

# The Power of Remembering

*Psalm 119*

By Dr. Jeff Meyers

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**Bible Text:** Psalm 119:49-56  
**Preached On:** Sunday, February 18, 2024

**Crossroads Ministries**  
301 S. 8th Street  
Opelika, Alabama 36801

**Website:** [www.fbcopelika.com](http://www.fbcopelika.com)  
**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/jeffmeyers](http://www.sermonaudio.com/jeffmeyers)

Tonight I want to encourage you to turn to Psalm 119. Now that ought to be familiar from Sunday morning. Let me kind of pull back. Those of you that Sunday evenings is maybe not a regular endeavor, maybe tonight's your first time to be with us as a part of Sunday night, typically, we go through a study on Sunday evening that is different than or distinct from our Sunday morning study. However, there is a slight issue with what we know as Psalm 119. It has a whole lot more sections than we have Sundays and what I mean by that is one of the things that I like to do, and this is just kind of personal, is I like to divide our year, our calendar year, into what I call semesters. I know we're in a college town, but it just makes sense that we would have a spring semester, a summer semester, and a fall semester. So, kind of, let me give you a big picture, then we'll go back to Psalm 119. As we have initiated our project 1189, our memorizing the entirety of God's word one chapter at a time, in the spring season we are focusing on Psalm 119 because it communicates the priority of God's word in our life. When we come to the summer, we're actually going to walk through the book of Ecclesiastes. We're going to look at life through the lens of the wisdom of somebody who's been there and done that. And then in the fall, we're going to look through the book of Colossians, an incredible study of not only the person but whom Jesus Christ is to be in our life in the midst of a world that's very eclectic and pluralistic at best. And so because there are technically not enough Sundays to get through Psalm 119 one section at a time, from now until the rest of this, quote, spring semester, we're going to kind of be doubling up Psalm 119.

Tonight, we're going to begin in verse 49 and I know some of you are very familiar with this, but if not, allow me to somewhat reiterate, is if you'll notice, right above verse 49, as you see in all the sections, there is what may look like an odd-looking character and a word that seems somewhat strange. That character is a letter in the Hebrew alphabet. There's 22 sections, there's 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. That word, Zain, is how you pronounce that Hebrew letter. So that's what it is. So it divides itself into the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Now there's very selective passages in your Bible that do this, that put the letters of the Hebrew alphabet outside the verses. Another one of interesting, I guess, prominence is Proverbs 31. The famous story of the Proverbs 31 woman actually has the Hebrew letters out beside the qualifications and designations of who she is. But tonight, when we come to verse 49, we discover again that what we know as Psalm 119 is focused on the word of God, its primacy and its purpose in our life, but if you allow me

to say this, Psalm 119, the more you study it, it kind of feels like an anthology. You know, in literature, an anthology is a massive book of a collection of stories that all are somewhat even from the same era or they have the same theme. Now, those of us who grew up with the Columbia Record Company, remember that back years ago, where they were always trying to sell you a multitude of cassettes and records and albums for just one penny. Some of y'all are probably still paying on those, to be honest with you. But one of the things they would do is they would give collections of music that was either from a certain stage or age or a certain genre or had a certain theme. What you discover in Psalm 119 is there is this theme about the primacy of the word of God. However, each and every one of these 22 sections stands on its own. There's no what I might call flow. In other words, what we studied this morning does not naturally just flow into tonight and continue next week. They are self-sufficient. They are independent. They stand on their own. And tonight's section is unique because when we get to verse 51, we're going to see that even within the text here, there's this unbelievable prophetic looking forward to whom we know as the Messiah, the person of Jesus Christ. Even though there's always these prophetic elements throughout the Old Testament about the coming Messiah, tonight in Psalm 119, there is an entire section that can be incredibly seen through the lens of Jesus Christ.

So without further ado, verse 49 says,

49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. 50 This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me. 51 The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law. 52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself. 53 Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law. 54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. 55 I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law. 56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

Now as far as the title is concerned, tonight I've entitled it "The Power of Remembering." You know, one of the reasons that those old record and album companies that gave those commercials, the reason they sold all that they sold is because they really, they had a way of kind of tapping into our desire to remember, our desire to go back to those quote unquote glory days or those young days and think back of a time where we felt more young, more free, whatever it may be. But I think we'd all recognize tonight that in verse 49 when it says, "Remember the word unto thy servant," there is a purpose in remembering and what we have here in Psalm 119 is really just a pleading to the Lord, "Help me to remember. Bring those things to recall so I can cherish and I can relish." And the attitude therein is why? Because in verse 49, you have caused me to hope.

