

Meditation on Scripture

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Date: 26 July 2026

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[0:00] Psalm 119, and we'll begin reading here in verse 97. So that I might obey your word.

I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. I gain understanding from your precepts, therefore I hate every wrong path.

Well, this morning we turn from memorizing Scripture to meditating on Scripture. At least eight times in this psalm, David speaks of meditating on God's word.

We're going to begin with verse 97. Oh, how I love your law. I meditate on it all day long.

Now this is more than just saying, I love your law. Oh, how I love your law. You hear the difference?

[1:27] Wives, would you rather hear your husband say, I love you, or oh, how I love you. You say you'd settle for either one, but that may be the case.

But you can see clearly there's far more heart and feeling in, oh, how I love you. It's almost a frustrated sigh because of his inability to adequately express just how much he loves you.

Well, this is David's cry concerning God's word. Oh, how I love your law. Now, if you love God's word, it's a clear sign of the new birth.

No one is born with a love for God's law. Rather, we're born with an aversion to it, and that's why every one of us, like sheep, have turned our back on him. We will not submit to his law because we're at enmity with him.

Neither, indeed, can we. So a false professor of Christianity may read, may come to hear preaching of God's word, but not because he loves it.

[2:42] Maybe it's because he knows he should. Or maybe to solve his conscience. Or maybe because he thinks it will somehow make up for his sins of the weak and maybe contribute something toward his salvation.

But no lost person ever loved God's law truly. And it's not hard to understand why. Because God's law forbids what he loves, and it commands what he doesn't love.

Jeremiah 6.10, the word of the Lord is offensive to them. They find no pleasure in it. We sometimes sing, had no taste for heaven's joy.

No pleasure, no taste for it. He doesn't love the word of God because he doesn't love the God of the word, of whom it speaks, and indeed, who is speaking in the word.

I did not love my father's voice. I would not be controlled. Oh, but the new birth gives us a new heart. Gives us new taste buds, new affections, new loves.

[3:52] So that David can say in verse 103 of our passage, How sweet are your words to my taste. Sweeter than honey to my mouth. You see, we now, as new creatures in Christ Jesus, the old is gone, the new has come, and we now taste in God's word, and we see just how gracious and good he is.

And so now I love my father's voice. And as Paul can say, as to my inner being, I delight in God's law.

That's why every one of us must be born again. That's why Nicodemus, the religious Pharisee who studied the word of God, still needed to be born again that he might have new taste buds and see the scriptures pointing him to his need for Jesus Christ.

So David is a regenerate man with a new heart that enables him to say, Oh, how I love your law. Now, how is his love for God, God's law, demonstrated?

Well, he tells us that in the second part of verse 97. Oh, how I love your law. I meditate on it all day long. That's the proof of his great love, isn't it?

[5:13] Again, wives, if your husband says, I think of you all day long. I just couldn't get you off of my mind. Not that he was trying to, but he loves you that much that he's thinking about you.

The lesson is clear. Our thoughts follow our affections. I love your law, oh God. And therefore, I meditate on it all day long.

You see, this truth will search us, won't it? Because where your treasure is, there your heart is also. And where your love is, there your thoughts are sure to follow.

That's why it's said of the wicked in Psalm 10 and verse 4, In all of his thoughts, there's no room for God. He doesn't love God, so he doesn't love thoughts about God and words from God in the Bible. So, where does your mind go when you have nothing demanding your full attention? Your free time? I know where it goes. It goes to the things you love.

[6:23] Thoughts follow our affections. David's love for God's law is clearly seen in his meditation on it all day long.

Not just when reading his Bible, but also after closing it and going into his day. Now, this doesn't mean that David did nothing all day long but meditate on God's law.

Perhaps as a shepherd on the hills of Bethlehem, he could do that all day long. But David also, you remember, spent years running from King Saul and his army.

He spent years fighting battles for Israel. And he spent years governing a nation as Israel's king. And yet, he can say, I meditate on your law all day long.

Whatever his business throughout the day, his mind kept returning to what he loved. God's word. God's word. Like a carrier pigeon returns to its home.

[7:38] God's word is at home with David. David's home is God's word. And so, he's busy, yes. And when he can, he comes back. And that's how his day is spent.

Coming back to the home base, the center of his existence. And that word then determined the way that he shepherded sheep. The way that he endured mistreatment.

