

## INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to Psalm 119 as we look tonight at verses 9-11.
2. This is our seventh message in our current series on Parenting.
3. We have already considered your child's greatest need which is salvation.
4. We have also considered what you should teach your kids about God, about prayer, and about Bible study.
5. Tonight we are going to consider what you should teach your kids about Scripture memory.
6. I believe that Scripture memory is one of the hardest tasks we are to undertake as children of God but it is also the most rewarding.
7. This, like prayer and Bible study, is a spiritual discipline and unless you make the effort to memorize Scripture you won't hide it in your heart.
8. God told Israel in **Deuteronomy 6:6 (NASB77)** <sup>6</sup> "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.
9. Where does God want His Word? On our hearts.
10. **Deuteronomy 11:18 (NASB77)** <sup>18</sup> "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your

soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.

11. God told Joshua the same thing when He said in **Joshua 1:8 (NASB77)** <sup>8</sup> "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
12. As we have pointed out in this series, all the principles for teaching your kids about God, about prayer, about Bible study, and about Scripture memory, comes from your own personal commitment to these things.
13. So before you can sincerely teach these principles to your children, you must first practice them yourself.
14. So with that in mind, let me ask you a question: Are you studying the Bible? Are you praying? Are you memorizing Scripture?
15. If not, don't expect your kids to be doing these things either.
16. As we look here at Psalm 119, you will notice twenty-two eight verse stanzas that begin with a letter from the Hebrew alphabet.
17. For example, the first eight verses begin with the first Hebrew letter Aleph.

## Teaching Your Kids About Scripture Memory

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Psalm 119:9-11

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18. The second section, verses 9-16, begin with the second, Beth and so forth throughout this chapter until all 22 Hebrew letters are used.
19. Each section has a theme that pertains to the Word of God.
20. The first is, *Joy in his judgments (119:1-8)*. Those who keep God's law "with all their hearts" are assured of great blessing.
21. *Purity in his precepts (119:9-16)*. "How can a young person stay pure?" By "hiding" God's word in his or her heart—studying, meditating on, and even memorizing Scripture.
22. *Security in his statutes (119:17-24)*. Amid persecution, the psalmist felt like a stranger in the world but found comfort in God's word.
23. *Deliverance in his decrees (119:25-32)*. Lying "in the dust, completely discouraged," the psalmist knew that deliverance from his sinful nature would come as the Lord helped him understand his laws.
24. *Worth in his word (119:33-40)*. If the psalmist could truly learn God's law and keep from desiring the "worthless things" of this life, then he would find delight, revival, and reassurance.
25. *Liberty in his law (119:41-48)*. The person who trusts in God's word will "walk in freedom," fearing no one and even speaking of his or her faith "to kings."

26. *Comfort in his commands (119:49–56)*. Because the psalmist had kept God’s laws (119:55–56), they were a comfort in the hour of pain and persecution.
27. *Meeting with God at midnight (119:57–64)*. The psalmist declared his loyalty to God and his word: God was his portion; he was loyal to God’s people (119:63); he hurried, “without lingering,” to keep God’s commandments, even arising at midnight to spend time with the Lord.
28. *“Thank God for my affliction!” (119:65–72)*. The psalmist’s affliction was a good thing (119:65, 68, 71) because it had turned him from his wayward life back to God and his word (119:67).
29. *“You did it because you loved me!” (119:73–80)*. Again the writer expressed his belief that God had afflicted him for his own spiritual good, because it had turned him to his word.
30. *Worn out like a wineskin (119:81–88)*. Though worn out by persecution, the psalmist was also wearing himself out seeking comfort in God’s word (119:81–82)!
31. *Forever standing firm in the heavens (119:89–96)*. As surely as the earth itself endures, so also will God’s word stand firm (119:89–91). The psalmist hoped God’s word would bring that same endurance to his own life (119:92–96).
32. *Wiser than his enemies, instructors, and elders (119:97–104)*. The psalmist had surpassed all his associates in

wisdom (119:98–100) because he studied and practiced God’s law (119:99–100).

