

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. I would like to invite you to turn in your Bibles to Psalm 119 as we continue our look at *teaching your kids Scripture memory*.
2. Last time we looked at verses 9-11.
3. Tonight we are looking at verses 12-16.
4. Read Psalm 119:9-16.
5. This section of this great psalm begins with a question in verse 9 and from it we learn of the theme of verses 9-16.
6. The psalmist asks, “How can a young man keep his way **pure?**”
7. Purity is the subject of verses 9-16.
8. Specifically, “The purifying power of God’s Word”<sup>1</sup> because in verse 9 he answers by saying, “By keeping it according to Your word.”
9. So we have divided verses 9-16 into two sections related to purity: Verse 9a is *the question regarding purity*, and verses 9b-16 gives us *the answer regarding purity*.
10. In verse 9 he gives a specific answer to his question but then elaborates on it in verses 10-16.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Lawson, Holman Old Testament Commentary: Psalms 76-150, (Nashville, TN.: Holman Reference, 2006). 242.

11. Before we can talk about teaching our kids about Scripture memory we have to understand why it is important to treasure God's Word in our hearts.
12. Purity is God's nature and it is His will.
13. He is pure and so is His Word.
14. Therefore, it is His will that His children be pure.
15. So, the psalmist states in his *answer regarding purity* that the young man can only be made pure *by obeying God's Word* (v.9b).
16. This is what theologians refer to as practical sanctification.
17. This is what Paul meant when he said in **Philippians 2:12 (NASB)** <sup>12</sup> So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling.**
18. So each principle given in response to verse 9 deals with the matter of purity or the purifying power of God's Word.
19. What is the second answer the psalmist gives to his question in verse 9?
20. A young man can make his way pure *by seeking God with all his heart* (v.10).

## Teaching Your Kids About Scripture Memory (Pt.2)

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Psalm 119:12-16

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

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21. The psalmist says in verse 10, “With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments.”
22. An obedient, seeking heart is the only safeguard against wandering “from Your commandments.”
23. Notice in verse 10 the commitment of the psalmist.
24. He states it with the words, “With all my heart.”
25. That’s what he stated in verse 2 when he said, “How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who **seek Him with all their heart.**”
26. In verse 34 he said, “Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law, and **keep it with all my heart.**”
27. In verse 58 he said, “I entreated Your favor **with all my heart;** Be gracious to me according to Your word.”
28. He gave his all in his pursuit of God and his Word.
29. Purity was his highest priority.
30. He knew that the only way to not stray from God’s commandments was to seek Him with “all [his] heart.”
31. Obeying God’s Word, and seeking God with all his heart was the first two answers given to his question in verse 9.
32. The third is in verse 11.

33. He says, “Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”
34. How can a young man keep his way pure?
35. *By treasuring God’s Word in your heart.*
36. The psalmist recognized two things at this point.
37. This is God’s Word and God’s Word is to be treasured in your heart.
38. The word “treasured” means to “store up, treasure, hide away”; here it may mean to memorize the Law. This meaning seems to be supported by verse 13, which speaks of the recitation of all the laws that Yahweh has given his people.<sup>2</sup>
39. Charles Spurgeon said, “His heart would be kept by the word because he kept the word in his heart. All that he had of the word written, and all that had been revealed to him by the voice of God,—all, without exception, he had stored away in his affections, as a treasure to be preserved in a casket, or as a choice seed to be buried in a fruitful soil: what soil more fruitful than a renewed heart, wholly seeking the Lord? The word was God's own, and therefore precious to God's servant. He did not wear a text on his heart as a charm, but he hid it in his heart as a rule. He laid

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<sup>2</sup>Robert G. Bratcher and William David Reyburn, *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991). 1000.

it up in the place of love and life, and it filled the chamber with sweetness and light. We must in this imitate David, copying his heart work as well as his outward character. First, we must mind that what we believe is truly God's word; that being done, we must hide or treasure it each man for himself; and we must see that this is done, not as a mere feat of the memory, but as the joyful act of the affections.”<sup>3</sup>

40. The desire of the psalmist was like that of Jeremiah who said in **Jeremiah 15:16 (NASB)** <sup>16</sup> Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart.
41. At this point we should say that there are three reasons for treasuring God's Word in your heart.
42. The first is this is God's Word.
43. The second is at the end of verse 11, “That I may not sin against You.”
44. The third is at the end of verse 16, “I shall not forget Your Word.”
45. When you understand this is God's Word, and hide it in your heart as a treasure of great worth, you will be more conscious about your sin and about God's Word.
46. Your desire will be not to sin against God.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, The Treasury of David (Bible Explorer).

