A Blessed Walk

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Thank you, choir. Jeremy, obviously leading today as John is out.

And so we are thankful for his willingness to step in and lead. And so first thing I'm going to say is if you want to see pictures of my new grandson, just see me after service.
Little Bo Allen was born on Friday and he's watching via live stream. And so, Bo, remember what we talked about. Give glory to God in all things and go Red Sox.
And so I told the seminar this morning, those were his first words, actually. Go Red Sox as he came out of the womb. But we are thrilled as a family and thankful for God's blessing.
And we rejoice in life and are so thankful for how he has worked and moved in our family. And we are quick to thank him in all things.
[1:19] And so if you have your Bibles, though, go ahead and open to Psalm 119. Psalm 119. And we'll look at the first eight verses here this morning.

Psalm 119. The first eight verses. A Blessed Walk is the title of this morning's sermon.
As you make your way there, in the second book of the Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan tells the story of Christian's wife, Christiana.
As she travels to the celestial city, she visits the house of interpreter, who shows her a room in which a man is scouring the ground with a muckrake in search of straw and sticks.
Now, for those of you in the younger generation, just Google muckrake, and you'll learn what a muckrake is. But he is scouring the ground with a muckrake in search of straw and sticks.
[2:35] Hovering above him is another man who offers him a golden crown in exchange for his muckrake. But the man with the muckrake is so absorbed with his search for straw and sticks that he never looks up.

The interpreter explains to Christiana that the point of the room is to let you know that earthly things, when they occupy people's minds, carry their hearts away from God.
Let me read that again. Many people are so preoccupied with the things of this earth that they have no idea what God offers them.
As Christiana listens to interpreters, she begins to weep. Oh, deliver me from this muckrake.
Now, as we think about that analogy, I couldn't help but think about a modern analogy to this scurrying about with our heads down can be seen in any waiting room, airport, restaurant.
[4:06] We're not, heads are down, mesmerized by the latest news or post or notification on our phones.

We scurry about needing to learn more about what's going on and needing to see who liked this or who reposted this.
And we walk around with our heads down and our eyes transfixed on these little computers that we carry in our pockets.
And if we're not careful, then we understand that when the things of this world occupy our minds, that they can carry us away from God.
And so we come to Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible. And in this Psalm, I love what one commentator, Derek Kidner, said, this giant among the Psalms shows the full flowering of that delight in the law of the Lord, which is described in Psalm 1.
[5:21] And it gives in personal witness to the many-sided qualities of Scripture praised in Psalm 19, verses 7 to the end of that Psalm.

See, if you know your Bibles and you've spent any amount of time in Psalm 119, you understand that the repeated phrase is pointing to the Word of God.

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It's a reminder of God in His Word and His declaration. And in fact, that when we look at this Psalm, we are confronted with many different terms that are used, synonyms that are used for Scripture. We find the law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, ordinances, word, or promise, all used as synonyms for the Word of God.
And a reminder to each and every one of us that God has spoken. God has revealed Himself. And we see it not only in creation, in general revelation, but we also see it in specific revelation in the Word of God.
[6:48] You've heard us talk about this often. That's why the Word of God is prominent in our church. Because God has spoken and we want to hear from Him.

We need to hear from Him. And so this majestic Psalm begins in Psalm 119.
Let me read it for us in verse 1. Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.
Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in His ways.
You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. Oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes.
[7:51] Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. I will praise you with an upright heart when I learn your righteous rules.

I will keep your statutes. Do not forsake me utterly, or do not utterly forsake me.
Psalm 119, verses 1 through 8. Your Bible perhaps even begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet that says Aleph.
Then the next stanza, beginning in verse 9, will say Beit, and then Gimel, and then Dalet. And it's actually Psalm 119 works its way through the entire Hebrew alphabet.
It's what we know as an acrostic, alphabetic psalm. And there's a reason for that. There's a reason that God so composed His Word that He did it in a fashion and in a manner so that it could be committed to memory.
[9:08] Easily recalled. And so the Hebrews would understand this, that with this first stanza, the opening word in every verse that we have begins with the letter A or the Aleph in the Hebrew.

