

## Finding Victory Through The Word May 10th, 2020

### Sermon Summary

This message looks at the importance of God's Word in our ability to find victory in our lives. A good bit of time is taken at the beginning to lay the foundation for why we need God's Word in our lives in order to find victory. A modern day parable is used to illustrate how God's Word is intended to serve as a manual for our lives. Two New Testament passages are quoted to help develop this foundation, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 2 Timothy 4:1-5. Selected verses of Psalm 119 are then used to discover the components of God's Word, the characteristics of God's Word, the purpose of God's Word, our responsibility to read and follow God's Word, and the results of following God's Word.

### Full Sermon Notes

Finding Victory Through The Word  
Psalm 119 (Selected Verses)

I sure love the worship time! We worship a mighty God who is so high and exalted above us and yet He loves us so much He has made epic efforts to reach out to us and invite us into a personal relationship with Him. He cared so much that we know Him that He inspired around 40 authors over thousands of years to write the 66 books of the Bible! When you look at how these books harmonize together in their message it's absolutely amazing! I would almost say it's just unbelievable, but actually the diversity of writers, the years of distance between them, and their unity of teaching makes the Bible so believable and trust worthy. Let's pray and ask God to teach us today how to find victory in our lives through the Word of God! Pray!

Just so you'll know, I'm going to spend a bit of time establishing why the Word of God is so vital for finding victory in our lives. I'll then share with you four things about the Word of God from David's Psalm 119, a most powerful worship song. It's the longest Psalm and the longest chapter in the Bible and probably the longest worship song ever written! When David got his worship on, it was Epic. Now, as promised, let me lay down a foundation for our message today. One of the beautiful things about the Bible is that it's not just written by one guy who claimed to have some special vision, or who just happened to discover a hidden copy in some obscure place. The integrity and authority of Scripture is real and powerful and has been vetted and verified in so many ways down through the years by archeologist, scholars and researchers. However, one of the most powerful indications of the truth of Scripture is found when a person reads, meditates, studies and then applies those truths to their life. But we must know there will always be a tension, a pull, and a temptation to minimize the authority of God's Word in our lives. This tension comes when our lives, our desires, and our culture, find themselves at odds with the principles of Scripture. The importance of guidance from an authoritative source has never been more apparent than in our present circumstances. We find ourselves looking to our governing authorities to give us guidance as we seek to overcome the Covid 19 Pandemic. Clear, concise, and consistent direction is desperately needed! The same thing is true when it

comes to spiritual guidance for finding victory in our lives! Thank God He has given us His Word as a manual for finding Victory in our lives!

I want to begin today with a crazy example. It's a modern day parable. A parable may or may not be talking about an actual event, but is a truth bearing story! So I'm going to tell you a modern day parable. I used to own one of these...

Picture of Yamaha 850 Midnight Special Motorcycle

Now let's just say, for illustration purposes, (this didn't really happen!) but let's say I was going to take my bike on a mountain trip. I decided it would need a tune up before I left. So I step into my shop and open up the box with all my manuals and grab one. I turn to the page that says "tune up" and I get to work. I follow the manual exactly! I finally finish around midnight and I'm leaving the next morning.

I'm so excited I can hardly sleep. I get up the next morning before the sunrise and load everything up. I fire up the bike and begin my adventure. However, I only get about two blocks when something makes a crazy noise and then there's a loud bang and the bike shuts down. I look down and there's oil dripping on the ground. It's not pretty. I trailer it to a shop and they tell me it has a bent valve and it threw a rod. I tell them I followed the manual when I tuned it up. They tell me I'm going to have to take it up with the manufacturer. Long and short, it ends up in Judge Judy's court. Now, don't forget this story is for illustration purposes.

