

Beth

- 9) How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.
- 10) With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments.
- 11) Your Word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.
- 12) Blessed are You, O Lord; Teach me Your statutes.
- 13) With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth.
- 14) I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches.
- 15) I will meditate on Your precepts, and regard Your ways.
- 16) I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.

We are studying the 119th Psalm, which is a Psalm specifically designed to magnify the Word of God. The Psalm is so focused in the written Word of God that it is written in a chronological order of every letter of the Hebrew Alphabet.

There are 22 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet and there are 22 eight verse sections in this Psalm. Each section begins with the letter of the alphabet to which it corresponds. So in these verses the letter “b” (Beth) begins every verse in this “be” (Beth) section. The underlined word(s) in this section are the words that actually begin the verse in the Hebrew text and those words start with a word that begins with the letter “b.”

For example, the word “how” that starts **verse 9** is the word “bameh.” The word “with” that starts **verse 10** is the word “bical.” The words “in my heart” that starts **verse 11** is the word “Bilbi.” So this is really a Psalm that focuses on the written Word of God.

Now the primary emphasis of this series of verse is this:

THE YOUNG PERSON WHO WANTS A PURE, POWERFUL, JOYFUL, IMPACTING LIFE WILL BE ONE WHO WILL KEEP HIS FOCUS ON CAREFULLY UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING GOD’S WRITTEN WORD.

This is a passage that causes me to have great fear for the next generation. Most of the young people who go to church are not going to a church that truly reverences the Word of God. They are growing up in a church designed to entertain them. The church is failing them because a careful focus on God’s written Word is the only thing that can really make a person totally fulfilled.

Most young people are looking for a successful and happy life. If you ask most churches what they need to do to help bring this about, they will tell you that the key is a dynamic youth program that blends fun, fellowship and some spiritual principles.

There are not too many churches that will teach the young people that the key to their life is a careful and accurate grasp of the written Word of God, all 66 books.

If you ask most schools what do the young people need to have a successful and happy life, you will be hard pressed to find one that tells them what is in this text. They will tell people they need computers and swimming pools and athletic programs and studies in math, geography and science. Now there is nothing wrong with any of these things; but they leave out the one central ingredient that can truly change a life.

If you ask most communities what the young people need, they will tell you they need youth centers, movie theaters, bowling alleys and skating rinks. Again, there is nothing wrong with any of this but it leaves out the ingredient of this text.

If you ask God what do the young people need for life, God says what they need is a careful understanding of My written Word.

It is God's written Word that produces power in one's life. It is God's Word that is able to make one wise. It is God's Word that is able to produce purity. It is God's Word that is able to put joy into a life. God's written Word is the key; this is God's formula and that is the emphasis of these eight verses.

It is a tragedy that everything else is taught to young people in school except the one thing that can really transform them; the Bible. The Bible is the one book that can really make a powerful difference and most schools have taken the one book that can do this out of their curriculum.

What is even more tragic than this is that most churches have taken a systematic study of God's written Word out of their services. The serious exposition of God's Word is being replaced by bands, praise songs, concerts, plays, dancing girls, movies and sermonettes. These churches are in effect hurting the flock and harming the youth. It is a serious focus on God's Word that the young people need. This is the key to their life.

YOUTH REALITY #1 – Young people who desire a pure heart keep their focus on God's written Word. **119:9**

In Hebrew this first part of the verse is addressed to the "young man." There is no question that this is gender-oriented. In fact, this word was used of one who was a young man about military age (I Sam. 30:17). We suggest this describes one who is an older teen or nearing twenty (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 555).

However, we cannot just limit this to young men because what is being discussed here is the matter of purity and that is not only a struggle for young men, but young women, and for that matter for everyone.

There is no question that when one is younger, the passions run hotter. The young person doesn't have a lot of experience in life or knowledge of the pitfalls that exist, but the struggle for purity is very real. It is a struggle.

Now the question arises, how can a young man or young woman keep himself or herself pure? This question is very critical in our society today and needs to be directed to all young people, perhaps even before Junior High School. We are living in a culture that is dedicated to flaunting and promoting that which is not pure. This world of ours features internet, movies, music, and magazines that all promote impure things at a very young age. In fact, pressure is on young people to use their telephones to do things that are not God-honoring.

So how is it possible for a young person to be pure in this kind of world? The answer is the Word of God. The answer lies in a commitment to carefully understand and apply God's written Word. In fact, the words "keeping it according to your word" mean carefully guarding and protecting the Word of God in your life.

Any person of any age, who will commit himself to accurately understanding and applying and protecting God's Word, will discover that God will produce a powerful and pure work in the individual.

Young people who persistently reverence God's Word and study God's Word will become powerful and pure. When God's Word is removed, there will always be a decline in morality because it is a focus on God's Word that keeps one pure.

YOUTH REALITY #2 – Young people who do not want to wander, need to seek God with all of their heart. **119:10**

Now the idea of seeking God with all of the heart is the idea of having a heart that is focused on carefully and accurately understanding God's Word so that one knows what is right in any context of life. That kind of focus keeps one from wandering.