That all eight verses, they're going to emphasize the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And then the Beit, all of those eight verses will begin with the B in the Hebrew alphabet.
And then it will go on all the way through all 22 letters. And so, we could look at the technical reasons for this and begin to dissect this particular psalm, but I want to do it, I believe, in the way that it was intended.
And that is that we are to meditate upon His Word. And so, I want to make three observations this morning.
And observation number one is the priority in this blessed walk. The priority. You see, right here, with the Aleph, it is a reminder to us that the priority should be the Word of God, His precepts, His commandments, the way in which He has given us His statutes.
[10:48] All of these synonyms that point us back to His Word, this psalm points us back to the priority of the Word. And again, if we go back to Psalm 1, we see even the opening of the entire Psalter.

All 150 psalms is a reminder of there is a way of the blessed and there's a way of those who are wicked. And the one who is blessed or the way of the righteous is the one who delights in the law of the Lord.
It's a priority in His life. And then in Psalm 19, again, we see all of creation speaking to God and His power and His majesty and His creation.
But then we see this glorious display of the beauty of His Word, of His spoken Word. And so priority is given in that it all begins here.
Derek Kidner again says this psalm and beginning here, we are reminded of an alphabet of prayers and reflections on the Word of God, giving each Hebrew letter its turn to introduce eight successive verses on the subject.
[12:13] And so in these first eight verses, we have a reminder of the A or the first letter in the alphabet pointing us to the priority.

of the Word. Just as we do not start the alphabet with the second or third letter, so we do not grow in Christlikeness apart from His Word.

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Now, for a church who loves His Word and treasures His Word and understands the priority of His Word, we need to be very careful because the treasuring of the Word, the exaltation of the Word, the priority of the Word should never lead us to worship the written Word but worship the God who spoke His Word.
We understand the author behind His Word. and we worship Him.
And the psalmist begins with this priority of those who would walk in what?
[14:02] The law of the Lord. Lord. And then those who keep His testimonies. Those who walk in His ways.

Those who understand the commandments and the precepts that He has commanded are to be kept diligently. And then the prayer in verse 5, Oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes, that our eyes are fixed on all your commandments.
When I learn your righteous rules in verse 8, I keep your statutes. You see the emphasis over and over and over on the priority of the Word. Commandments, precepts, statutes, over and over again point us to the priority of the Word.
but the quick application is for us to understand the author behind the Word, who speaks the Word, who gives us His Word.
And so we understand that it is authoritative because God has spoken. And so we don't debate with the Word because God is God and He spoke and so His Word is authoritative.
[15:25] We bow in reverence to His Word. Not only is Word authoritative but it is inerrant. And His Word is infallible. His Word is God breathed in 2 Timothy 3, 16 and 17.

God speaks His Word and it goes forth. But not only that, and this is where the hiccup comes in our lives, if you will. His Word is sufficient.
That His Word has been given to us so that we have all things for life and godliness. 2 Peter chapter 1. And so His Word is authoritative and infallible and inspired and inerrant and sufficient.
And so the Word should be a priority or the aleph, I would say, in each of our lives. It's foundational.
I love what Spurgeon said of Martin Luther when he said that Luther studied the Bible this way and even Luther's words verify this.
He said, first I shake the whole apple tree that the ripest might fall. Then I climb the tree and shake each limb and then each branch and then each twig and then I look under each leaf.
[16:59] Oh, that that would be us in our study of the Word, in the priority of the Word, that we would worship the One who has spoken His Word.

But not only do we see the priority that is given in this first stanza or the Aleph and each verse reminding us of the priority, but then we see the pronouncement, the pronouncement.
And the pronouncement is that of the blessed or the blessed. You see it in verses 1 and 2. It has been likened to the gateway to this entire psalm.
Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of Yahweh. Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart.
And so we have a pronouncement, and again, this is very familiar and similar to Psalm 1. Blessed are those who delight in the law of the Lord and those who meditate on His word day and night.
[18:12] There is this pronouncement though of the blessed or the blessed. If we look at this word in the Hebrew, it carries with it the idea that points to excellence or even some translations have it here of happiness.