Now I've mentioned this in days gone by, but I mean it sincerest. We live in a culture, we live in a society today that has become absolutely abjectly hopeless. In other words, we have an entire generation of young people that deep down, if you peel away the layers, they really believe no matter how hard they try, no matter what they accomplish, no

matter how much discipline they enact, the proverbial rug's gonna be pulled out from under them. We have an entire culture that sees that there is literally little to no hope of any type of striving, any type of purpose, whatever it may be. Hopelessness is a powerful, powerful emotion. Hope is unbelievable. When you have hope, you can push through when you didn't think you could. When you have hope, you can persevere when you thought you would give up. When you have hope, you can continue when every fiber of your being says, "I don't want to go another single step." Hope is an amazing construct in our life and what we see in verse 49 says that we possess hope or we can have hope when we remember the words of Lord and what the Lord has done in our lives.

Now on Sunday evenings, we are somewhat a little bit more casual, so to speak, when it comes to our Bible study. So tonight, if you don't mind, and you'll give me a little bit of leeway, I'm gonna share a personal story that happened in my life some years ago in regards to this. I don't know if you've ever experienced what I'm about to share with you, but I'm sure you have at some level. We call it a crisis of faith. There comes a time in your life and maybe multiple times in your life where something has occurred or something has not occurred, whatever it may be, and you begin to truly question deep down at the core of who you are, who you are, what you believe, the constructs of your belief, your convictions, whatever they may be. The story that I'm about to share with you, and this is purposeful in doing so, actually happened many, many years before I ever knew you existed and vice versa. In fact, it's very fitting being in a collegiate town because I was a freshman in college when this took place.

I found myself, like many young college freshmen, I was in a new place, it was a new environment, new challenges, new temptations, new this, new that, there was a crisis of faith that took place in my life. I'll cut the story somewhat short, but it's very apropos to this evening. Because as a college freshman, I decided to do something that very few college freshmen do. Now, I know there are those that do what I'm about to talk about, but not all the time. I decided to go to church on the Sunday evening service. Now don't get me wrong, in a collegiate town, it's a big deal for all college students to go on Sunday morning but I'm talking about this service. And we would all admit, and we're just all friends here, our Sunday evening service, I love our Sunday evening service, but numerically speaking, it's not Sunday morning. All you gotta do is look around, okay? And I knew that. I knew that because I grew up in church. I knew about Sunday night. I mean, Sunday night's the faithful few, right? I mean, that's who we are. And so I knew that if I went on Sunday night, there wouldn't be a whole lot of people there. I knew that nobody would know me. And I knew that I could, quote, deal with my crisis of faith. And so I don't remember the songs we sang. I don't remember the sermon, the pastor prayer. I don't remember any of it, because all I knew was this, that I was struggling. I was at turmoil. I was in a crisis of faith.

We came to the end of the service, a time of response to what you and I would typically call an invitation. Have you ever had a moment in life that you know that on the clock is only maybe 90 seconds, but it feels like 20 minutes? I had one of those that night. I know it couldn't have been more than 90 seconds because the time of response was still happening when I did what I'm about to share with you. I sat there that evening. I

wrestled with God much like Jacob. I struggled. I dealt with all that I was, quote, dealing with. And I will share with you, I've never, to my knowledge, audibly heard the voice of God, but that night came about as close as I've ever experienced. Seated in kind of the back section of a room eerily similar to this, the Lord and I had a time. Again, it felt like about 20 minutes, but I want you to hear what I sensed and what I heard from the Lord that night. This is the Lord quote speaking. Again, I think the Lord speaks to me in my dialect, so forgive me, okay? "So you're telling me, that all that I've done in your life the last 10 years is a lie. So you're telling me that all that we've been through is all fictitious." Now let me tell you what those two statements meant in that 20 minutes of my life that only lasted 90 seconds. You know what the Lord allowed me to do that night? To go back and to remember all the times he brought me through stuff. He allowed me to remember all the times where he gave me hope when I had no hope, fortitude when I had none, and he allowed me just to cherish and relish about 10 years of my life where I thought he was absent, where I thought he had abandoned, where I thought I was on my own. He reminded me and he caused me to remember all those times that he didn't only go alongside of me, but he led me and in some cases he carried me.

