

The Eighth 8 Reasons for Reading the Bible

Psalm 119.57–64

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Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs on the Bible

Prelude:

I. A new year has begun.

- A. For most people that means a New Year's resolution.
- B. I hope that even if you have made a New Year's Resolution,
 - 1. that you will also resolve to read the Bible daily in 2022, and
 - 2. that you will read the entire Bible.

II. I believe the best thing that I can do for this congregation

- A. is to get you to read the Bible for yourself.
- B. It all starts from there.
 - 1. Your life starts from there.
 - 2. Everything else about your faith starts there.

III. Whatever you think is important in your faith or in your life,

- A. such as praying, or
- B. you might say that loving God and loving your neighbor are number one,
 - 1. yet, I am going to guess
 - 2. that you would make those points because
 - a) you read it in the Bible.
 - b) That is why I say it all begins with reading your Bible.

IV. If you read the Scriptures daily,

- A. you will learn countless valuable lessons and
- B. gain knowledge and wisdom
 - 1. that will guide you through every part of your life.
 - 2. Whatever life throws your way,

- a) the Lord, through his word, will guide you.
- b) Perhaps you think to yourself,
 - (1) “But, Don, You have no idea what I am experiencing and I see no way that the Bible can help me.”
 - (2) I have lived long enough and preached long enough,
 - (a) that I can tell you that every situation that I have faced, and
 - (b) that every situation that I have ever seen anyone experience,
 - i) they and I would do better,
 - ii) if we knew what the Bible said and lived it.

V. As you know, my other sermons on annual Bible reading in the past 7 years,

A. have been based on Psalm 119.

B. Psalm 119 is divided up according to the Hebrew alphabet.

- 1. The first 8 verses begin with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- 2. The second eight verses with the second letter, and so on,
 - a) until you go through the whole alphabet.
 - b) There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet.
 - (1) Twenty-two times eight equals 176,
 - (2) which is the number of verses in Psalm 119.
 - (a) Now, I am on the eighth letter of the Hebrew alphabet,
 - (b) which we cannot see in English, of course.
 - i) Today, I give you verses 57–64.
 - ii) Therefore, this is the eighth set of 8 reasons.

VI. Now notice the great spiritual qualities you get from the word of God.

A. What does reading and meditating on the Scriptures do for you?

B. Psalm 119.57–64 will show us eight things.

Persuasion:

I. Psalm 119.57 • We Discover that the Lord Is Our Portion

**57 You are my portion, O LORD;
 I have said that I would keep Your words.**

A. What does it mean that the Lord is our portion?

1. What is our part?
2. What do we get?
 - a) We get the Lord.
 - b) He is our inheritance.

B. As our portion:

1. He is ever present with us even to the end of the world,
2. He is unchanging, but is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and
3. He satisfies the soul as nothing else can do.

C. If he is our portion,

1. then we will keep his words.
2. But I have to know what his words are.
 - a) How can I know what his words are,
 - b) if I do not read his words, all of his words?

II. Psalm 119.58 • We Learn to Entreat the Favor of the Lord

**58 I entreated Your favor with my whole heart;
 Be merciful to me according to Your word.**

A. We seek the Lord's favor because of

1. the trouble we are in,
2. the sins we have committed, and
 - a) we know that we have to throw ourselves at the feet of the Lord,
 - b) knowing of the power that he has.

(1) Therefore we seek his favor with the whole heart.

(2) He loves us and appeals to us with his whole heart;

(a) how can I do anything less?

(b) Therefore, O God, we need your favor desperately.

B. All that we are doing is pleading for favor in the way that he has told us to do.

1. And the fact that he has told us to seek his favor when we are in need.

2. He is there for us.

C. We can only appeal to his mercy, because

1. we cannot bribe him,

2. we cannot claim that we deserve it, but

a) we plead with him according to his word,

b) just as we see Jacob entreating the Lord in this manner:

**“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth
which You have shown Your servant...”**

– Genesis 32.10

D. How can a person plead for God’s mercy according to God’s word,

1. if that person has not read what the Bible says about mercy?

2. We read the Scriptures,

a) seeing his mercy unfold in the stories that we read.

b) So we just ask him

(1) to do what he has already done countless times before

(2) with the people that we read about in the Bible.

III. Psalm 119.59 • We Learn to Think about Our Ways

59

**I thought about my ways,
And turned my feet to Your testimonies.**

A. Isn't that one of the reasons that we turn to God's word?

B. We have been thinking about our ways and

1. it is obvious to us
2. that we need to turn our feet toward his testimonies.
 - a) We have been going down the wrong way.
 - b) However, we know that our Creator knows the right way.

C. As one commentator said:

“Sin is a reckless absence of thought.”

– J. W. Burn, *Homiletic Commentary: Psalms*, page 281.

1. We sin because we do not think about what we are doing.
2. But then, like the Prodigal Son, we come back to our right minds, and
 - a) that is when we turn our hearts back to the Lord, and
 - b) we want to know what his word says.

D. Therefore, we turn to his word daily.

1. We want to know what the all-powerful and all-knowing and all-wise God
2. says about our lives.
 - a) We want to know why he created us.
 - b) We want to know how we can glorify him.
 - c) We want to know what he wanted to say to us.
 - (1) Of all the things that he could have said,
 - (2) why did he choose what he did?

