

Series: *Christ's Preeminence Demonstrated*

Title: "Open My Eyes" (Psalm 119:17-24)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 3/10/2019

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Before we look into God's Word together this morning and seek His instruction in it, let us look to the Lord once again in prayer...

The passage of Scripture to which I want to direct our attention this morning is found in Psalm 119. It is highly significant that the longest chapter in the Word of God is a chapter about the Word of God. It is a chapter about the nature of the Word of God, the purpose of the Word of God, and the effects of the Word on both the believer and the unbeliever. I want to direct our attention in particular to the words that we find beginning at verse 17. Psalm 119, beginning at verse 17:

17. Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word.
18. Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.
19. I am a stranger in the earth; do not hide Your commandments from me.
20. My soul breaks with longing for Your judgments at all times.
21. You rebuke the proud — the cursed, who stray from Your commandments.
22. Remove from me reproach and contempt, for I have kept Your testimonies.
23. Princes also sit and speak against me, but Your servant meditates on Your statutes.
24. Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors.

In particular, this morning I want to focus our attention on the familiar words of verse 18 – “Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.”

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"Open My Eyes"

What is the first thing that confronts us as we look at these words? Well first of all, this is a prayer. It is a petition to God. "Open my eyes..." What does this mean? Why is the psalmist praying for this? Why does he need for God to do this for Him?

Well in the original Hebrew we find that the psalmist is literally petitioning God in this way: Uncover my eyesight. I recognize that my eyes are covered. Something is over them that is preventing me from seeing at all, much less from seeing thing clearly.

And he says, "Open my eyes." There is an emphasis in the Hebrew. Open my eyes – yes, even mine. It is a personal petition. It is a petition that recognizes a personal condition. It is a petition that recognizes a personal need. It is also, as we shall see, a petition that recognizes personal responsibility. And it is a petition that is asking the Lord for personal benefit.

What is our natural condition? Apart from the work of God, we are the people who are described many times in the pages of the Word of God in this way – "people who walk in darkness." Literally, "people who walk in obscurity" – people whose vision is not merely impaired, but obscured. Blocked. People who are in utter spiritual darkness.

Our eyes are covered. We are in darkness. We cannot see.

The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not [even] know what makes them stumble. (Proverbs 4:19)

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Satan, "the god of this age," Second Corinthians chapter 4 tells us, "has blinded [the minds of those] who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:4-6)

Here is where today's church is failing. Today's church, with few and precious exceptions, preaches man, not Christ. Man's word, not God's Word. Why? Because, as these verses tell us, light has never shined into their hearts. They are still in darkness.

And what is the result? The Holy Spirit tells us in 1 Corinthians 2:14. "...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God" – literally, the unsaved man does not accept the things of God as truth – Why? – "for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them" – he is incapable of understanding them – Why? – "because they are spiritually discerned."

Let me put this in terms of what has happened this past week in our nation. This past week, the highest court of the United States ruled that it is a Constitutionally-protect act for two men or two women to enter into a so-called marriage relationship, to enter into a relationship that God in His holy Law repeatedly calls an abomination, a supremely detestable thing in His sight.

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Would we have had the Supreme Court decision of this week if the decision had been rendered by men and women whose eyes could see? We have the answer in the words of the Court. If you read the majority opinion that was given, and if you read all of the dissents that were written, there is absolutely nothing of Biblical Christianity in any of them. Absolutely nothing. The case was argued and decided completely apart from even the slightest consideration of the holy Law of the God of the universe, the One that our own founding documents acknowledge as the Author of true liberty.

And why is our government in this condition? It is because of this: As the church goes, so goes the nation. The church has failed to grasp that it alone has supernatural authority and power that emanates from the supernatural Word of God.

The believing church, the Bible-believing church, the Scripture-driven church, the praying church, the church that holds forth God's Word as the only standard, the church that holds forth God's Word as the inerrant authority and the infallible critic of the human heart, the church that declares that all things are naked and open before the eyes of the One to whom we must give account – that church, Christ's true church, has greater power than all of human government to exert a righteous influence upon the nation. It has the power of God.

Would we have the conditions that we have in so much of what is called the Evangelical church today if the churches were being led by men who can see? It is by the way in which they are leading the church that they most clearly demonstrate that they cannot see, their spiritual eyes are darkened. Many of them – I would dare to say

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most of them, based on the evidence – are still lost in their sins. They are still blinded by the god of this world.

How does God remedy that condition? It is God who brings the light that drives away darkness.

Through the tender mercy of our God... the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:78-79)

God does this first of all by the saving work of Christ. God applies that work to our hearts by His Spirit who regenerates us. By His Spirit who lives within us. By His Spirit who "guides...into all truth" (look at this week's broadcast notes)

"That I May See"

Why does God remedy that condition of obscured sight, covered eyesight resulting in spiritual darkness? He does it, the psalmist declares, "that I may see." This is a very rich statement in the original Hebrew. "That I may see," the psalmist says.

That I may pay attention to God's Law. That I may behold God's Law with unrestrained eyes. That I may give to God's Law due respect and regard. That I may look upon it with a proper insight, with a proper spiritual appreciation, and with an appropriate response. All of those things are contained within the original language of those four words, "that I may see."

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Why does God do this? Why does God answer the petition of the man who prays, "Open my eyes, that I may see...?"

God does not do it to give us a mere knowledge that will puff us up with pride. No. He gives sight so that we may understand our humble position before Him.

He gives us knowledge that increases our responsibility before Him. He gives us knowledge that must be obeyed. He does this so that we may walk in the light, walk in the truth. He does this in order that we may set our minds on things above where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

"Open my eyes, that I may see." Biblical truth is revealed truth. Man does not discover it or understand it on his own. He cannot.

Biblical truth is revelation from God. Biblical truth consists of God's facts, not man's opinions. To understand Biblical truth requires God's enlightenment by His Spirit. To obey Biblical truth requires God's illumination.

"Wondrous Things"

And what is the nature of that truth? The psalmist calls it "wondrous things." Again, this is a rich term in the original. It speaks of things that are surpassingly marvellous. It speaks of things that are extraordinary. It speaks of things that are beyond mere human power to perceive. All of that is embodied in this word.

The Scripture-driven Christian can see what the unregenerated world cannot see. Let me put it to you in a very basic way. The Christian sees a different world than the

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ungodly see. The blue of the sky is a different blue than the ungodly see. The green of the grass is a different green.

As the hymn writer has put it, "Something lives in every hue" – even in the very colors of the creation – that "Christless eyes have never seen."

This message will be continued on our next broadcast.

About the Broadcast

The Scripture-Driven Church airs each week across the United States and around the world. Our goal is to obey Christ's Great Commission: preaching the Gospel to all, and equipping believers in Christ to live every area of life by the sole authority of Scripture, to the glory of our Lord and Savior.

For more information, please visit our website, www.teachingtheword.org.

The prayers of our listeners and supporters are vital to all we do. We thank you for bringing this ministry before the throne of grace. We are also grateful to God for the gifts of individuals and churches that support this work financially.

**May the Lord richly bless your personal study
of His inspired, infallible, inerrant Word.**

TeachingtheWord Ministries

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