

Wednesday Word

June 26, 2024

Psalm 119:9-11 “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”

As most of you know I was raised by great parents in a solid Christian household. I was at church at least 6 days out of the week and my folks were involved in several service activities and ministries. I felt, and still do feel, very at home inside a church and even in churches I am just a visitor of. I strayed from the Lord in high school and after a few years of misery, I came back to God like the prodigal son. The years of going my own way made my spirit and my soul very dry and barren. I had to rebuild my relationship with the Lord that was very immature at best as I wandered away in my most important spiritually developing years.

When I graduated from middle school my pastor gave each student in my class a nice Zondervan NIV Bible (I no longer read NIV but that's another story). I pulled that Bible out of my drawer, blew off the dust and opened it up. At the time, I was working at a construction company and living at my parents' house. I would get home from work around 4:30 and go right into my room and start reading the Bible. I remember sitting on my bed for hours and hours just reading and reading. This went on as a routine for about the next year. I didn't go anywhere but to church and would even spend my full day on Saturdays reading and studying. The more I would read the hungrier for God's Word I would become. If my memory serves me, I read the Bible the entire way through 3 times that year. This was a very important season in my life to allow the water of God's Spirit and Word to heal the self-inflicted wounds from my years in the world.

I look back at those years and although I don't have the physical time to dedicate to God's Word as I did when I was single, I believe God set a standard in my life to always be dutiful in my study and relationship with him. I have matured to a point where some of my best encounters and devotions with the Lord will be when I read one single verse and then just meditate on it all day. As I keep that verse on the forefront of my mind, it comes to life in my heart and instructs, corrects and guides my life.

I think so many times we need our devotional life to be a long and arduous so we can prove to God we are truly devoted to Him. But the reality is He wants to fellowship with us, he wants to be near us and lead, guide and speak to us in every part of our life. The challenge I want us all to consider is: Am I keeping in step with the Spirit? Is he close to me and am I close to him? We can miss the beautiful and full life with Jesus if we turn our relationship with Jesus into works. Find a way of connecting with God that works for you and then allow the Spirit to develop and refine that. Maybe its prayers in the AM or a single scripture read

out loud as you start your day? Whatever it is, dedicate it to the Lord and allow Him to come near to you!

I Love You and God Loves You!

Pastor Eric