

Directing Our Ways to Keep God's Word
(Part 2)
Psalm 119:5

Psalm 119:1-8 reads, “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.”

Four times in the first eight-verse section of **Psalm 119** the word “keep” is employed with regard to keeping God’s Holy Word. In fact, throughout the psalm the words “keep” and “kept” are employed twenty-nine times in twenty-nine different verses. This is almost one fifth of the verses in the psalm, and unto this might be added the various reference to walking in obedience unto God’s Word. Certainly then, one of the primary themes of **Psalm 119** is the need to direct our ways to keep God’s Word. Even so, within the opening section of the psalm, in **verse 5** the psalmist exclaimed so passionately, “O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!” What then do we learn from **Psalm 119** concerning this matter of directing our ways to keep God’s Word? Already in the first part of this message, we have learned that keeping God’s Word is the prerequisite for the Lord’s blessing, is the Lord’s plan for our daily lives, should be the passion of our hearts, and should be the practice of our daily living. In this second part of the message, let us consider four additional truths.

5. Keeping God’s Word should be the priority of our hearts and lives.

In **verse 17** the psalmist expressed the prayer of his heart unto the Lord, saying, “Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.” Herein the psalmist presented himself before the Lord as a servant of the Lord. As such, he requested that the Lord might deal bountifully with him in order that he might live a full life. Yet why did the psalmist desire to live such a full life? Did he desire to live this full life for his own purposes and pursuits? God forbid! Rather, the psalmist desired to live such a full life in order that he might keep the Lord’s Word. Yea, the psalmist desired to live in order that he might spend his life in obedience to the Lord. Keeping God’s Word was the priority of his heart and his life. Even so, in **verse 112** the psalmist expressed the commitment of his heart unto the Lord, saying, “I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.” In like manner, the priority of our hearts should not be inclined toward some possession of this world, or toward some pleasure of this world, or toward some position of this world. Rather, the priority of our hearts and lives should be inclined toward the obedient performance of God’s Holy Word. The priority of our hearts and lives must not be inclined toward selfishness, worldliness, and covetousness. Rather, the priority of our hearts and lives must be inclined toward walking in all the Lord’s ways and keeping all the Lord’s Word. Indeed, the priority of our hearts and lives must not be inclined to love this world and the things of this world, but to love the Lord our God and to seek first His fellowship and His righteousness.

6. Keeping God's Word should be the platform for our prayer lives.

In **Psalm 119:22** the psalmist expressed his request unto the Lord, saying, "Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy word." Herein the psalmist asked the Lord to deliver him from the trouble and tribulation of his life. Herein the psalmist asked the Lord to deliver him from the reproach and contempt of his persecutors. Yet on what ground did the psalmist make this request and have some assurance that this request might be heard? He made this request on the ground that he had kept God's Word with obedience. In like manner, we must plant our prayer lives on the platform of faithful obedience. Indeed, without faithful obedience we have no claim in our prayer lives for the Lord our God to hear and answer our prayers. Even so, **Proverbs 15:8** declares, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight." Again **Proverbs 15:29** declares, "The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous." Yet again **Proverbs 28:9** declares, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Thus the closing portion of **James 5:16** declares, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." On the other hand, **Psalm 66:18** warns, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

7. Keeping God's Word should be the purpose for our learning.

In **Psalm 119:34-35** the psalmist expressed his request unto the Lord, saying, "Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." Herein the psalmist asked the Lord to teach him and to give him understanding in the way of His Holy Word. Yet why did the psalmist make this request to learn the truth and teaching of God's Word? He made this request to learn in order that he might keep the law, the rules and regulations, statutes and standards, precepts and principles, commands and counsels, reproofs and rebukes, confrontations and corrections, wisdom and warnings, of God's Word. Yea, he made this request to learn in order that he might keep the law of God's Word with his whole heart unto the end of his life. In like manner, this should be our purpose for learning the truths of God's Holy Word – that we might keep it with our whole heart unto the end. Most certainly we are to receive, study, and learn the truth of God's Word with all meekness and with all diligence. Yet we are not to do so simply in order to be learners of God's Word. Rather, we are to do so specifically in order to be doers of God's Word. Even so, **James 1:21-22** gives the instruction, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

8. Keeping God's Word should be the pattern of our whole lives.

In **Psalm 119:44** the psalmist expressed his commitment unto the Lord, saying, "So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever." Again in **verse 112** he expressed his commitment, saying, "I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end." The psalmist's commitment to keep God's Word was a lifetime commitment. He

expressed this lifetime commitment with the phrases, “continually for ever and ever” and “always, even unto the end.” In like manner, our commitment to keep God’s Word must be a lifetime commitment. It must be a commitment to walk in obedience unto God’s Word continually throughout each day and consistently throughout our entire lives. It must be an “always” commitment. It must be a “for ever and ever” commitment. It must be an “unto the end” commitment. It must be a commitment that encompasses every moment of every day for our entire lifetime.