The way that he ruled over a nation. Now, some of your jobs might require more mental attentiveness than other people's jobs. But some of you can drive and meditate at the same time.

You may be able to do laundry and meditate. To mow and meditate. And even for those whose job demands more full attention, there are moments in the day when the heart returns to its center.

And consciously holds communion with God through his word. So, whatever we're doing all day long, God's word is to be as it was for David. Never far from his thoughts.

[8:46] As everything that we do all day long is to be done for him. And through him. And with him. That's him invading our day and living our day with us.

That's the shared life of abiding in Christ. Our love captivates our thoughts. David says in verse 48, I lift up my hands to your commands which I love and I meditate on your decrees.

There's the connection. What we love, we meditate on. And he says all day long. But in verse 148, he even says, My eyes stay open through the watches of the night that I may meditate on your precepts.

Day and night. Does that ring a bell? Psalm 1, verse 2. The blessed man. What's true of him? On his law. He delights in God's law and on it he meditates day and night.

Now, if we're to do this all day long. If we're to do this even lying on our beds. It means that we must hide God's word in our hearts. We must memorize it so we've got it stored up.

[10:01] Ready to use when the situation calls for it. Ready to use in meditation. Ready to use in temptation. In moments of decision.

In times of need. We saw this last week with David, didn't we? When he was tempted to get revenge on King Saul. And to take his life. That word of God was there.

Inscribed on his heart. And I will not lay my hands on the Lord's anointed. And it kept him from sinning. Well, this is to have the sword then. Always at hand.

Memorized. So that we might then meditate upon it. I urged you last week to search out Bible verses. Matching your temptation. So that when it arises. You'll have the sword ready to conquer temptation.

And I have been encouraged to hear some of you doing that very thing. It's to be well armed against Satan's devices. Against you particularly. He doesn't just tempt us as in mass.

[11:03] He tempts us individually. He studies us and knows our weaknesses. So we need to have scripture ready for those areas in our life. Perhaps posted on a verse card that we put in our car.

Or on your desk. Or over the sink. Or in the bathroom. You're wanting to hide that word in your heart. That you might then meditate upon it. Verse 13 says, With my lips I recount or I rehearse all the laws that come from your mouth.

That sounds to me like he's rehearsing his memory work. With my lips. I'm recounting. Rehearsing. All the laws that come from your lips.

Verse 15. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. There we have it. Meditation. So you see then how memorization of God's word is a handmaiden to meditation.

We memorize in order to be able to meditate throughout the day. It's what my sister likes to call the M&Ms.; Memorize and meditate.

[12:14] Now, next let's consider just what is meditation on God's word. Well, it's not like Eastern religions. The emptying of the mind. It's rather the filling of the mind with the word of God.

And then thinking about it. Mulling it over. Considering it. Studying it. Meditation is to the soul what digestion is to the body.

Kids, when you put food in your mouth, do you immediately swallow it? I hope not. You're liable to choke. You chew it, don't you?

You smash it. That's digesting it. Chewing our food is not only the way to taste and enjoy it.

It's the first step in this important process of digestion. As you chew the food, you're smashing it.

You're breaking it down into smaller pieces.

[13:16] And then your spit, your saliva has got enzymes and digestive juices that are mixing with it. In your mouth, you're starting that digestion. And digestion, by digestion, your body then is drawing out of the food all the nutrients, the vitamins, the minerals, the energy that God has put into that food.

So meditation is like chewing your food. You want to get out of that passage, that verse, what God has put into it for your soul's maximum health.

Now, if you simply read a chapter of the Bible and then close the book, you may have some profit from it. I trust you do.

But not nearly as much as you would if after reading it, you spent some time meditating on it. Maybe you read a chapter and then you select one verse and say, okay, I'm going to spend more time meditating on this one verse.

And you chew it over. You study it. You ponder it. You think so as to understand its meaning. And you go on chewing it. And you're thinking, what difference should this make in my life today?

[14:32] Meditation. Meditation. It's like squeezing the juice out of grapes. And the more time spent squeezing, the more juice you get out of it.

That's why Thomas Manton said, those that meditate most thrive most. Because you get most out of the Word of God. Charles Bridges says, meditation is the digestive faculty of the soul, which converts the Word into real and proper nourishment, so that this revolving of a single verse in our minds is often better than the mere reading of whole chapters.

Because that's, you're leaving in an undigested state, whereas this, you're breaking down and making it to feed your soul. So, meditation.

