

God's Word & Work is Sure & Settled

Psalm 119:89-96

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Introduction: So begins the second half of Psalm 119, with the next 8 verses beginning with the 12th letter of the Hebrew alphabet, "Lamed." In a day of drastic & dangerous changes in our society, it is good to know & rely upon the unchangeable affirmations of God's Word. Consider the words of Henry Lyte in his hymn "Abide with Me" where he says, "'Swift to its close ebbs our life's little day; Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away! Change & decay in all around I see: O Thou who changest not, abide with me!" Note with me tonight 4 affirmations of the psalmist that were true 3,000 years ago & are just as true today in 2023. Consider with me: (1) the faithfulness of God's Word (:89-90a); (2) the unchangeableness of God's creation (:90b-91); (3) the steadfastness of God's servant (:92-95); & (4) the unlimitedness of God's work (:96).

I. The faithfulness of God's Word (:89-90a)

A. God's "settled" Word >

1. Eternal, immutable, comprehensive, fixed & secure.
2. "After tossing about on a sea of trouble the psalmist here leaps to shore & stands upon a rock" (Spurgeon).

Summary: God's faithfulness is not limited to one generation – His promises are not worn out with use.

B. Man's "unsettled" teachings >

1. Consider the teaching of Mormonism & the black community.
2. Consider the teaching of Jehovah Witnesses & the 144,000.

Summary: Note the contrast between man's "changeable" teachings & God's "settled" Word. "There is an analogy between the *Word* of God & the *works* of God. They are both of them constant, fixed, & unchangeable" (Spurgeon).

II. The unchangeableness of God's creation (:90b-91)

A. Note God's "ordinances" >

1. The earth is "established" – meaning "fixed" (cf. Psalm 57:7). "The revolutions of the earth & the motions of the heavenly bodies may be calculated" (Plumer).
2. The word "ordinances" is also translated "judgments" or His settled decisions.

B. Note also Creation's obedience >

1. God's will is the universal law of Nature.
2. "From the ministering of the Archangel to the labor of the insect, from the poising (balance or suspension) of the planets to the gravitation of a grain of dust, the power & glory of all creatures, & all matter, consist in their *obedience*, not in their freedom" (Ruskin).

Summary: "All the creatures are in their places, & according to their capacities, serviceable to their Creator, & answer the ends of their Creation, & shall man be the only rebel, the only revolter from his allegiance, & the only unprofitable burden of the earth?" (Henry).

III. The steadfastness of God's servant (:92-95)

A. His "delights" in God's Law >

1. The psalmist refers to the "*delight(s)*" of God's Word; here the plural to indicate the intensity of his love for the Word of God (cf. 119:16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 77, 174 > "*delight*" & in 119:92, 143 > "*delights*").
2. The psalmist tells us that it has been his delight(s) in God's Word that has seen him through his trail of affliction (physical – in body or by persecutors).

Summary: "That which was our *delight* in prosperity has been our *light* in adversity; that which in the day kept us from *presuming* has in the night kept us from *perishing*" (Spurgeon).

B. His deliverance from his enemies >

1. His **condition**:

- a. He is revived ("*quicken*ed"), made alive & lively.
- b. He is rescued (implied in verse 95); though his enemies had waited to see him perish.

2. His **cry**:

- a. He belongs to the Lord because of creation, preservation, & redemption (cf. I Cor. 6:19-20; heavenly CPR).
- b. "The proof that he is in covenant with God is found in the fact that he *sought* to know & to do the will of God" (Plumer).

Summary: He who seeks holiness is already saved; if we have sought the Lord we may be sure that the Lord has sought us, & will certainly save (deliver) us" (Spurgeon).

IV. The unlimitedness of God's work (& Word) (:96)

A. The limit of earthly "*perfection*" >

1. "Everything of human origin has its bounds & limits, & ends, howsoever extensive, noble, & excellent" (Clarke).
2. "Poor perfection which one sees an end of! Yet such are all those things in this world which pass for perfections" (Henry).

B. The unlimitedness of God's commandment >

1. God's perfect law declares our imperfection. All the law is perfect – all is needed, necessary, & purposeful (cf. II Timothy 3:16-17).
2. It is the psalmist saying, "I have learnt by experience that all earthly perfection has its limit; but God's commandment is unlimited in extent & value" (Kirkpatrick).

Conclusion: In light of all the changes about us, is it your prayer, "O Thou who changest not, abide with me"? Wiersbe reminds us: "The Word equips us to deal with the changes of life & the crises that come. The verb '*sought*' in verse 94 means 'to consult, to inquire, to beat a path, to read repeatedly. Here is a believer who beat a path to the Bible, read it over & over, studied it, & when he had to make a decision, consulted it carefully. Philosophies change, political expedients fail, promises & contracts are broken, but the Word of God still stands." How about you tonight? Are you known as one who "beats a path" to the Bible in a time of crisis or to seek God's direction? Someone once said; "To **seek** God's will is life's greatest adventure; to **find** God's will is life's greatest discovery; to **do** God's will is life's greatest achievement." Again I ask, "How about you tonight?"