So because I'm a young college student, I did something that would visually be disturbing to pretty much anybody in the room, including the security team, is while we were in a time of response, stood up and I just, I mean, I took off the back door. I mean, I literally took the back door off. I was basically at a jog and I hit the door probably a little too strong. An older gentleman caught me in front steps. He said, "Son, are you okay?" I said, "Sir, I've never been better." I said, "This may be one of the best days of my life. I apologize if I disturbed y'all. Y'all have a great one." And I rolled out. And the reason I share that story with you, that was a long time, that was 30 plus years ago. Did you know then I thought that was a crisis of faith? Do you know how many things I've walked through since that make that look like kindergarten? You know how many things I've walked through with the Lord now that look like, quote, child's play?

And so when this verse says, "Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hope," one of the things that I've discovered when we talk about the purpose of remembering what God has done, what he has spoken, and what his word has done in our life, it gives us hope in the midst of times when we have no hope. We're all gonna walk through crises of faith. We're all gonna have struggles. We're all gonna have those times where we don't have answers, we don't have direction, and we may be without hope, but because of that time, you know what I've learned to do? I've learned to just stop and just remember all the words that the Lord has spoken in here, all the things that he has brought me through, all of the trials and all the times.

You know why? Because look in verse 50, "This is my comfort in my affliction. Thy word has quickened me." Comfort and affliction. I'm a fan of that first word, but not the second one. I like when things are comfortable. I'm not a real fan when things are afflicting or when things are difficult. One of the things that anybody who's been walking with the Lord for any amount of time will confess is this, more often than not, the valleys are longer than the mountaintops. I would dare say that in the Christian life, affliction is

often more prominent than comfort. Now don't get me wrong, there are times of great comfort but there's times of incredible affliction.

I'm reminded at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus has given all kinds of instructions and guidance and directions on things and he comes to the very end and he uses this incredible illustration. He says there's two men that build a house. One builds on the solid foundation of a rock. The other man builds his house on shifting sand. Now, we get the idea from Jesus' story that the houses are identical square footage, they're made of the same materials, they used the same plans, and they probably used the same builders. I mean, they are identical in every form and fashion with this exception, what lies underneath the structure? What gets me about that story is verse 24. Verse 24 of that passage says, "And the winds blew and the rains came." There is one thing that I know the longer I live on planet earth, the winds are gonna blow and the rain is gonna come. There's going to be difficulties. There's going to be struggles. And when those times come, if we cannot enact verse 49, we're in trouble. If we cannot see hope by remembering the word of God and what he has done in our life, because sometimes that's all you've got to hang on to. The only thing we have is what God has spoken and how he has moved and how he has operated. Think about what we call the intertestament, that 430 years between Malachi the Old Testament prophet and what we know as the New Testament, for 430 years, that's a long time. You know how much God spoke to the Israelites? Zero, zip, nada, none. Do you know how many times they had to remember God said a Messiah's coming. God said the answer is coming. God said do not give up, do not lose hope. Do you find it ironic that in what we know is the Christmas story of Luke chapter 2, when everybody should have come out and said, "Aha, it's finally happened!" There was no room in the inn and nobody there to throw a celebration.

So when we look at the purpose of remembering the word of God, it's to give hope in times of hopelessness and to give comfort in times of affliction. So what's the provision? It's a certain attitude that says, "thy word has quickened me," or given me life. I love that word quickened because it brings an aspect of immediate instantaneous results and/or actions, an attitude that the word of God can address every situation and every struggle in our life. And if I had this conversation once, I've had it a thousand times. I cannot tell you how many people I've spoken with personally who simply say, "You know what pastor, I just don't think the Bible deals with what I'm dealing with." I would beg to differ and I would argue. There is not a personal struggle, situation, or difficulty in life that is not addressed somewhere, somehow, with some character and some situation or story in the Bible. The problem is we probably haven't read it. We probably haven't studied it. And most people when you say, "Well, have you even gone and looked," say, "Well, I just didn't think there were any answers."