So I tell the Judge the whole sad story. That's when she ask a stunning question that ruins my whole day. She ask me to let her look at the manual. I said sure. She looks at it and ask me if this is the manual I used? I said yes. She then says, "This manual?" "Yes Mamm!" Then she says, "This is the manual to a Briggs and Stratton 3.5 lawnmower." To which I reply... "A manual's a manual. It shouldn't really matter." She looks at me like I'm crazy and says, "You've got to be kidding! Case dismissed, I rule in favor of the motorcycle manufacturer."

Now, I didn't really do that, and I've never been on Judge Judy. I actually sold the bike after someone pulled out in front of me and I almost had to lay it down. I figured I would wait till my kids were grown before I got back on a bike. And every time I mention getting a bike, my wife mentions the grandkids and I'm thinking, okay when they're grown I'll get one. I'll only be about 80!!!

Here's the point...everyone in here, even those who have never turned a wrench, knows you can't use a lawn mower manual to tune up a motorcycle. That's a no brainer. The manufacturer of the motorcycle knows best how to tune the bike because they made it. They know the right specs.

Who made you? God! That's right! God! And He did a marvelous thing for you...

He wrote a manual. It's called the Holy Bible! God's Word to humankind. We discover the secrets for victorious living in this amazing life manual called the Bible. Listen to what Paul said about God's manual for our lives...

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

2 Tim 3:17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

And we know that includes the man of God and the women of God! Amen? Amen!!

But here's the issue: People tune their lives up to the world's manual. They listen to everyone but their creator. Then it happens. Life blows up in their face. Their life begins to fall apart. And you know what they want to do? Take the manufacturer to court. That's right, they blame God! I've seen it happen so many times.

I worked a wreck many years ago when I was a fireman. A man had been drinking heavily and blew through an intersection. He hit a young father on his way to work and took his life. The drunk man was walking around hitting things and saying, "God why me? Why are you doing this to me?" I knew he was going to have to deal with a lot when he sobered up, but I did have a pretty good talk with him in which I let him know this incident was not on God! I also let him know God loved him and would help him deal with the consequences if he would allow it. You can find out about that help in last week's sermon on Finding Victory Over Failure. But here's a very true statement...

People follow the world's manual in their dating relationships, their marriages, their ethics, their goals in life, lifestyle choices and then when things begin to crash, God many times gets the blame.

This is not to imply that people who walk with God and consult God's Word never have problems. They do, but there's a difference. Their problems are not usually self-inflicted. Everybody makes mistakes, but let me tell you, if you are seeking to live by God's Word your decision making processes will be different and your consequences will be different. We've been reading through the Bible this year and I'm grateful for all of you who are reading along with us. I know it's not easy to keep up sometimes and studying God's Word is a discipline and a good habit that must be developed. I want you to think about these questions and I'm not asking these questions to guilt trip anyone, but to make us think.

If you've been following the reading plan, how's that been going?

If you're not following the reading plan, did you read God's Word any this last week?

Did you read God's Word daily?

Did you consult or even consider God's Word when you made decisions big or small, moral or ethical decisions?

I know sometimes we just get busy, and forget, or we get to the end of our day and we are so worn out we can't physically keep our eyes open! But there are times, I'm afraid, we intentionally ignore God's Word because there's a conflict of interest between what we are doing or want to do and what God's Word says we should do? And I must remind us all that God didn't give us His Word to hamstring us, or stifle us, He gave it to us so we could flourish and grow, and find great joy, peace and victory in life! By the end of today's sermon, it is my prayer that you will realize...to neglect God's Word is to neglect your greatest resource for life. On the other hand, embracing God's Word will be a treasure trove of blessing to your life. Did you know I've been instructed to tell you these things. God's Word tells me this in 2 Timothy 4:1-5...

2 Tim 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

2 Tim 4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction.

2 Tim 4:3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

2 Tim 4:4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

2 Tim 4:5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

I'm going to do this by looking at selected verses in Psalm 119. It is one of the best chapters in all of the Bible when it comes to letting us know the prominent place God's Word, His manual, should have in our daily lives. If we're going to find real and lasting victory in our lives we must find that victory through God's Word. He gave us His Word for that very reason! As we read Psalm 119:9-16, you can underline the word your and the word that goes with it in each verse.