It is one who enjoys God's favor. One who is doing that which God has designed Him to do. One who resides under God's blessing.
That's what it means to be blessed. You see, sometimes we're flippant in that word where someone sneezes and we say, what? Oh, God bless you.
And we really don't understand the biblical word behind walking in the way of the blessed blessed or being blessed of God. It's not just some casual term.
It's not just some polite way to acknowledge someone who's sneezed, if you will. It is a pronouncement from God.
[19:22] Thomas Manton said, the psalmist begins with a description of the way to true blessedness, just as Christ began His Sermon on the Mount.

And as the whole book of Psalms is elsewhere begun, as I mentioned in Psalm 1, blessedness is that which we all aim at, only we are ignorant or reckless of the way that leadeth to it.

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Therefore, the holy psalmist would first set us right in the true notion of a blessed man. I love what author and pastor J.
Stephen Yule had to say, blessedness is what everyone wants, yet it eludes most people because they look for it in the wrong place.
It doesn't depend on the accumulation of earthly goods, nor is it contingent on pleasant experiences and favorable circumstances.
[20:27] Rather, it is rooted in the knowledge of the living God, who alone is blessed. The extent to which we enjoy Him is contingent on our conformity to Him.

As we love what He loves, as we hate what He hates, we live the life of God. And this is precisely what we discover in the first stanza of Psalm 119.
there is a pronouncement of the blessed, a blessing from God. And if we were to trace this word throughout Scripture, we would not only find it in Psalm 1, but we'd find it in Psalm 32, verses 1 and 2.
In fact, if you have your Bibles open, just turn to the left there and go to Psalm 32. Psalm 32 gives us a description even of the blessed.
Verses 1 and 2. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
[21:59] So the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, who the Lord does not count iniquity, that's the blessed one. We know from Psalm 1, the blessed one is the one who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night.

We know from Psalm 32 that the blessed one is the one who the Lord forgives his transgressions. And then turn with me to the New Testament and we'll find another occasion if you turn to Matthew chapter 5 and another description of the blessed.
Matthew chapter 5, it's what we know as the Beatitudes speaking to the blessing. And here, Jesus himself, when he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain and when he sat down, his disciples came to him and he opened his mouth and taught them saying, look at verse 3, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.
[23:29] Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Even blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. There is a pronouncement of the blessed and ultimately for you and I to understand the pronouncement of the blessed is found by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.
That's the way of blessedness. There's no other way. we need to understand that God is the one who declares blessing upon us. God is the one who says you're blessed and you're blessed because of the righteousness of another.
And the righteousness of the other is the Lord Jesus Christ himself because he lived the perfect life that you can't live. In fact if you were to walk through Psalm 119 you're going to see repeatedly the psalmist talks about straying.
And even in verse 8 he says Lord do not utterly forsake me. There is an understanding that apart from God pronouncing blessing on us all of us are like sheep and go astray.
[25:00] Each and every one of us are sinners. Each and every one of us are not righteous. We have gone our own way. And the word of God declares that the only way that you're made right, the only way that you're made blessed is through faith in Jesus Christ.

You read Romans. Romans walks us through that in the depravity of man and the justification that comes by faith in Jesus Christ because it's his righteousness that we need credited to our account. That when the judge looks at me that he would see the righteousness of another, he wouldn't see my own feeble attempts at righteousness. And so scripture points us to the pronouncement of blessing, but we know as New Testament believers that the only way that we're pronounced

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blessed would be through faith in Jesus Christ or to be found in him, in Christ.
Now I love what one author had to say when we consider the blessed and when we consider that blessedness is rooted in our position in Christ, it's helpful to clarify the twofold obedience in scripture.
There's a twofold obedience in scripture. One is a legal obedience, perfectly obeying God's will. You perfectly obey God's will.
[26:34] That's legal obedience. Which guess what? None of us can perfectly keep God's will. None of us can keep God's law.