It has, what? It has quickened me. There has to be an attitude that the Bible has the answer. Now, think about that for a moment. Why do you, now, this is a dumb question, but it's a real question, why do you Google to get an answer? Correct? If you want to know what the hours of a certain store are, or the price of a certain item, what do you immediately do? You go to your phone because you honestly believe that if you type it in the search engine, you'll get an answer. So if we believe it has the answer, we will search

it. If we don't believe it does, we won't. Unfortunately, our culture and a lot of us have decided that this old book doesn't have the answers that we hoped it would, and so why even go and, quote, search it? You know, the reality is it's because it takes time. It takes effort. It takes energy. It takes toiling and walking through the afflictions of life. What is the action? He says, "I have not declined," verse 51, "from thy law." Let me unpack what that means. What that means is I have not quit searching. I have not stopped the pursuit. I have not declined from it. In other words, whatever I'm struggling with, whatever the battle is, whatever the difficulty is, I have not ceased to put forth the effort.

You know, one of the proverbial responses that I would encourage you to give when somebody says, "You know what, whatever I'm walking through, what I'm struggling with, the Bible just doesn't talk about it." Say, "Great, can you share with me the book, the chapter, and the verse that tells you the Bible doesn't deal with it?" Because more often than not, it does, but we give up. Now, we've become a culture today, our give up doesn't last but about 13 seconds. I don't know if you know that. Fortitude and fervency are two words that have almost ceased to exist from our culture today, the willingness to just, quote, hang in there and go forward. I'm gonna give you a statement or a quote. I'm sure you've heard me use this before, but it just resonates so well. Luis Palau. Luis Palau, unfortunately, well, for us, unfortunately, fortunately for him, he's with the Lord now. He was a South American evangelist. Many people called him the Billy Graham of South America for years. Actually moved to the North American continent, put his headquarters up in Portland, Oregon, was just a blessing to so many people and so many aspects of life. He had this one statement, he had many statements, but one that I loved. He said most Christians, most Christians give up on God within two years of God coming through. Now think about that for a moment. Within two years. Now think about our culture today. We can't wait two minutes in the drive-through line. You ever done a search on your phone, laptop, tablet, and the circle starts spinning? What do you do? You get frustrated. You get mad, because I want an answer now. Luis Palau said two years.

The thought today of navigating two years of fortitude without an answer is almost unfathomable in our culture. Our days of perseverance and pushing through almost seem like days gone by and the reason that this Psalm is so powerful or should be in our lives is, number one, the power and the purpose of remembering. Secondly, when we talk about the provision of God, I got news for us, God's timetable is not our timetable. Now, again, I'm not God. I know that. His ways are not my ways. His thoughts are not my thoughts. But the way that I'm wired, I want God to answer every problem yesterday. That's my, I want it yesterday. More often than not, it's a day longer than I'm wanting to hang in there. Or a week longer. Or a month longer. Or a year longer. When you look at the characters in the Bible, many of them waited for years. The song that we were just blessed with, "In the presence of Jehovah," Moses. had been on the backside of nowhere, handling the flock of his father-in-law for 40 years. Jacob spent 14 years with the wife of his choosing. That's unfathomable in our culture, but you know what, that's biblical. What we discover is that when we, quote, decline from his law, we often miss out on the hope and the blessings that he truly intended for us.

When we pick up verse 51, I mentioned a little bit earlier in the message, there's kind of this shift. Again, every verse is applicable to our life, every statement is purposeful for our life, but I want to reread verse 51 through the end, and I want you to hear it through the lens of Jesus. I want you to hear it through the lens of the Messiah because a lot of the Psalms, a lot of the Old Testament are prophetic passages. Yes, they're apropos specifically to David's life in Psalms, apropos to the time period he was living in and people's lives and decisions and struggles, etc., but I want you to hear these words again through the lens of Jesus. "The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law. I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself. Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law. This I had, because I kept thy precepts."

I want you to think about that attitude, the proud have had me in great derision. You know, if you read through the gospels, I don't care if it's Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, just a cursory reading through it, you know what you'll discover? Every time Jesus turned around, every time he turned the corner, somebody was upset and mad at him about something. I mean, every time he turned around, they're arguing with him about his lineage and his genealogy, they're arguing with him about the fact that he would dare give somebody food on the Sabbath day. They even got mad he healed a blind guy. Can you think about that for just a moment? Why would you get mad he healed him? Oh, I know, because he did it on the wrong day. Every time you turn around, somebody was mad and upset. In fact, these guys, by the way, I've got proof that the Pharisees were not Baptist. Did you know that? Because the Pharisees got so mad at Jesus, they said, "We promise we will not eat again until he's dead." Baptists ain't gonna do that, all right? So that being said, we exonerated ourselves there.