47. William Cowper, commenting on the phrase, “*That I might not sin against thee,*” says, “Among many excellent virtues of the word of God, this is one: that if we keep it in our heart, it keeps us from sin, which is against God and against ourselves. We may mark it by experience, that the word is first stolen either out of the mind of man, and the remembrance of it is away; or at least out of the affection of man; so that the reverence of it is gone, before that a man can be drawn to the committing of a sin. So long as Eve kept by faith the word of the Lord, she resisted Satan; but from the time she doubted of that, which God made most certain by his word, at once she was snared.”<sup>4</sup>
48. So, “How can a young man keep his way pure?”
49. By obeying God’s Word, by seeking God with all your heart, and by treasuring God’s Word in your heart.
50. There are 6 more principles found in verses 12-16 related to the question in verse 9.
51. Notice verse 12.

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<sup>4</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* (Bible Explorer).

- I. The Question Regarding Purity (v.9a)
- II. The Answer Regarding Purity (vv.9b-16)

“How can a young man keep his way pure?” (v.9a)

- A. By Obeying God’s Word (v.9)
- B. By Seeking God with All Your Heart (v.10)
- C. By Treasuring God’s Word in Your Heart (v.11)
- D. By Adoring God (v.12a)

“Blessed are You, O Lord.”

Here the psalmist gives glory to God by words of adoration.

The word “blessed” originally meant “to kneel down” as it is used in **Psalms 95:6 (NASB)** <sup>6</sup> Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

The NIV translates the word “bless” as “praise.”

As it is used here in verse 12, the psalmist ascribes this blessing or praise as an attribute of God. He says, “Blessed are You, O Lord.”

Paraphrasing Matthew Henry who said, “God is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of Himself and has no need of us or our services; yet He is pleased to reckon Himself honored by them.”

As the psalmist hides God's Word in His heart, He recognizes the self-sufficiency of God.

God doesn't need us for His personal fulfillment or happiness. He is the sum, totality, and source of true happiness or blissfulness.

**Psalms 68:35 (NASB)** <sup>35</sup> O God, *You are* awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. ***Blessed be God!***

Charles Spurgeon says, "No sooner is the Word in the heart than a desire arises to mark and learn it. When food is eaten, the next thing is to digest it; and when the Word is received into the soul the first prayer is, Lord, teach me its meaning."<sup>5</sup>

So, the possibility of a pure life depends on the direction of the will (10), the contents of mind and memory (11), the pre-occupations of the mouth (13), and of the emotions (14, 16), the subjects of thought (15, 16). The outward life (*way*), arises from inner factors, all absorbed in the word but centralized on the Lord in praise and instruction (12).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, *Psalms*, Crossway classic commentaries (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1993). 184.

<sup>6</sup>D. A. Carson, *New Bible Commentary : 21st Century Edition*, 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: InterVarsity Press, 1994). Ps 119:9.

The psalmist continues in verse 12 with a request. And in this request we learn another principle of a pure life.

“How can a young man keep his way pure?”

Verse 12b answers:

E. By Being Teachable (v.12b)

He asks God to “Teach me your statutes.”

Matthew Henry says, “Thou art the fountain of all blessedness; O let me have this drop from that fountain, this blessing from that blessedness: *Teach me thy statutes*, that I may know how to bless thee, who art a blessed God, and that I may be blessed in thee.”<sup>7</sup>

William Nicholson says, “He had Nathan, he had priests to instruct him, himself was a prophet; but all their teaching was nothing without God's blessing, and therefore he prays, ‘*Teach me.*’”

11 times in this chapter the psalmist asks God to teach him His Word.

1. **Psalm 119:26-27 (NASB)** <sup>26</sup> I have told of my ways, and You have answered me; ***Teach me Your statutes.*** <sup>27</sup> ***Make me understand the way of***

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<sup>7</sup>Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible : Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991). Ps 119:12.

*Your precepts*, So I will meditate on Your wonders.