We find that repeatedly. All you have to do is walk through the Ten Commandments and you're repeatedly confronted with the fact that you fall short, you fail, you're a sinner. So there is the legal obedience, perfectly obeying God's will, and then there's gospel obedience.
And that is sincerely seeking to obey God's will. Sincerely seeking to obey God's will. You see, the difference in the two is Christ.
Christ is the one who legally obeyed everything that God the Father had set up in his law. He never sinned.
He never failed. And so when we trust Christ, his righteousness is credited to our account, and then we're led to gospel obedience, that we would sincerely seek to obey God's will.
[27:39] We don't seek to obey God's will and God's law in order to be accepted in him because our acceptance is based on Christ in him alone.

But growth in holiness, growth in Christlikeness, what we call sanctification, is what the psalmist is pointing us to here as well. That there is a way that's blessed and the way that is blessed we find in Christ and then we find it further leads to practices of the blessed.
That's your third point, practices of the blessed. So you have this priority that's given to the word and the law of God, and then you have this pronouncement of the blessed, and then you have the practices of the blessed, and the way one walks in blessedness is they are those who are blameless.
They walk in the law of Yahweh, verse 1. They are those who keep his testimonies. They seek him with their whole heart.
So the blessed man walks in the law of Yahweh. He walks in obedience to the law of Yahweh. But the blessed man, verse 2, also seeks him, Yahweh, with all his heart.
[29:17] He seeks him with all his heart. And so the practices of the blessed is that we would walk in obedience and we would seek him with all our heart.

Observations we make right here out of Psalm 119. Pointing to the priority of the word, the pronouncement of blessedness, and now the responsibility that comes.
And the responsibility that comes is that we would walk in the law of Yahweh. We would be obedient to that which God commands us in his word.
Charles Spurgeon again said, heart fellowship with God is enjoyed through love of his word, which is God's way of communicating with the soul by his Holy Spirit.
Heart fellowship with God is enjoyed through love of his word, which is God's way of communicating with the soul by his Spirit. Spirit. Listen, Proverbs tells us the way of the wicked is hard.
[30:30] The way of the wicked is troublesome. The way of the wicked is chaotic. The way of the wicked leads to destruction. And yet, why do so many walk in this way?

So many walk in this way because either A, they don't know Christ as Savior and Lord, and so they're just living out what their heart is. Their heart is dead to the things of God, and so they just live out their natural desires, their natural passions, which are all against God, or those who were found in Christ walk in a way that is not blessed, in a way that's not obedient, because they're ignorant of the word.
They don't spend time in his word. They don't meditate on his word. They don't memorize his word. Listen, how many times has that happened in your life?
You think, oh, if I would just be obedient to that which the word of God calls me to, then I wouldn't be walking in this way, but I've made a mess of my life because I've walked in direct disobedience to his word.
And it can be practical things. Like, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church. And we have husbands who treat their wives like dirt and who are demeaning to them and are unkind to

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them and nitpick them, and then they wonder why there's conflict in their marriage.
[32:11] When the word says, husbands, love your wives as what? Christ loved the church, which means you lay down your life for her. Not only that, Ephesians 5 tells us you're to nourish her, you're to cherish her.

You know what that word picture is? It's like a hen who is warming her chicks. And yet we have men who just, they're casual and they're cavalier in their demeanor with their wives and then they wonder why their wives don't want to submit to their leadership when you walk around like a jerk. That's in the Greek. You're a jerk. I mean, give me a break. If we walk in obedience to the word, the word hasn't left us on our own just to try to figure it out.
No. Love your wife as Christ loved the church. Nourish her. Cherish her. Seek to water her with the washing of the word.
God so she'll be pure and spotless. Listen, that's practical. You can put that into practice in your marriage.
[33:32] An equal opportunity preaching here. Wives, you're not off the hook either. Wives, we can go all the way back to Genesis chapter three, and we can begin to diagnose the problem, right?