33. *A lamp and a light (119:105–112)*. God’s word offered the psalmist both illumination and inspiration. Though his enemies always threatened, God’s word was his heritage and joy (119:111).
34. *Depart, all you double-minded! (119:113–120)*. The psalmist would separate himself *from* the ungodly that he might separate himself *to* God’s word (119:113, 115).
35. *A time for action! (119:121–128)*. While pleading for mercy for himself as a lover of God’s law, the psalmist implored God to exercise justice against those who disregarded God’s law.
36. *“Easily understood, even by the uneducated!” (119:129–136)*. Even the “simple” can become wise through God’s word. The writer “panted” for more of this wisdom (119:131; see 42:1) and expressed great sorrow over the widespread disobedience to God’s law.
37. *The Scriptures in the time of storm (119:137–144)*. Though consumed with anguish over the wickedness around him (119:139), the psalmist found delight in God’s word (119:143).
38. *Delighting in them day and night (119:145–152)*. Though many sinful people were near him, the psalmist found the Lord near as well (119:150–151) as he arose before dawn and stayed awake at night contemplating the Scriptures.

39. *Error-free and eternal (119:153–160)*. Amid persecution, the true believer can trust in a God whose words are totally trustworthy and will not change (119:160).
40. *“I pray seven times a day!” (119:161–168)*. In spite of persecution, the psalmist found peace and hope (119:165–166) through his faithful and frequent practice of prayer.
41. *“Come seek me,” said the straying sheep to the Shepherd! (119:169–176)*. Confessing that he had gone astray, the psalmist declared that, nonetheless, he had not forgotten God’s word, and he hoped that God would seek him (119:176) and would hear, help, and save him (119:169–170, 173–174).<sup>1</sup>
42. It is also important to note that there are 10 titles for Scripture given in this chapter.
43. It is called *law* – 25 times, *testimonies* – 22 times, *precepts* – 21 times, *statutes* – 22 times, *commandments* – 21 times, *judgments* – 4 times, *word* – 36 times, *ordinances* – 16 times, *wonders* – 1 time, and *words* – 6 times.
44. According to Psalm 119, God’s Word **brings blessing and happiness** (119:1–2, 122), **It keeps us pure** (119:9), **It keeps us from sin** (119:11, 29, 121), **It gives wise advice** (119:24), **It encourages the grieving** (119:28), **It reassures us of his promises for those who honor him** (119:38), **It provides answers, even for those who taunt**

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<sup>1</sup>H. L. Willmington, *Willmington's Bible Handbook* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997). 323.

**us** (119:42), **It gives freedom** (119:45), **It offers hope** (119:49), **It comforts and revives** (119:50), **It provides a thankful heart** (119:62), **It brings us back to God** (119:37, 67): God will discipline us if we turn from him, **It instructs and gives wisdom** (119:98–100), **It nourishes** (119:103) : God’s word is sweeter than honey, **It enlightens** (119:105) : God’s word provides a light for our path, **It protects** (119:114) : God’s word is a refuge, **It sustains our hope** (119:116), **It brings delight** (119:70, 111). **It brings peace** (119:165) : We do not have to fear stumbling, **It delivers** (119:170) : God promises to rescue us, **It brings love and salvation** (119:41, 149), **It shows mercy to all who love his name** (119:132), **It deserves respect** (119:46, 120), **It is important to remember** (119:141).<sup>2</sup>

45. As I stated earlier, the theme of verses 9-16 is “The purifying power of God’s Word.”<sup>3</sup>
46. The psalmist begins this section with a question in verse 9 and also answers it in verse 9 and further elaborates on it in verses 10-16.
47. I believe before we can talk about Scripture memory, we need to talk about purity because in verse 11, the psalmist says that the reason for treasuring God’s Word in his heart was so that he “may not sin against” God.

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<sup>2</sup>H. L. Willmington, *The Outline Bible* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999). Ps 119:141.

<sup>3</sup> Steven Lawson, *Holman Old Testament Commentary: Psalms 76-150*, (Nashville, TN.: Holman Reference, 2006). 242.