2. **Psalms 119:33 (NASB)** <sup>33</sup> *Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes*, And I shall observe it to the end.
3. **Psalms 119:64 (NASB)** <sup>64</sup> The earth is full of Your lovingkindness, O Lord; *Teach me Your statutes*.
4. **Psalms 119:66 (NASB)** <sup>66</sup> *Teach me good discernment and knowledge*, For I believe in Your commandments.
5. **Psalms 119:68 (NASB)** <sup>68</sup> You are good and do good; *Teach me Your statutes*.
6. **Psalms 119:108 (NASB)** <sup>108</sup> O accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, And *teach me Your ordinances*.
7. **Psalms 119:124-125 (NASB)** <sup>124</sup> Deal with Your servant according to Your lovingkindness And *teach me Your statutes*. <sup>125</sup> I am Your servant; *give me understanding*, That I may know Your testimonies.
8. **Psalms 119:135 (NASB)** <sup>135</sup> Make Your face shine upon Your servant, And *teach me Your statutes*.

The way of purity is by the grace of God taught in the heart of the saint through the treasuring of God's Word.

When one obeys the Word of God, seeks God with all his heart, treasures God's Word in his heart, adores God, and is teachable, he will also proclaim His Word.

The psalmist says in verse 13, "With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth."

In other words, "How can a young man keep his way pure?"

F. By Proclaiming God's Word (v.13)

The psalmist says, "With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth."

The phrase "with my lips I have told" The Hebrew verb may mean to tell or to number.<sup>8</sup>

Proclamation alone is not enough to answer the psalmists' question in verse 9. There must be obedience as the first and foremost behavior.

There are many in our day as in the days of old that proclaimed the Word but gave no heed to it.

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<sup>8</sup>Robert G. Bratcher and William David Reyburn, *A Translator's Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991). 1001.

Richard Baxter, in his book, *The Reformed Pastor*, exhorts pastors to take heed to themselves “lest we live with those actual sins which we may preach against in others. Let us see that we are not guilty of that which we may daily condemn.

Will we make it our work to magnify God? And when we have done so, do we dishonor Him as much as others? Will we proclaim Christ’s governing power? And yet when we have spoken of this power, do we deny it, and rebel ourselves? Will we preach God’s laws and willfully break them? If sin be evil, why do we live in it?

If there be no sin, why do we dissuade men from it? If it be dangerous, how dare we venture on it! If it does not exist, how dare we tell men it is so? If God’s threatening be true, why do we not fear them? If they are false, why do we trouble men needlessly with them and make them frightened without a cause?

Do you know the judgment of God? They who commit such things are said to be worthy of death, and yet would we persist in doing them? (Romans 1:32). You who teach others, will you not teach yourselves? You who say a man should not commit adultery, or be drunk or be covetous—are you such yourself? You who make your boasts in the law—do you not realize that in breaking the law you dishonor God? (Romans 2:21-23).

What! Shall the tongue speak evil that also speaks against evil? Shall it censure and slander and secretly backbite while it cries down these behaviors and the like in others? Take heed then to yourselves, lest you cry down sin and yet do not overcome it in yourself. For as 2 Peter 2:19 reminds us, of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage. To whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are whom you obey—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness (Romans 6:16). Yes, it is easier to judge sin than to overcome it.”<sup>9</sup>

The desire of the psalmist was to speak of God’s “ordinances” and he did.

Matthew Henry says, “This he did, not only as a king in making orders, and giving judgment, according to the word of God, nor only as a prophet by his psalms, but in his common discourse. Thus he showed how full he was of the word of God, and what a holy delight he took in his acquaintance with it; for it is *out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks*. Thus he did good with his knowledge; he did not hide God’s word from others, but hid it for them; and, out of that *good treasure in his heart, brought forth good things*, as the householder out of his store *things new and old*.

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, Abridged edition, 1982 based on Orme’s edition of 1830). 28-29.

Those whose hearts are fed with the bread of life should with their lips feed many.”<sup>10</sup>

The psalmist tells us in verse 46 that he will “also speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be ashamed.”

The Word is heard in the ear, treasured up in the heart, and proclaimed with the mouth.

So proclamation of God’s Word comes with a pure life. If you’re going to proclaim the Way make sure as Richard Baxter well stated you’re not the hindrance to the Way!

“How can a young man keep his way pure?”

G. By Rejoicing in God’s Word (v.14)

The psalmist continues by stating that he has “rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches.”

Delight in the Word of God is a sure proof that it has taken effect upon the heart, and so is cleansing the life.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible : Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991). Ps 119:13.

<sup>11</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, *Psalms*, Crossway classic commentaries (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1993). 184.

He states it in these terms in verse 16 when he says, “I shall ***delight*** in Your statutes.”

In verse 162 he says, “I ***rejoice*** at Your word, As one who finds great spoil.”