She'll seek to have dominion over or rule over. Wives were created by God to be a helpmate, to come alongside, to compliment.
Wives are created in the image of God and are valued and they are there to walk alongside and to be a helpmate to their husbands in their two.
Uh-oh, get ready. Submit. You can't say that in the pulpit today, can you? Yes, you can. If you're going to preach the Bible, you do.
You're to submit to his leadership as unto the Lord because your leadership, your submission as unto the Lord first and foremost.
[34:37] Oh, but you don't know he's a jerk. you submit as unto the Lord. See, the word doesn't leave us on our own. We submit and then what can you do?

Now, you can cultivate 1 Peter 3, you can cultivate the inner beauty. You can walk closely with the Lord, seeking to win your husband to desire to serve the Lord and please the Lord by him watching and observing your life and your fellowship with the Lord and your close walk with the Lord.
See, the word is pretty explicit in husbands and wives and children. Children aren't off the hook, right? Children, what are you to do?
Obey those whom God has put in authority in your life. Oh, but you don't understand his rules, her rules are unreasonable.
people, they're constantly on me. What does Scripture say? Obey. You obey so that you may enjoy a long life.
[35:51] Pretty practical, is it not? And listen, when you hit the teen years, there's the danger and the temptation that your life's not going to be long if you're disobedient.

We're to obey. We're to walk with those in authority over my life, which then translates to others who are in authority in my life, which means those teachers who are in your life.
You're to submit to their leadership. Those in law enforcement and others who are in positions of authority.
We want to submit as unto the Lord first and foremost. Why? Because the word points us back to. They're gifts from God. They're ministers from God so that we don't have disorder and chaos, but that we would walk in order.
The word is incredibly practical. How about as an employee? You're to honor your boss.
[36:55] You're to work hard as unto the Lord. You're not to cheat him. You're to work so that he sees your life as a witness for the glory of God.

It just relates to all of life. But our problem is practicing the word. It's not how much we know, but it's how much do we obey in his word.
But the way of the blessed is one who walks in obedience to the law of Yahweh. God walks with an eye toward worshiping the Lord through everything that he says and everything that he does.
But not only that, does he walk in obedience, but blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with what? That which is left over?
that which I can find time for? With their whole heart, their entire being.
[38:07] Heart, again, speaking to affections and will and mind, that we are driven to seek God in such a way that it moves us in our emotions, it moves us in our will, it moves us in our mind that we

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are those who seek God, we seek him.

And while we're seeking him, then all these other things begin to flow and come into play here and they're put in order in our lives.
In that verse three, as we're seeking him with our whole heart, then we also do no wrong. We're not looking to get as close to the line of right and wrong as possible.
No, we're seeking to walk with him closely so that we can't even see the line. We don't want to pitch our tent as close to Sodom as possible. We want to be as far away from Sodom as possible.
And those who seek him with all their heart, that's what will happen in their lives. They will do no wrong, they'll walk in his ways. It's a habitual lifestyle.
[39:20] And then not only will you look to the precepts that have been commanded, but you will look to keep them diligently. Or the Hebrew carries with it the idea of carefully doing all that God has commanded.

This is indicative of one who seeks God with their whole heart. You do no wrong. seek to keep all of his precepts diligently.
And then the prayer again, verse 5, oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes. Crying out to God, and then I will not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.
You see, sin carries with it shame. You see it in the Garden of Eden, and you see it all through Scripture, and you see it all through church history. Sin carries with it shame, guilt, the desire to hide, the desire to pull away.
And the psalmist here says, I'll not be put to shame. Why? My eyes are fixed on your commandments. And then I'll praise you with an upright heart when I learn your righteous rules.
[40:40] And then the declaration again in verse 8 of I will keep your statutes. But then don't miss this last line.