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48. Scripture memory is beneficial in many ways but the most benefit comes when it acts as a preventative against sin.
49. So as we consider this subject tonight, I want us to look at 7 principles found in verses 10-16 that will help us with purity according to God's Word.
50. Look at verse 9 where the psalmist asks and answers his question.
51. The question the psalmist asks is regarding *purity*.



**I. The Question Regarding Purity (v.9a)**

“How can a young man keep his way pure?”

Charles Spurgeon asks, “How shall he become and remain practically holy? He is but a young man, full of hot passions, and poor in knowledge and experience; how shall he get right, and keep right? Never was there a more important question for any man; never was there a fitter time for asking it than at the commencement of life. It is by no means an easy task which the prudent young man sets before him. He wishes to choose a clean way, to be himself clean in it, to cleanse it of any foulness which may arise in the future, and to end by showing a clear course from the first step to the last; but, alas, his way is already unclean by actual sin which he has already committed, and he himself has within his nature a tendency towards that which defileth. Here, then, is the difficulty, first of beginning aright, next of being always able to know and choose the right, and of continuing in the right till perfection is ultimately reached: this is hard for any man, how shall a youth accomplish it? The way, or life, of the man has to be cleansed from the sins of his youth behind him, and kept clear of the sins which temptation will place before him: this is the work, this is the difficulty.

No nobler ambition can lie before a youth, none to which he is called by so sure a calling; but none in which greater difficulties can be found. Let him not, however, shrink from the glorious enterprise of living a pure and gracious life; rather let him enquire the way by which all obstacles may be overcome. Let him not think that he knows the road to easy victory, nor dream that he can keep himself by his

own wisdom; he will do well to follow the Psalmist, and become an earnest enquirer asking how he may cleanse his way. Let him become a practical disciple of the holy God, who alone can teach him how to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, that trinity of defilers by whom many a hopeful life has been spoiled. He is young and unaccustomed to the road, let him not be ashamed often to enquire his way of him who is so ready and so able to instruct him in it.”<sup>4</sup>

When the psalmist asks this question, he poses it of a “young man.”

This, in the Hebrew, is a naar, which is used to refer to “a boy, a teenager or a servant.”

It is used in Ex.2:6 of Moses as an infant. It is used in 1 Sam.1:24 of Samuel as a child just weaned. It is used of Ishmael in Gen.21:12 and Isaac in Gen.22:5 and youth. It is used in Gen.37:2 of Joseph, who is said to be 17 years old, and it is used in Gen.34:19 of one who was at a marriageable age.

The word then can refer to a child of any age but here the psalmist qualifies it by telling us this is a “young man.”

Either he is speaking of himself or of “young” men in general. It is clear that this “young” man can understand the issue of purity. Joseph was 17 years old when he was sold to the Ishmaelite traders and either the same age or a year or two older when Potiphar bought him. In Genesis 39:2 he

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<sup>4</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, The Treasury of David (Bible Explorer).

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is now referred to as a “man” who was “overseer” to Potphar’s house (v.4). We’re not told how old he was when Potphar’s wife made sexual advances to him, but we could suffice it to say he was probably somewhere between 17-20 years old.

The point is this: As a young man, he understood purity and that sexual sin was a “great evil and sin against God” (Gen.39:9).

So, parents, are you giving the Word of God to your teenagers? Are you teaching them about purity?

“How can a young man keep his way pure?”

Before we look at the answer given in verse 9, understand first that:

### A. Purity is God’s nature

1. He is pure – **1 John 3:3 (NASB77)** <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as ***He is pure***.
2. His Word is pure – **1 Peter 2:2 (NASB77)** <sup>2</sup> like newborn babes, long for the ***pure milk of the word***, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.

### B. Purity is God’s will

1. It is a prerequisite of heaven

- a) **Psalms 24:3-4 (NASB77)** <sup>3</sup> Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? <sup>4</sup> He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully.
  - b) **Hebrews 12:14 (NASB77)** <sup>14</sup> Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
  - c) **Matthew 5:8 (NASB77)** <sup>8</sup> "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
2. It is the mark of godly wisdom that comes from above

**James 3:17 (NASB77)** <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

3. It is to be sought by every child of God

Paul told Timothy in **2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB77)** <sup>22</sup> Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

4. It is to occupy our thoughts continuously

**Philippians 4:8 (NASB77)** <sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is *pure*, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, *let your mind dwell on these things.*

## II. The Answer Regarding Purity (vv.9b-16)

The psalmist answers his own question in verse 9 and then elaborates further on it in verses 10-16.