Let's consider two different methods of meditation. I want this to be very practical. I trust if you're not doing it, you will begin this practice, even as David is holding it before us.

You can go online. There's many different ways of meditating. I'll mention two. The first is to ask a series of questions about the passage you've read. So, maybe on a card where you keep your bookmark in your Bible, you'll put that card, and on that card we'll have a list of questions.

[16:01] What does this passage teach me about God? What does it teach me about man, about myself? What does it teach me about sin? What does it teach me about Christ?

How is this to apply to my life? Are there things here that I need to start doing or stop doing or to do more or to do less?

You may want even to journal your answers to that in a notebook. That's the question method of meditating.

A second is to break a verse down into smaller pieces, just like chewing does. You go over it word by word, placing a different emphasis on each word each time you read the verse.

So, let's say you're going to meditate on 1 Peter 5, 7, or you're just going to read it. And so, you read it, casting all your cares on him for he cares for you.

[17:06] And you close the book and you go on. You get some help from that. But now, let's meditate on it. Casting all your cares on him.

Casting, not holding on to, not keeping and clutching, but casting away, throwing it off of you, getting rid of it. Casting all your cares.

What are my cares? What am I anxious about? What am I fearful of? What keeps me awake at night? What makes me break out in a sweat?

Your cares. Casting all your cares. Don't leave out any. Not some of them. All of them. Casting all your cares on him.

On him. On the God who created the heavens and the earth. And you can spend the rest of the day meditating on him, can't you? But you see, it really matters for the power of this verse that you do give some thought to this God.

[18:18] That you're to cast your cares on. On him. And you look at, does my verse say anything about him? What about the verse before? Oh, the verse before talks about humbling myself under his almighty hand.

Oh, he has an almighty hand that's able to lift me up. He's got an almighty hand. Well, then he can handle all my cares. And then, for he cares.

The for is the word, like, the cause. Because. Why should I cast all my cares on him? Because he cares. It's his concern.

He has concerns. He has cares. He cares for the birds. And then, he cares for you.

For you, child of God. This great God of eternity. Who's existed forever and ever. Without beginning. He knows your name.

[19:21] And everything about you. Where you live. What's going on in your life this past week. What's going on in your mind, your head. What's bothering you? He knows it all. He cares for you.

Little you. Poor and needy you. Weak and faltering you. Discouraged and fearing you. And he's concerned for you.

He cares for you. More than the birds. With a father's pity and concern for his own chosen child. So concerned.

That he gave up his one and only eternal son. To be cursed. In place of you. That you might be eternally blessed.

He cares for you. So cast all your cares on him. And you do that by going to him in prayer.

[20:21] You unburden your heart. One care at a time. You tell him everything. As if he knew nothing. Yet realizing all the while he knows everything better than I know it.

But he wants you to come and pour out your heart to him. To empty the whole picture. He wants to hear it from your lips. What's bothering you. Why?

Because he cares for you. And he wants you to cast that care onto him. To transfer it to him. To commit it into his care. So that you're not carrying that load yourself.

Now I don't know what that's taking. Three, five minutes. Can you see how much more profit we receive from 1 Peter 5, 7? Just by thinking three minutes about that verse.

Tearing it down into smaller pieces. Far more profit than just reading it through. The benefit we reap is 30, 60, 100 times more.

[21:21] And it's why many Christians profit so little from their Bible reading. And why their love for the word of God is so small.

They don't meditate on what they read. And so they lose much of its benefit. Psalm 1 says of the man who meditates on God's word day and night.

He'll be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. That brings forth its fruit in its season. Its leaf also does not wither. And whatsoever he does prospers.

Prosper. I want us to think a bit about the prospering of your soul if you meditate. What are some of the benefits of meditation? I have five of them and we're done.

In the section read for us, we see some of these benefits. First of all, the first benefit we get from meditation is we gain greater wisdom, insight, and understanding.

[22:20] Understanding. David says greater than his enemies, than his teachers, and than his elders. Now, he's not bragging. He's just showing the blessed benefits that are accrued by meditating on God's word.

So verse 98, your commands make me wiser than my enemies. For they are ever with me. I'm ever meditating on them. And that makes me wiser than my enemies.

Perhaps referring to Saul and the 3,000 men that were all conspiring to kill him. I'm wiser than them because your commands are always with me.

Ever on my mind. Pointing the way to live. A voice speaking to me. This is the way. Walk in it. So while his enemies were meditating on how to destroy David, he's meditating on God's word.