He was like Jeremiah who said in **Jeremiah 15:16 (NASB)** <sup>16</sup> Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart.

H. By Meditating on God’s Word (v.15)

“I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways.”

He who has an inward delight in anything will not long withdraw his mind from it. No spiritual exercise is more profitable to the soul than that of devout meditation.<sup>12</sup>

The psalmist speaks of meditating on God’s Word 5 times in Psalm 119.

In addition to verse 15 he says in:

1. **Psalms 119:27 (NASB)** <sup>27</sup> Make me understand the way of Your precepts, So I will ***meditate*** on Your wonders.

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<sup>12</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, *Psalms*, Crossway classic commentaries (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1993). 184.

2. **Psalms 119:48 (NASB)** <sup>48</sup> And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes.
3. **Psalms 119:78 (NASB)** <sup>78</sup> May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie; *But* I shall meditate on Your precepts.
4. **Psalms 119:148 (NASB)** <sup>148</sup> My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.

To “mediate” (Heb.siach) means “to discuss or ponder” (KJV Commentary), “chatter” (Augustine) or “to chew the cud” (Thomas Watson). It “is the soul’s chewing” (William Grimshaw).

It is only through meditation can one truly “regard [God’s] ways.”

Meditation is the response to treasuring God’s Word in your heart. It is also the key to your obeying it.

**Joshua 1:8 (NASB)** <sup>8</sup> "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

The final response to the question in verse 9 is:

I. By Delighting in God's Word (v.16)

The psalmist has already mentioned this in verse 14 when he said he "rejoiced in the way of your testimonies, as much as in all riches."

Now he says in verse 16 with full determination, "I shall delight in your statutes; I shall not forget Your word."

Obedying God's Word, seeking God with all your heart, treasuring God's Word in your heart, adoring God, being teachable, proclaiming God's Word, rejoicing in God's Word, meditating on God's Word, and delighting in God's Word involves all your determination.

If you do not determine in your heart to be obedient then you're not going to be.

If you do not determine to seek God with all your heart, you won't.

The same is true for the remaining principles we have looked at tonight.

The psalmist "rejoiced" in God's Word in verse 14 and now he was determined to continue. This is paramount to the righteous man in Psalms 1:1-3 who is referred to as being blessed by God.

<sup>1</sup> How ***blessed*** is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! <sup>2</sup> ***But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.*** <sup>3</sup> He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

The psalmists' desire to "delight" in God's Word is noted 9 times in Psalm 119.

1. **Psalms 119:24 (NASB)** <sup>24</sup> ***Your testimonies also are my delight; They are my counselors.***
2. **Psalms 119:35 (NASB)** <sup>35</sup> Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, ***For I delight in it.***
3. **Psalms 119:47 (NASB)** <sup>47</sup> ***I shall delight in Your commandments,*** Which I love.
4. **Psalms 119:70 (NASB)** <sup>70</sup> Their heart is covered with fat, ***But I delight in Your law.***
5. **Psalms 119:77 (NASB)** <sup>77</sup> May Your compassion come to me that I may live, For ***Your law is my delight.***
6. **Psalms 119:92 (NASB)** <sup>92</sup> If ***Your law had not been my delight,*** Then I would have perished in my affliction.

7. **Psalms 119:143 (NASB)** <sup>143</sup> Trouble and anguish have come upon me, *Yet Your commandments are my delight.*
8. **Psalms 119:174 (NASB)** <sup>174</sup> I long for Your salvation, O Lord, And *Your law is my delight.*

### **CONCLUSION**

1. Parents does this describe you tonight?
2. Are you memorizing God's Word?
3. Are you teaching your kids the importance of memorizing it so that they will not sin against God?
4. These principles should be taught over and over again to your children.
5. "How can a young man keep his way pure?"
6. By obeying God's Word, by seeking God with all your heart, by treasuring God's Word in your heart, by adoring God, by being teachable, by proclaiming God's Word, by rejoicing in God's Word, by meditating on God's Word, and by delighting in God's Word.
7. Teaching your kids about Scripture memory is more than just reciting a few verses, it's a way of life.
8. And as I keep emphasizing, it begins with you first parents!

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Psalm 119:12-16

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9. Purity has to be the highest priority of your life before it can be for your kids.
10. You have to talk about it constantly!
11. Then you have to put it to action by demonstrating an obedient life to your children.
12. Let's pray.
13. If you're here tonight and you have not been forgiven of all your sin, I want to encourage you to turn to Jesus Christ who died as a substitute for your sin.