

Subject: *Lord, Open Our Spiritual Eyes*

Scripture: *Psalm 119:17-24*

The Bible is God's greatest gift and our greatest treasure. If we were to describe God's Word as a valuable piece of jewelry, then Psalm 119 would be like the precious stone in the middle. Psalm 119 is a complete statement and description of all Scripture. It reveals the truth about who God is and what He does. It also reveals the truth about who we are and what we must do with His Word.

The Bible is a spiritual book that requires spiritual understanding. As we read and study Scripture we realize this is no ordinary book. We can't begin to understand it without God's help. There's good news—God has promised to help us and give us spiritual understanding if we ask Him and make an effort to learn God's Word and live by it. Verses 17-24 speak about this matter of understanding the Scripture.

The preparation for understanding Scripture (vs. 17)

The most important preparation is salvation. When God “deals bountifully” to us He extends His mercy. ***Psalms 13:5-6***⁵ *But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.*⁶ *I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.*

When God deals bountifully our souls are at rest, ***Psalms 116:7*** *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

The problem of understanding Scripture (vs. 18)

“Wondrous” means “difficult to comprehend.” The psalmist asks for God's help to see what God what he can not see on his own. MacArthur comments: “Perhaps this is the supreme prayer that a student of Scripture could speak since it confesses the student's inadequacy and the Divine Author's sufficiency” (*MacArthur Study Bible*). This is a prayer for illumination.

1 Corinthians 2:11-14¹¹ *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*¹² *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*¹³ *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*¹⁴ *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

The purpose of understanding Scripture (vs. 19)

God's people have a dual citizenship. We are citizens of earth and citizens of heaven. Although we live in this world we are never at home in this world. We need guidance and encouragement for our journey.

Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

1 Peter 2:11 *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*

The passion for understanding Scripture (vs. 20)

This verse speaks of the strong desire to know God's Word and to do it. Do we really long to know it?

Psalms 119:40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

Psalms 119:131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Ezra was a ready scribe in God's Word. He had this passion, ***Ezra 7:10*** For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

The pride that prevents understanding Scripture (vs. 21)

God rebukes all who disobey His Word. A proud person doesn't have a teachable heart. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

The peace that comes from understanding Scripture (vs. 22)

The writer knows that others may intimidate and belittle him, but God will take care of him.

The perseverance that results from understanding Scripture (vs. 23)

Even though powerful people slandered him, the psalmist continued to meditate on God's Word. He would not be sidetracked or defeated because he kept his focus on the Lord.

The pleasure that is found in understanding Scripture (vs. 24)

The best source of wisdom and counsel is God's Word.

Psalms 119:98-100⁹⁸ Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. The best method of counseling is to explain and apply God's Word by God's Spirit to the life of a believer.

Let's look at a Bible illustration of how the Lord opens our spiritual eyes.

Luke 24:27-32 – On the road to Emmaus Jesus met two disciples shortly after His resurrection. He knew them, but they did not recognize Him at first. He opened the Scriptures and explained them.

Luke 24:44-45 – He opened their understanding. Two things need to be opened. We need to open our Bible and read and study and we also need to ask God to open our spiritual eyes to understand what we are reading and help us to apply it daily.