How to please his God. And that's why he's far wiser than they are. They're wise in doing evil. His meditation makes him wise in doing good.

[23 : 25] I'm wiser than my enemies because I meditate. Verse 99, I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. You see, a teacher may have a lot of verses of Scripture that they just give to you as they're teaching.

But you can have more insight than your teacher if you're meditating on those verses more than your teacher did. And David says, that's the way it was for me.

I had more insight than my teachers. David chewed on that word and got more insight out of it than they did. And then verse 100, I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. Not only meditate, but also obey those precepts. More understanding than the elders. It's said that wisdom dwells with the aged, the elders.

That's not always the case. Older is not always wiser. There are such things as old fools. And here we have these elders that David says, I have more understanding than them.

[24 : 41] We could think of the teachers and the elders of Israel in David's time or in Isaiah's time, in Jeremiah's time, in Jesus' own day. They're not always wiser. Spending their lives studying the word of God.

And yet lacking in true understanding and wisdom. Because they didn't obey God's command. So Jesus is able to say to them in his day, you search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life.

Yet those are the things that testify of me. But you will not come to me that you might have eternal life. You won't obey. You won't keep what the word of God is saying.

How wise can they be when they miss the whole purpose of scripture, which is to lead them to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. So what kind of wisdom can you have when you miss him? You miss the whole key to scripture, the whole aim of scripture, which is to know him. Whom to know is eternal life. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.

[25 : 50] You see, your real, true understanding of the text is not based on how many facts you have in your head, but how much you obey. And put it into practice. Not leaning on your own understanding.

But trusting and obeying God's word. James has an important question. That he asked in chapter 3:13 and following.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life. By deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

Such wisdom does not come from heaven, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first pure. Then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

[26 : 59] This is the wisdom. This is the understanding. That it is higher than the elders. Even as high as heavenly wisdom is.

Than devilish wisdom. That's a benefit of meditating on scripture. That we gain understanding, insight and wisdom for life.

Secondly, meditation keeps you from straying from God's commands. And from sinning against him. We saw that last week in verse 11. Where we were told the benefit of memorizing.

I have hidden your word in my heart. Why? That I might not sin against you. And now we're being told that this is also one of the benefits of meditating on God's word. Look at verse 101.

I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. 102. I have not departed from your laws. For you yourself have taught me. You see, these are benefits of meditating.

[28 : 02] This is all in this section that began. Oh, how I love your law. I meditate on it day and night. Here's the benefit. It keeps us from straying. It keeps us from sinning against God.

So the purpose of meditation, it's your sanctification. You're persevering in holiness. That as you meditate on God's word, you behold the glory of God.

And that sight of his glory is transforming you from one stage of glory to another into his likeness that comes from the Lord, who is the spirit.

2 Corinthians 3. 2 Corinthians 3:18. So meditation is meant to move you to do some things and to stop doing other things. Meditation is meant for you to believe some things and to not believe other

things.

To get you to obey God's word, which is to love him with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself. These are the aims and therefore the benefits, you see, of meditation that we might be more like him who is holy, harmless and undefiled.

[29:13] Our Lord Jesus Christ. You're familiar with James 1.22 to 25, but I believe it puts its finger right on this point of meditation. He says, do not merely listen, or we might say read God's word, and so deceive yourselves.

Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

Well, he hears the word of God preached. He reads a portion of it, but he closes the book and walks away, and he's soon forgotten. What he saw in the mirror that needed to be changed.

He didn't linger long enough to deal with it. He just walked away. He reads this chapter, closes the book, never gives it another thought. So he's not getting the nutrients into his soul.

It's just swallowing food whole. He's not digesting it. And he's deceiving himself to think he's better off for having gone to church, better off for having read a chapter.

[30:28] If it's not leading him to greater likeness to Jesus. But, verse 25, here it is. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law of liberty and continues to do this, not forgetting what he's heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.

You see, the difference is meditation. The first one just reads, just hears, and out the door, closed Bible, done with that. This man, in verse 25, hearing the word preached, read, is just the beginning for him.

He's now going to look intently. That means to spend more than a casual glance at. He's looking intently. Even as he moves on into the business of the day, he's looking closely.

He's carefully pondering, how does this apply to me? And he continues to do this. He keeps revisiting the passage, considering it again.