But you think about the derision, the animosity, not just in his ministry. I mean, think about it. If you would just look at it from a simply benign objective perspective, why would you get upset with an individual that everybody he comes into contact with gets healed or delivered? Why would you get upset about that? I'll tell you why. Because he's taking away from whatever you've been selling and pitching to other people. And no more so, we're gonna walk through this in just a moment, than when he was on the cross. I mean, it's bad enough to be put on a cross, but they mocked him, they made fun of him, they spit at him, they derided him.

Now there are four statements beginning in verse 52 that I want to kind of walk through and just kind of see how Jesus addressed this in his ministry. "I have remembered thy judgments." Luke chapter 4. Jesus is in the wilderness, been there 40 days and 40 nights and I love how the Bible says "and he hungered." So what happens? It says Satan showed up, tempted him with three specific temptations. The first one was to turn a rock into bread. The second one was to cast himself off the temple and the angels to catch him before he hit. And then the third one, obviously, was to take or inherit the kingdoms of the world and quote worship Satan. Those are the three respective temptations. It says, "I remembered thy judgments." Every single temptation that Jesus faced he respond with,

"It is written. Thus saith the Lord. According to scripture." He never said, "I think, I feel or I like." Every single time he quoted the Bible.

In John chapter 10, remember those Pharisees that can't be Baptist because they've said they're not gonna eat till something happens? In John chapter 10, they are arguing about who Jesus is. You know what Jesus did? He went all the way back to Genesis and he quoted what Abraham said. Every single defense that Jesus gave to opposition was he quoted chapter and he quoted verse. You know what Jesus never did? Jesus never showed up and said, "Just because I said so, just because I am who I claim I am." He says, "Oh no, no, go read Genesis. What did Moses say to you? How about this proverb? How about this Psalm? How about this prophet?" Every single statement he made can be rooted back in quote, remembering thy judgments.

How about this next statement, "Horror hath taken upon me." Now, again, I'm not here to get necessarily in your personal lives, but I just, ooh, I do not like horror movies. I'm just gonna be honest. If it includes any type of blood and guts, I'm out. I admit I'm a wimp. How's that for honesty? I'm not a fan of it. I mean, I'm talking, we can watch a television show that involves a medically trained doctor doing a procedure, I can't watch it. Much less somebody with a ski mask and a hatchet. I mean, seriously, I'm just not going there. But when we use that word horror, we know the inflection. We know the emphasis there. In Isaiah chapter 52 verse 17, it says that when Jesus was on the cross, and this is a prophetic statement, it said that when he hung on the cross, that his visage or his appearance would be worse than any other man. In other words, he would be incredibly difficult to recognize. And when you do a study of what Jesus Christ endured, when you see the beatings that he inflicted, it's almost unfathomable. Now, again, I'm not here to put the quote cold water on your warm flame of life, but you know what we typically teach when it comes to the beatings of Jesus? That they beat him 39 times. Why? Because in the Old Testament, the Jews beat somebody 40 times minus one. If they did it 40 times, then they got beat too. The Jews didn't beat Jesus. The Romans did. They didn't have that law, they didn't have that rule and those guys were ruthless. I mean you think about from his head to his toe, the horror that that would have been. In Psalm chapter 22, we have probably the greatest concentration of messages or prophetic statements about the Messiah and the crucifixion. There are eight statements in Psalm 22 alone about what Jesus Christ would endure. It talked about the dogs that encompassed him that gambled over his clothes. It talked about him being pierced in his hands and his feet. And in that passage it talked about that his appearance was such that he could not be looked upon. The horror that he experienced.