E. The only thing that I can say is:

1. Scripture has all the answers, but
2. we only find them by reading and meditating upon what we discover.

IV. Psalm 119.60 • We Learn to Obedience Immediately

60 **I made haste, and did not delay To keep Your commandments.**

A. You know very well

1. that reading the Scriptures
2. is not the same as reading anything else.
 - a) Many people are like those who first heard the Book of Jeremiah.
 - b) Others are like the people on the day of Pentecost.
 - (1) They heard Peter preach the word, and
 - (2) they wanted to know what they needed to do.
 - c) People approached John the Baptist,
 - (1) asking him what they needed to do.

B. Look at Psalm 119.60 again.

1. The psalmist did not delay, but
2. made haste to keep God's commandments.
 - a) Do not let yourself go any further into sin.
 - b) You do not know what dangers await you.
 - (1) Once you see what you need to do,
 - (2) do not delay to do it today.

C. As you learn more and more of God's commandments,

1. the more and more you should be moved to do what he says.
2. You will eventually get to the point
 - a) that you will not want to delay any longer.
 - b) As you continue to read the Scriptures daily,
 - (1) you will be eager to do what you have read.

(2) You will think about it through the day.

V. Psalm 119.61 • We Learn How to Escape the Cords of the Wicked

**61 The cords of the wicked have bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.**

A. The wicked do not rest, but

1. seek to capture us constantly.
2. Solomon stated it well:

**16 For they do not sleep unless they have done evil;
And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.**

– **Proverbs 4.16**

- a) Don't you agree with Solomon?
- b) The wicked bombard us relentlessly.
 - (1) If they take a break,
 - (2) it is only for a moment:

**13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed
from Him until an opportune time.**

– **Luke 4.13**

B. Therefore, we have to remember God's law.

1. His law protects us from the evil one.
2. Remember how Jesus resisted the temptations of Satan:

4 But He answered and said, "It is written..."

7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again..."

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written..."

– **Matthew 4.4, 7, 10**

C. How can I know what is written,

1. how can I recall the teaching of Scripture,
2. how can I use Scripture to combat evil,
 - a) unless I know what it says?
 - b) How can I know what it says,
 - (1) if I do not read it and meditate upon it daily?
 - (2) You can learn to be free from the cords of the wicked
 - (a) by what the Holy Spirit teaches you in the Scriptures?
 - (b) Why not resolve today to start reading Scripture daily?

VI. Psalm 119.62 • We Learn to Give Thanks

**62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.**

A. How many of you wake up sometime during the night?

1. Brother Marshall Keeble had to get up frequently during the night.
2. When he returned from the restroom,
 - a) he would kneel beside the bed and
 - b) pray before getting back in bed.

B. Samuel once prayed all night to God.

1. Jesus did the same.
2. Why?

C. Listen to what Psalm 119.62 says.

1. The psalmist rose at midnight and gave thanks to the Lord because
2. the Lord's righteous judgments moved him to do so.
 - a) It is not that the Bible says pray during the night, but

- b) when the psalmist awoke,
 - (1) he thought of the Lord's righteous judgments, and
 - (2) it just moved him to give thanks for those righteous judgments.
- D. How do you think he knew what those righteous judgments were?
 - 1. Do you think he just heard the word once and remembered everything?
 - 2. You know the answers to those questions.

VII. Psalm 119.63 • We Acquire New Friends

**63 I am a companion of all who fear You,
 And of those who keep Your precepts.**

- A. When you find someone who has a common cause, hobby, or whatever,
 - 1. you are immediately drawn to that person.
 - a) You may not have anything in common, but
 - b) there is that one thing that draws you together.
 - 2. So it is with those who have the same view of Scripture that we do.
 - a) They become our companions with the first conversations.
 - b) This has happened to me countless times.
 - (1) When you get away from talking about the Scriptures,
 - (2) you may find that you have little or even nothing in common.
- B. However, the worldview
 - 1. that you both gain from your reading and meditation upon Scripture,
 - 2. makes you companions in the greatest way there is.
 - a) And it sharpens you spiritually:

**17 As iron sharpens iron,
 So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.**

– Proverbs 27.17

- b) I thank God often for the church because
 - c) it is my friends in the church
 - (1) who have made me what I am today.
 - (2) It is my friends in the church who will make be better tomorrow.
- C. Read the Bible daily,
- 1. meditating on its soul-changing truths, and
 - 2. you will be driven to find others like you.

VIII. Psalm 119.64 • We Learn of the Lord's Mercy

**64 The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.**

- A. The fact that the earth still exists shows God's mercy.
- 1. The fact that the earth provides everything that we need, shows God's mercy.
 - 2. The fact that the earth is full of dangers, yet, we escape them, shows God's mercy?
- B. Why then does the Lord pour out his mercy upon us daily?
- 1. When we open ourselves to his instruction in his statutes,
 - 2. we discover why he shows mercy.
- C. He wants to save us from our sin.
- 1. He wants us to learn how to live.
 - 2. He created the earth and us on it for a reason.
 - a) Let us, therefore, read from the Scriptures daily,
 - b) meditating on its life-giving teachings
 - (1) that we might find his mercy and
 - (2) discover not only a better life now, but eternal life.