Do not utterly forsake me. You see, herein lies in verse 8, this paradox, if you will, that we find throughout Scripture.
There's this bold declaration by the psalmist that I will keep your statutes. And then the recognition. Do not forsake me.
Do not utterly forsake me. The recognition I can't do this in and of myself. I need you, God. I'm dependent upon you. I need you in order to walk in this way.
Please do not utterly forsake me. And this is the opening stanza, the aleph of this majestic psalm.
[41:46] The priority of the word God has spoken in recognizing the author behind the word, the one who's spoken, that God himself, the one true God, he's the one we worship, and then the way of the blessed, that the pronouncement of blessing we know comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

And then we see descriptions of this, the one who delights in the law of the Lord, the one whose sin is covered, the one who is poor in spirit, the one who's a peacemaker, the one who's pure in heart, all of these things that only come through Christ.
And then the practices of the blessed. And therein lies the greatest challenge to each of us, that we would be doers of the word and not merely hearers only.
You see, the great danger for us, First Baptist Mustang, everywhere you turn, you're confronted with the word. It's a great thing.
Everywhere you turn, if you're being rocked by someone in the nursery, chances are they're singing scripture to you. You're chasing around toddlers through the preschool area.
[43:05] Chances are they're saying, Lord, help me, and Lord, help him, help her. But they're going to be confronted with scripture and the truth of scripture all throughout preschool ministry, children's ministry, in our youth ministry.

They're confronted with the expositional preaching and teaching of the word. They're our choir. They're singing the word of God. Our men are constantly confronted either through the institute or through discipleship groups with the word of God.
Our ladies with our discipleship groups, with ladies and theology, constantly confronted with the word of God. And if we're not careful, we're inundated with the word, which is a great thing, but then Monday happens and we don't practice it.
Oh, fill me with more Bible study. Give me more Greek words. Give me more Hebrew words. Give me more background. Give me more history. Give me more grammar.

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Give me more genres. And listen, all those things are good and of themselves, but all of those matter not an ounce if you don't practice the word.
[44:25] That I would understand sin is not something to be played with and trifled with and that becomes a pet in our lives, but it is poison and I need to avoid it because it will lead to destruction.

That pride is something that God opposes. It's not something that we should just laugh off and joke about and rationalize and justify. No, God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.
So what should I be doing? Killing pride and cultivating humility in my life, which I can't do apart from God. Do not utterly forsake me, but I've got to practice the word.
How about in your communication? Are you practicing the words? Seeking to build others up? Or are you constantly tearing them down? What about in your communication?
Are you always speaking and never listening? Scripture addresses that too. Again, husbands, wives, children, employers, employees, and on and on it goes throughout our life.
[45:40] Those who are walking through trials. trials. Do you think Scripture addresses that? You better believe it does. How I walk through a trial. How is it that I'm able to say, God, I praise you for these trials in my life?

James 1. That's because I live out the word. The circumstances may not be bringing joy, but I can trust the God who's in the middle of the trial.
I can trust his faithfulness, his grace, his mercy, his patience, his plan. He's working a plan in your life, a purpose behind everything in your life, even the difficult people in your life.
God has them there for a reason, or maybe you're the difficult person, and God's revealing that to you, and there's a reason behind it to form you and conform you into the image of his son.
That's growth in holiness. That's growth in godliness. See, this is applying the word. What about grief? A loved one is no longer present with you, and you miss them terribly.
[46:53] You want to be with them. You miss their companionship. Listen, as the old preacher said, in the midst of grief, you can either get bitter or get better.

And we can get bitter and frustrated. God, why'd you take them? Why are they not here with us so we can get better? And then we say, God, I miss them. You know that. You know my heart. But praise God, they're found in Christ, and I'll see them again.
Or praise God for the time that you gave me with them, and I know you're going to carry me, and you're faithful, and you'll lead me through this grief. See, Scripture addresses all these things, and yet, folks, one of our dangers is that we're so inundated with Scripture and Bible study that we just go from one to the other, and we fail to practice the Word.
Listen, it's not just you. This is in my life. But that's why we do what we do when we gather together, is that we gather together, and that's why we need to hear from God.
Listen, I would have had no problem getting up here this morning and running a million pictures of my new grandson, and telling you how great it is to be a grandfather, and give you story after story, and listen, you may be tickled by that, you may be comforted by that, but in the end, that's all it is, is a nice story.
[48:21] When we gather together in God's room, in the worship center, we need to hear from Him. That's why we open His Word. Why? Because not only do I want to hear, I want to learn, I want to grow, but then I want to practice the Word.