Not forgetting what he's heard, but doing it. Meditation moves us from merely reading and hearing to doing, and that's how we know we're profiting from the word.

[31:50] There's a proverb, chapter 12, verse 27, that says, The lazy man does not roast his game. He's a hunter.

In those days, it wasn't with rifles. It was with bow and arrow, usually. So he's expended no small amount of energy going out hunting a deer with his bow and arrow.

He's spent a lot of energy, and he's got him one. But he's too lazy to dress it. And so he loses all that energy that he spent, because he didn't have a little more energy to dress it, and then to eat it, and thereby nourish his body.

And you see, the same thing's true with regard to the nourishment of the soul. We can expend a certain amount of energy of getting up maybe before work and spending some time reading the Bible.

But if we just close it and go on our way and never think about it again, we cheat ourselves of the energy we did expend just to read it.

[32:58] When if we would have spent a little bit more time, our profiting would have been seen by all. So that's meditation.

We chew on it. We try to draw out the applications for our lives. If you take what's dished out to you in the Sunday school classes, in the morning and evening services, the Wednesday night devotional, and you take that and you just spend three to five minutes with what's been dished out to you, your profiting will go way up from the Word of God that you're hearing.

Do you know that's the very reason we started small groups years ago? We said we don't need... It's not like we're on a shortage of sermons and Bible studies.

We get that. What we need is to slow down and to think together. How are we applying the Word that we've heard? How is it benefiting our lives?

I trust that, yes, even as you're meeting today, that you'll come prepared. And you see, that will help you week by week as you're listening to know, okay, small groups is coming, and I'm going to need to be ready to share how God's Word is changing me, how it's challenging me, what I'm profiting from it.

[34 : 26] That's a benefit of God's Word. It keeps us from straying from God's commands and sinning against Him. But then thirdly, it helps you to realize the presence of God throughout the day.

Having God's Word on your mind all day long keeps God Himself on your mind, doesn't it? Because who wrote the book? It's God Himself speaking to you, and He's speaking to you about Himself. So if you're spending your day returning to this, then it helps you to live each day, *Coram Deo*, before the face of God.

That, my friend, is the joy of the Christian life, to live the shared life, everything to Him, with Him, and for Him. That was the situation we saw last week in the Valley of Elah.

David saw God where nobody else saw Him. Well, if David's meditating on God's law all day long, when he arrives in the Valley of Elah, he sees Goliath, just like they did.

[35 : 33] They saw him and they ran to their tents, terrified. David saw him too, but he saw God. He's got God in view. And that shrinks Goliath down to size. And with God in view, David says, who does this uncircumcised Philistine think that he is to defy the armies of the living God?

I'll go fight Him in the power of God. I'll defeat Him. So he saw God. Again, meditating on God's Word keeps the God of the Word before our minds.

We live with Him in view, and nothing looks the same with God in view. Fourth benefit, meditation increases our love for God and His Word.

Now, we saw in verse 97 as we began today, oh, how I love your law. And it's that love for the law that drives us to meditate. But what happens when we meditate?

Well, we meet with that God who's speaking to us, and we study that God, and we're getting to know that God, and to know Him is to love Him. And now we find ourselves loving Him and His Word more, and it returns us back to that Word.

[36 : 46] And we love this God, and we love His Word. And it's a wonderful thing to be caught up in this cycle of divine love with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And then lastly, meditation gives us matter for prayerful communion with God. It gives us matter for prayerful communion with God.

You know, the whole of this longest chapter in the Bible is a mixture of David's meditations on God's Word, his praises for God's Word, and then right in the midst, he'll turn it to a prayer.

He's praising God, and then he's praying and petitioning God. And so in my meditation on God's Word, I find plenty for which to respond to God in prayer.

I find merciful blessings to give thanks for, strength for today, bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine with 10,000 beside. I find them as I'm meditating on God's Word, and it moves me to give thanks to Him in prayer.

[37 : 49] I find attributes of God to praise and to adore. Oh God, You are good, and You do good. Teach me Your decrees.

God's attributes turning us to praise and adoration. Precious promises are there to plead in prayer. That's what promises are for.

That's our fitting response. Has God promised to do something? We should come and ask Him to do what He's promised to do. There are specific sins to confess. We sin in specifics, not general, do we?

We sin specifically. So we ought to bring specific confessions to God as we're reading, and we say, wow, that's what I did last night.

I spoke so unkindly. And so we confess our unkind speech. And you see, I'm getting material for praying, responding to God as I read the Bible.