When one gets away from a focus on God's Word, one can begin to drift and wander out into many areas, including those areas that are unclean. Now the writer truly wanted to know God's word with "all" of his heart. This young person so wanted to know the Word of God that he actually asks God not to let him wander from God's commandments.

He did not want to drift into impure things, so He asks God to keep him focused on His Word.

Young people will never regret praying and asking God to keep them focused on understanding His Word. You will not wander philosophically or morally. Any young person who wants a powerful, pure, fulfilled life will commit himself to understanding God's Word and then will pray and ask God never to let him wander away from it.

YOUTH REALITY #3 – Young people who do not want to sin will treasure God’s Word in their heart. **119:11**

Someone said of this verse what we have here is: 1) the best thing—the Word of God; 2) the best hiding place—the human heart and 3) the best purpose—not to sin.

The real key to a life of purity and a life that does not habitually fall into sin is to treasure God’s Word in your heart. Now the Septuagint uses the plural “your words.” But in either the Hebrew or Greek text, the fact is not sinning against God comes down to treasuring the very words that are found in the Bible.

Now the verb “may not sin” is in the Imperfect Tense. What that means is that the writer was speaking about a point of sin that progressed and continued to grow and grow (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, p. 313). This is not saying one will never sin if he treasures God’s Word. Young people need to know that there will be times when they will fail, like we all do.

There is no one who will ever reach sinless perfection in this life. Solomon said, “Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins” (Eccl. 7:20).

But the one who will not end up perpetually sinning so that he progresses more and more is one who will treasure God’s Word. The idea of treasuring God’s Word is the idea of considering it to be the most valuable thing in one’s heart.

One who treasures God’s Word will want to know what it says, what it means. This one will have a passion to listen to it being accurately taught. This text does not so much have to do with memorizing it as treasuring it in your heart.

Now most young people are in schools that do not consider God’s Word to be the ultimate treasure. But if a young person will make this their treasure, that young person will see God do amazing things in their lives.

YOUTH REALITY #4 – Young people who want God’s blessings talk to God. **119:12-16**

Young people who are pure and powerful and fulfilled are those who will pray and talk to God.

Item #1 - Powerful young people acknowledge to God that He is the blessed God. **119:12a**

Obviously one of the things that God is praised for in this Psalm is for giving the written Scriptures. God deserves praise for giving us His written Word.

Item #2 - Powerful young people ask God to teach them His written Word. **119:12b**

It is interesting that the word “teach” is an imperative, so the writer is actually crying out to God and asking Him, in fact, commanding Him to please teach him His Word and statutes.

This young person wanted to know everything about the written Word of God that he could possibly know and he was wise enough to realize God is the one who must enable me to do this. Young people, you will never regret asking God to give you wisdom to understand His Word.

Item #3 - Powerful young people defend God's Word verbally. **119:13**

A contextual point here is that the more one would know of God's Word, the more effective he would be in communicating it. It is clear that this young man had literally spoken up for God and defended His Word. He took a stand with what he knew.

When he says, "I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth," it is obvious that this young person considered the written Scriptures to be the very Word of God and any regulation or truth in the Word he did not hesitate to communicate.

Young people who defend God's truth and Word will never regret it.

Item #4 - Powerful young people rejoice in God's Word. **119:14a**

This young person found his greatest joy in the Word of God. As one writer said, he rejoiced in the "way of your rules." **What young people will discover is they will find their greatest joy and happiness in life in knowing and applying God's Word to their lives.** Most will not do this and most will end up miserable.

Item #5 - Powerful young people treasure God's Word. **119:14b**

Young people will find all kind of riches in the Word of God. You will ultimately have the richest and most fulfilled life of all by treasuring the Word of God.

This young person treasured God's Word as much as in all riches. Do you see that? When we get to the place where we recognize the value of God's written Word as being the most valuable thing on this earth, we have reached a very powerful and pure level.

Item #6 - Powerful young people meditate on God's Word. **119:15a**

One of the things that God's people need to learn to do is to sit still and sit quiet and think. Be quiet and think about God and His precious Word.

Now the idea of meditating on the precepts of God is the idea of carefully thinking about everything in view of the written Scriptures. This idea includes carefully thinking about every decision we make in view of the revealed Word of God.

Item #7 - Powerful young people regard the ways in God's Word. **119:15b**

The idea behind "regarding" God's ways is carefully gazing and thinking about the ways of God. The focus is thinking about how God reveals Himself to be in His Word.

Item #8 - Powerful young people delight in God's Word. **119:16a**

One writer said, "A love for God's word is a love for God (v. 47, 70), expressed in a heart attitude, in actions and in words. In his whole being the godly man cries out to God and delights in His will."

When any person delights in the Word of God, he is destined for powerful things.

Item #9 - Powerful young people will not forget God's Word. **119:16b**

The idea here is not just referring to a loss of memory, but a loss of focus and obedience. This young person is promising God that he will never lose a focus on carefully understanding His Word.