The question in verse 9 is “How can a young man keep his way pure?”

His immediate answer is:

### A. By Obeying God’s Word (v.9b)

“By keeping it according to Your word.”

One of the most crucial problems in the life of every **young man** is how to keep pure. The answer is by practical obedience to the words of the Bible.<sup>5</sup>

The question is “How can a young man keep his *way* pure?”

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<sup>5</sup>William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Ps 119:9.

The word rendered **his way** (Heb *ḥōrach*) signifies a track, a rut, such as would have been made by the wheel of a cart. A young sinner has not beaten a broad path, but rather has transgressed again and again in the same manner, creating a sinful rut. How shall he escape? **By taking heed thereto according to thy word.** Heeding the Word of God leads to a godly life-style. Ignoring the Word of God leads to a godless rut.<sup>6</sup>

Obedience to God's Word is the answer to purity.

1. Joseph feared God and was obedient to His Word which is why he could not sin in doing what Potiphar's wife wanted him to do in having an immoral relationship with her.

**Genesis 39:7-9 (NASB77)** <sup>7</sup> And it came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."  
<sup>8</sup> But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, with me *here*, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. <sup>9</sup> "There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. **How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?**"

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<sup>6</sup>*KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994). 1148.

2. It is the Word that brings about purity

Jesus told His disciples in **John 15:3 (NASB77)** <sup>3</sup>  
"You are already *clean because of the word  
which I have spoken to you.*

3. It is the Word that sets us apart to God

Jesus prayed in **John 17:17 (NASB77)** <sup>17</sup>  
"*Sanctify them in the truth;* Thy word is truth.

4. Every husband is to have a purifying love towards his wife

**Ephesians 5:25-27 (NASB77)** <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; <sup>26</sup> that He might *sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,* <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.

- B. By Seeking God with All Your Heart (v.10)

David now elaborates on his answer in verse 9.

What is involved in obeying God's Word? A seeking heart! It is the only safeguard against wandering "from Your commandments."

The psalmist has already stated in verse 2 that those who are “blessed” are “those who observe [obey] His testimonies, who ***seek Him with all their heart.***”

Seeking God “with all my heart” is the psalmist’s desire.

1. **Psalm 119:34 (NASB77)** <sup>34</sup> Give me understanding, that I may observe Thy law, And keep it ***with all my heart.***
2. **Psalm 119:58 (NASB77)** <sup>58</sup> I entreated Thy favor ***with all my heart;*** Be gracious to me according to Thy word.
3. **Psalm 119:69 (NASB77)** <sup>69</sup> The arrogant have forged a lie against me; ***With all my heart*** I will observe Thy precepts.
4. **Psalm 119:145 (NASB77)** <sup>145</sup> I cried ***with all my heart;*** answer me, O LORD! I will observe Thy statutes.

C. By Treasuring God’s Word in Your Heart (v.11)

Purity requires obedience to God’s Word, seeking God with all your heart, and treasuring God’s Word in your heart.

The psalmist says, “Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”



The psalmist recognizes that:

1. This is God's Word!

The psalmist makes this claim 33 times in Psalm 119. He states this in vv.9, 11, 16, 17, 25, 28, 38, 41, 42, 50, 58, 65, 67, 74, 76, 81, 82, 89, 101, 105, 107, 114, 116, 133, 140, 148, 154, 158, 160, 162, 169, 170, 172.

2. God's Word is to be treasured in your heart

The word "treasured" means to "store up, treasure, hide away"; here it may mean to memorize the Law. This meaning seems to be supported by verse 13, which speaks of the recitation of all the laws that Yahweh has given his people.<sup>7</sup>

Do you see God's Word as a precious treasure?

