His statutes.
 - ii. I take that to mean God teaches us the reason for His statutes. You see God not only reveals to us how we are to live this life to the fullest, He tells us why His rules are what they are. The Bible is far more than a list of do's and don'ts.
 - iii. Josh McDowell explained this with the 10 Commandments years ago. For example, God says you shall not murder. That means you should preserve innocent life. That's the statute. But God also teaches us the way, the reason, for that statute. We are to protect and preserve innocent life because God is life. You see, His statutes reveal His ways to us.
 - iv. Because if we know the way, the reason behind it, we are motivated to keep it, to obey it. "I will keep it to the end."
 - b. He gives us understanding – I take this to mean He not only teaches us what to do, He shows us how to do it. His statutes come with the reason why and the understanding of how.
 - i. Let's take another example. Love the Lord with your whole heart. The reason for that statute is because God is love. The understanding of how to love God is written on every page, but specifically God says to love Him with our whole heart, have no other god above Him. Love Him above all!
 - ii. Now with an understanding, we can, as the psalmist says here, keep His law and observe it with our whole heart.
 - c. Leads us in the path of His commandments. I take this to mean God not only gives us the why and how of His statutes, He also gives us the desire for His statutes. Paul writes in Philippians 2 to work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

- III. 3 Things God Does To Help Us Remain in the Word
- a. Confirm to your servant your promise, that you may be feared. Nothing keeps us hungry for more of God and more of His Word like His rich and gracious promises. And His Word is pregnant and overflowing with good and hopeful and peace-giving and faith-sustaining and life-changing promises!
 - i. And God is good for each and every one. He makes no false claims. He keeps His Word. His promises never fail! We just need to abide in His Word, glean His promises and cling to every one! Glean and cling! He is faithful. He will confirm every one. For they are all yes and amen in Christ!!
 - ii. Standing on the promises! If He said it, I believe it. You're a man of your word.
 - b. Turn away the reproach that I dread. There is one thing we know as believers. If we sell out to Jesus and live a radical life for God, there will be consequences. There will be reproach. There will be a price to pay when our lives become counter-culture. And that is why we often keep silent and we often keep our faith shut up in a closet. We dread and fear reprisals and rejection and reproach.
 - i. We need God to show us His rules are good. We need to learn the goodness of God far outweighs the reproach of man. Oh taste and see that the Lord, He is good! Is there a price to pay? Absolutely! But is it worth the price you pay? Absolutely! God's return will always surpass the world's reproach!
 - c. I long for your precepts – why? Because in His righteousness He gives us life – full, satisfying, and complete! We just got to get our longing pointed in the right direction. We long for the wrong things. We long for that which can never satisfy. We've got to get our longing right. And the right comes from His righteousness – His Word.
 - i. Here's what God does when we commit to exposing our lives to His Word on a regular basis – the more we're in His Word, the more He shifts our longings, away from self and sin and the world and more to Christ and the word and the glory of God!

Conclusion – you know if you don't get adequate sleep, you can't function right physically. Loss of sleep affects you physically. And when we don't get enough of God through His Word, we can't function right spiritually. The lack of Bible intake

affects us spiritually. And the consuming of Scripture will affect us spiritually as well. It's not how much you read – it's that you read. You'll never make a better resolution this year than to spend quality time with God in His Word on a regular basis. (1) 5x5 (2) OT or NT (3) pick one book (4) memorize a book (5) find a plan on a Bible app