And that affects how I approach life tomorrow morning when the alarm clock goes off. That affects how you respond to the unreasonable boss.
That affects the way that you communicate with the lost person in your workplace, or your family, who does everything that they can to annoy you, and to make a mockery of Christianity and Christ. Scripture addresses all this. So let me sum all this up, because I've got to go see my grandson. And so, practical application.
You ready? Ready for the practical application that we draw from this? prayer. Number one, pray. Pray. That's what Psalm 119 is filled with, prayer.
[49:41] Oh, make my way established, God. Would you establish it in keeping your statutes? You pray. You cry out to the Lord, God, give me a hunger and a thirst for your Word.

Give me a passion for knowing you and studying you and examining all there is to examine so that I may practice the Word as well. But you pray, number one.
Number two, you read the Word. You read the Word, which means you need to have a plan. Listen, if you have no plan to read the Word, that's your plan.

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And you're going to hit it. So many of us think, well, that's just something real technical, Jeff. If you're planning, you know, I need to, that's technical. I want to just be, I want it to be just, I'm moved by the Spirit.
Well, listen, the Spirit moves in the midst of a plan as well. So have a plan. And listen, I follow a plan because of the weakness of my flesh. I know what happens when I don't follow a plan.
[50:43] There'll be a million other things that'll pop up to distract me from being in the Word. So follow a plan. Read the Word. Number three, meditate on the Word.

Meditate. Again, this is coming right out of Psalm 119. We can't get to more of it this morning, but you meditate on it. That means to turn it over in your head.
That means as you're driving to work, how does this apply to my life? Father, how do I apply this to the office? How do I apply this to my family member? You meditate. Then you memorize.
Verse nine, how can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your Word. You memorize the Word of God. You deposit it within you so that then the Holy Spirit recalls it at just the right time.
You'll be amazed at how often that happens. When you hide the Word of God in your life, then all of a sudden you're talking with somebody and oh, lo and behold, all these passages of Scripture are coming to the forefront of my mind.
[51:42] Why? Because you've hidden the Word in your heart. You pray. You read the Word. You meditate on the Word. You memorize the Word. Number five, you apply it to your life.

You look for ways to apply it to your life. Some of you this morning, in a very practical way, need to look at the way you function as a godly husband or a godly wife and the direct applications that's there or to a child and the way you function in your family.
Number six, be obedient. Be obedient. It's not enough just to note the application. Yeah, how many of us are good at that?
Oh, I see how this applies. Or we do this. This is a good one too, right? We're like, oh man, I wish he was here to hear this. I wish she was here to hear this. Well, again, apply it, but then be obedient in your own life.
And number seven, take others to the word of God. Take others to the word of God.
[52:51] Listen, the greatest thing you can do is speak God's word to others.

His word is living and active. Now, direct application for this. Listen, Michael and Marcy don't get on a plane till tomorrow, so we can keep going all afternoon.
But real quick, the direct application for this is in the moment of a crisis in another person's life.
If you're tempted to not move toward them because you don't know what to say, you speak the word.
That's, you speak the word. Or you come near them and you don't speak at all. That's called the ministry of presence. It's what Job's counselors should have done.
[53:52] Just go be a comfort to them. Don't try to figure it out. But the greatest thing you can do is speak the word of God and take others to the word.

Why? Because it all comes full circle. When you take others to the word, you're taking them to the one who spoke his word and the one who created them.
And his word is perfect. And his word is sufficient. Let's pray together. Our Father, we thank you for this time this morning and the opportunity we've had just to gather in this room and to take part in viewing baptism, hearing a testimony of conversion.
help us to never take that for granted. Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray.
Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray.
[55:03] Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray. Oh, how we pray.

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