It says, "Thy statutes are songs in the midst of the pilgrimage." Now we don't have a whole lot from the quote cross. We have seven statements. But what we do know is leading up to it, there are expressions of faith, there are mannerisms, there are behaviors that give us a little bit of insight. Let me take you back to John chapter 13. Jesus is in the Upper Room. He washes the disciples' feet. He teaches them about the Holy Spirit in chapter 14. He talks about being a vine in chapter 15. He talks about the Holy Spirit again in chapter 16. And then they make their way to Gethsemane. Now, honestly a trip, this is gonna hopefully get your attention, a trip from where they were in the Upper Room to the



Garden of Gethsemane is like walking from here to the ice cream store in downtown. I just thought I'd get your attention there. It's just not that far. But nonetheless, you know what Matthew chapter 26 says? That while they walked, they sang a hymn. Now I'm gonna confess something to you. I know that tomorrow morning when you wake up, you're not going to quote or remember anything I've said today. I know that. But I know what you will do. You might hum a bar or a stanza of a song we sang. There's something about music that just rings within us. You do realize that the Psalms are songs. What did they do? They sang. Zephaniah 3 talks about the Lord singing over us. How many of those Psalms, we don't know the answer, did Jesus himself sing to himself while he was hanging on the cross?

"In the night, I kept thy law." Now if we look at this just strictly, literally, chronologically, when Jesus and the disciples leave that Upper Room, they make their way to Gethsemane. It was there where Peter, James, and John, they're by the wayside. Remember Jesus said to stay awake. They didn't stay awake. Three times he comes back and forth. It is in the midst of the night. Who shows up? Judas. Judas shows up with 500 men. The Bible says they've got swords and they've got staves. I love Jesus' response. He says, "Man, why didn't you come in the middle of the day? I mean, I've been out and about. I've been in the highways and the byways. You had all these opportunities to give me, why do you come in the middle of the night?" I'll tell you why, because people do things in the middle of the night when they're up to no good, is what they do.

In other words, when it says here, "in the night I have kept thy law," when humanity was — think about what happened the night before Jesus' crucifixion. You had a man betray him, Judas. You had 500 men attack him, literally. You had a kangaroo court, if you'll allow me to use that term, in Caiaphas' house, where they could not incriminate him, so they got one of their law-abiding Pharisees to lie about him. I mean, it was sideways, every respective. "In the night I kept thy law." You know, it's fascinating. When you study the trial of Jesus, of what he said, or should I say what he did not say, he just kept his mouth shut.

Matthew chapter 28 verse 1. That's the last chapter. That's resurrection day. That's that day we celebrate with what we know as Easter. You know it says that the women came to the tomb to prepare and anoint the body and it said that the sun had yet to rise. Isn't it interesting that if you want to do a strict chronology of it, those women showed up to the tomb, the sun had not risen yet. It was still technically night and the angels said, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" The stone had been rolled away and Jesus had walked out. You say, why is that important? Because it is in the night that we struggle the most, but it was in the night that Jesus conquered it all. In other words, that which causes us so much issue and so much trouble is when the Lord wants to meet us with his word. You know, I've never met anybody who says, you know, I have trouble sleeping during the day. What do people say? I just can't sleep at night. I mean, it's easy to sleep during the day. I mean, who doesn't love a good nap? Maybe I'm the only one. I love a good nap. You ever been two, three o'clock in the morning, wide open, staring at the ceiling, can't go to sleep, don't know what to do, fretting and fussing? Oh yeah, because the night's tough because that's when it's just you and your thoughts.

Let me go back full circle to verse 49, "Remember the word." Tonight as we close, I'm gonna give you a little Meyersism. I understand what it's like to have difficulty sleeping. I know what it's like to struggle in the night. I did not originate this, but I practice it, okay? I had somebody tell me years ago, if you're struggling in the nights, then whenever you go to bed, either have scripture or a sermon playing in the background. I will confess to you, I go to sleep every night either with the Bible being played or somebody preaching to me. Now be careful who you get to preach to because once you fall asleep, if they start yelling, you will wake up. I'm just gonna warn you, okay? But you know, the night isn't always just according to the clock. You know, you can experience the night at three in the afternoon. You can walk through darkness at any point of the 24 hours of a day. And when we walk through that night, we need to remember that it was the nighttime that the Lord was betrayed, but it was also technically the nighttime in which victory was brought and victory came.