Charles Spurgeon said, "His heart would be kept by the word because he kept the word in his heart. All that he had of the word written, and all that had been revealed to him by the voice of God,— all, without exception, he had stored away in his affections, as a treasure to be preserved in a casket, or as a choice seed to be buried in a fruitful soil: what soil more fruitful than a renewed heart,

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<sup>7</sup>Robert G. Bratcher and William David Reyburn, *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991). 1000.

wholly seeking the Lord? The word was God's own, and therefore precious to God's servant. He did not wear a text on his heart as a charm, but he hid it in his heart as a rule. He laid it up in the place of love and life, and it filled the chamber with sweetness and light. We must in this imitate David, copying his heart work as well as his outward character. First, we must mind that what we believe is truly God's word; that being done, we must hide or treasure it each man for himself; and we must see that this is done, not as a mere feat of the memory, but as the joyful act of the affections.”<sup>8</sup>

Jeremiah said in **Jeremiah 15:16 (NASB77)** <sup>16</sup>  
Thy words were found and I ate them, And Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Does this describe your desire? Is God's Word the joy and the delight of your heart?

Where are you to treasure God's Word? In your heart.

The goal is the end of Psalm 119:16, “I shall not forget Your word.”

That's why you hear statements about remembering God and His Word.

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<sup>8</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, The Treasury of David (Bible Explorer).

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- a) David called on Asaph and his relatives to give thanks to the Lord when he said in 1 Chronicles 16:15, “Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations.”
- b) When God instituted the feast of unleavened bread he said in **Exodus 13:8-9 (NASB77)** <sup>8</sup> "And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' <sup>9</sup> "And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt.
- c) Peter told his readers in 2 Peter 1:5-15 to remember by adding moral qualities to your life and that he would “always be ready to remind you of these things” (v.12).
- d) What are some ways we can treasure God’s Word in our hearts?

By being committed to purity  
By being committed to obeying God’s Word  
By being committed to studying God’s Word

This is where it all begins!

When you arrive early at church, why not get with someone and the two of you work on memorizing Scripture?

I found a neat computer program that not only helps you memorize Scripture but also helps you review it. It's called "Memorize His Word." I put a link to it on our study page on the website.

Write the verses you're learning on 3 X 5 index cards and carry them around with you to go over throughout the day.

The point is simply this: If you don't make the effort you won't do it! That's why you need to see the urgency of hiding the Word in your heart.

3. God's Word hidden in your heart will help you to overcome sin

The psalmist says, "Your word I have treasured in my heart, ***that I may not sin against You.***"

All sin is against God as Psalm 51:4 says. Hiding God's Word in your heart will help you to see the wickedness of your sin and see the seriousness of it too. It will also help you to realize that what you're about to do, that is, sin, is "against" God.

God's Word will teach you this! It will cause you to form biblical convictions. It will cause you to see the divine standard God places on our lives.

Charles Spurgeon says, "Here was the object aimed at. As one has well said,—Here is the best thing—"thy word"; hidden in the best place,—"in my heart; "for the best of purposes,—"that I might not sin against thee." This was done by the Psalmist with personal care, as a man carefully hides away his money when he fears thieves,—in this case the thief dreaded was sin. Sinning "against God" is the believer's view of moral evil; other men care only when they offend against men. God's word is the best preventive against offending God, for it tells us his mind and will, and tends to bring our spirit into conformity with the divine Spirit. No cure for sin in the life is equal to the word in the seat of life, which is the heart. There is no hiding from sin unless we hide the truth in our souls."<sup>9</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

1. So parents! Are you first teaching your kids about purity?
2. Are you teaching them that the reason why we should memorize Scripture is so that we may not sin against God?
3. We will consider the remaining 4 principles next time.

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<sup>9</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, The Treasury of David (Bible Explorer).

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4. Let's pray.
5. As you pray tonight, ask God to help you to apply yourself to this task of hiding God's Word in your heart so that you may not sin against Him.
6. If you're here tonight without the Savior in your heart, turn from you sin tonight and embrace Jesus with all your heart.
7. **Romans 10:13 (NASB77)** <sup>13</sup> for "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."
8. Do you know the Lord in whom you are calling on?
9. He is Jesus Christ!
10. Call on Him now.
11. Let's pray.