[38 : 54] Precepts and commands. Oh God, help me. Make me to follow Your decrees, for there I find a light. I see Your commandment. It's exceedingly broad.

Oh, help me. You've laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in keeping Your decrees.

So cares and worries, I see them in here. I'm to cast on the Lord, and so I do that in prayer, and so on. We see temptation.

People tempted in this book, don't we? And last week we saw how David, because he had memorized God's Word in his heart when he was tempted to take the life of Saul, and his good friends were urging him, the providence of God is with you.

It's clear. He wants you to kill him. Go ahead. No. He had his Word, and he planted his flesh. I will not touch the Lord's anointed.

[39 : 55] Either he'll take him in the normal way, and he'll die of old age, or he'll die in battle. But that's God's to deal with. He said, vengeance is not mine. It's mine to follow God. It helped him.

It kept him. He responded to God's Word as he sees it here in his own life. Now, just a footnote from last week's sermon.

1 Samuel 24 and 1 Samuel 26 recorded those two times when David was that close to Saul and could have just snuffed his life out, and it was the Word of God that kept him from sinning, kept him from straying.

What comes between chapter 24 and chapter 26? Chapter 25. And that's where David and his men had been in a certain area, where Nabal, his sheep herders had been, and David's men were a protection so that nobody came and stole any of Nabal's flock.

Well, it's sheep sharing time, and Nabal's in high spirits, and everybody's feasting and having a good time, and David sends some men to say, could you share some of the good stuff with us since we were there helping?

[41 : 07] And he insults David and his men. There's a lot of rebellious fellows running around. How do we know who this guy is? And he sent them back, insulted and mocked.

And David was so caught up with emotion that he said to his men, strap on your swords, and 400 strapped on their swords and headed to Nabal's house.

And David swore an oath that he would slaughter every male in Nabal's estate. What happened to that word hidden in his heart?

Well, chapter 24 and 26, he did great with it, but you see the temptation comes with such power and such emotion is brought up in his heart that he's now ready to seek revenge just for an insult to slaughter a whole bunch of men.

And he's on his way. But I remind you that he prays in Psalm 119.10, I seek you with all my heart. Do not let me stray from your commands.

[42 : 20] That prayer was not forgotten. It wasn't out of date just because David might have prayed it three years earlier. It was known and stored up in heaven for just such a time as this.

David's straying. He's more than straying. He's trampling on God's commands. He's full in, committed. But God in heaven says, that man in his better day asked me to keep him from straying. And he stirs up the heart of Nabal's wife, Abigail, who was as wise as Nabal was foolish. And she goes out, loads up her camel, and goes out to meet David in his 400.

And with tact and wisdom, she talks him down. Why should you come into the throne one day? She knows he's going to be king. The word is out.

Why should you come to your throne with your conscience loaded down with the guilt of bloodshed, unnecessary bloodshed? And she prevailed with David.

[43 : 23] But behind Abigail, you see, was God answering his prayer. Do not let me stray from your command. I dare say that every one of us have had Abigail's interrupt our sin, sinful straying.

You spend some time thinking, I was straying from God. And somebody came. Something happened. Behind it all. Trace it back to the God who keeps his children, keeps us from straying. Even when our hearts are not in it, we're ready to get revenge. And God comes and delivers us from our temptation. Well, what a savior.

What a salvation. And we see then, not only the value of memorizing and meditating on scripture, as we see it successfully work in chapters 24 and 26 of 1 Samuel, but we see we're to also pray. We find stuff here to cause us to say, oh God, do not let me stray from your commands. And God in heaven hears and answers. Let's pray.

[44 : 31] Father, we thank you for Psalm 119. We thank you for a man that was flesh and blood like us. He was not perfect.

He had a temper that rose up and would have slaughtered dozens. But we thank you that we have a savior on the throne who is stronger than our temptations and who hears our weak cries for help. We thank you for your word. Oh, forgive us, Lord, that we don't love it any more than we do. We don't meditate on it more than we do. That we're content just to read it or to hear it preached and then to have nothing more to do with it.

Teach us. Teach us what it is then to meditate and to suck out all the juice and nutrients of your word that will help us in these many different ways.

Thank you for being our helper, for being for us, for pitting us in our weakness. As you remember that we're dust, now come and by your Holy Spirit, sanctify us through your word.

[45:40] Your word is truth. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.