And so when we walk through the horrors, when we walk through the night, when we walk through the struggles that this life most assuredly will bring us, we need to circle back to verse 49. It says, "Remember the word unto thy servant." I know that we've been walking slowly and steadily through Psalm 119. If you are over 50 years of age, I realize I'm a broken record. I get it, okay? But there is no other answer to the struggles and the problems of our life other than what you have in your hands. I know I keep saying it over and over and over again. I had somebody tell me just the other day, I'm not making this up. They said, "I want your advice on something, but don't tell me it's somewhere in the Bible. I want to hear your opinion." I said, "I got bad news for you. My opinion is just as valid as yours. It stinks." They said, "Well, I don't want to hear the Bible." I said, "Well, bye. We're done." I was cordial to them. I was nice. I'm telling you, if there is a night experience, a struggle, a derision, whatever it may be, you have the answer, the problem is, are you willing to stick through it, the derision and the extent thereof?

Let's pray. With our heads bowed, our eyes closed, Miss Abby's gonna make her way back to the piano and we're not gonna stand and sing like we quote normally or might do, but what I do want to invite you to do is just have a time of remembrance. Tonight, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you know, sometimes it bodes us well just to go back and remember that day that we called out for him to save us, just to remember that time where we called out and he forgave us. Maybe you're here tonight and you say, "I don't have that time. I don't remember that." You know, the Bible says that today's the day of salvation. Maybe today's the day that you need to call out and cry out. Maybe today's the day where you quote, come to your proverbial end of yourself and you say, "God, I can't do this anymore. I'm running out of strength. I'm running out of energy. I'm running out of want to. God, I recognize I've got a sin problem and I need you to save me." The Bible says in 2 Corinthians chapter 11, "I am remiss that you have forsaken the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus." When the Bible says call unto the Lord and you will be saved, it's not a three page document that you've got to pray, it is an admission of sinfulness and it is a confession that Jesus is the only means and way. So maybe tonight you say, "I don't have that memory. I don't have that time." Maybe then tonight's the night you need to call out for the first time to be forgiven and to be saved. But if you are saved, you're a believer,

maybe you're walking through one of those nighttime experiences, maybe people in your life know about it, maybe they don't. But you do. Can you look back tonight in spite of it and remember how the Lord has walked through you in spite of it? Can you remember how the Lord has moved and operated in spite of it? Can you remember the scriptures, the passages, the songs of the faith that God has used to get you through days past and now believing he's gonna get you through days present?

And the Bible says to remember the word so that we might have hope. All of us tonight live in a society that is very hopeless. Even for those of us who believe in Jesus, it's a struggle walking through the difficulties of life. Maybe tonight, in a moment as we depart, you don't have to blow open the doors like I did as a 19-year-old but maybe tonight's the night where you walk out of here saying, "You know what? I'm going to trust the Lord through this. When the hopelessness creeps up, I'm going to go to the word. When the night settles in, I'm going to go to the word. When the doubts and the questions arise in the midst of the day or the night, I'm going to go to the word." The only hope we'll ever have is what he said, verse 49, is to remember his words. So tonight, when it comes to a time of response, it's really not about walking down an aisle, it's really about trusting the word of God, whatever he's spoken in your life today, and how that will be lived out in the hours, the days, weeks, and months ahead.

*Heavenly Father, tonight, thank you. Lord, we're such a blessed people, even in the midst of a culture that at times is so hopeless. God, and we confess, we fall into that trap. Instead of seeing the world through your eyes and hearing it through your ears, we see it through our own flesh and our own frailty but we've got the blessing that we live in a place where we have your word. We don't have to struggle to find it. We don't have to go on a search in the hopes of finding a page here or there. It is not absent. In fact, at this current stage of life, it is in great abundance. But God, we confess how quickly we give up the search, how quickly we bow out and say, "I'm tired of the journey." So God, I pray tonight, somehow, some way, that you would just put up within your Holy Spirit within us the want to, the desire to allow you to speak in the night, to speak in the darkness, to speak in the doubt, to speak into the questions. And God, help us to trust you, help us to look back on the totality of scripture at how many times humanity didn't believe you would come through and you always did. God, help us to learn from your word and help us when we can't see it, when we don't know it and it's not clear that we would just take a step of faith, that we would just trust that you know what we're doing. And when we do and live life according to your word, you never lead us astray and you never leave us alone. Your word says, you'll never leave us, you'll never forsake us, you'll be with us to the end of the age. Help us, O God, tonight to simply remember your word, days past, days present, and days future. It is in the incredible powerful name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*