## 1. Finding Victory by Understanding the Components of God's Word

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

Psalm 119:9 (NIV)

I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

Psalm 119:10 (NIV)

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11 (NIV)

Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.

Psalm 119:12 (NIV)

With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

Psalm 119:13 (NIV)

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

Psalm 119:14 (NIV)

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

Psalm 119:15 (NIV)

I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

Psalm 119:16 (NIV)

In these verses the Psalmist speaks of at least seven ways God's instructions for life comes to us.

God's Word in General/God's Commands/God's Decrees

God's Laws/God's Statutes/God's Precepts/God's Ways

Your Word or Words is used 29 times in Psalm 119!

Commands is used 22 times in Psalm 119!

Decrees is used 22 times in Psalm 119!

Law or Laws is used 45 times in Psalm 119!

Statutes is used 23 times in Psalm 119!

Precepts is used 21 times in Psalm 119!

Ways is used 8 times in Psalm 119!

(2 x's talking about God's ways and 6x's talking about changing a person's ways to God's ways!)

I was talking to my Father-in-law a few years ago after he had a medical procedure and we were talking about God's Word. He told me this:

"God's Word speaks by direct command, necessary inference, or actual example!"

I said, "Thanks Pop, that's going in a message!"

Direct Command

God's Word brings us law's, commands, decrees, and statutes that give direct, exact instruction.

Necessary Inference

God's Word brings us precepts that give principles to guide us no matter what the circumstances.

Actual Example

God's Word brings us thousands of examples that illustrate exactly how we are to apply God's Word.

## 2. Finding Victory by Understanding the Characteristics of God's Word!

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

Psalm 119:89 (NIV)

Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures.

Psalm 119:90 (NIV)

Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you.

Psalms 119:91 (NIV)

To all perfection I see a limit; but your commands are boundless.

Psalms 119:96 (NIV)

And look at verses 137-138...

Righteous are you, O LORD, and your laws are right.

Psalms 119:137 (NIV)

The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy.

Psalms 119:138 (NIV)

So God's Word is eternal, stands firm in the heavens, highlights God's faithfulness, endures and is boundless!

There's just nothing else in this old world that endures like the Word of God. And when it comes to wisdom, God's Word is boundless! We will have a whole sermon next week on finding victory through wisdom! When it comes to the Word of God...

We can neglect it, but we cannot negate it! We can deny it, but we can't destroy it! We can ignore it, but we cannot invalidate it! We can reject it, but we cannot replace it!

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

1 Peter 1:24 For, "All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,

1 Peter 1:25 but the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

### 3. Finding Victory by Understanding The Purpose of God's Word

God's manual was given to us for a reason. It was not designed as a book to straight jacket us, to imprison us, to stifle us, to make us miserable, or to keep us from becoming our best. In fact just the opposite. It was designed to teach us how to reach our fullest potential. How to tune up your life so you can get the most out of every mile of life!! In fact the Psalmist makes it very clear why God gave us the manual...

Psalms 119:33 Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.  
(NIV)

Psalms 119:34 Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:35 Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:37 Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:38 Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:39 Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:40 How I long for your precepts! Preserve my life in your righteousness.  
(NIV)

God's Word was given to us in this manual we call the Bible to teach us, to guide us, to give us understanding, to turn us away from worthless things that would harm us, and bring us disgrace. It was designed to preserve our life. God's Word was given to us in this manual we call the Bible to us to set us free, to release us, to empower us, to embolden us, to equip us, to strengthen us, to encourage us, to delight us, to comfort us, to teach us, to guide us as we navigate the troubled waters of this life.

I must tell you this. If you don't trust that God is a good God and has your best interest at heart, then you won't trust His Word. You won't follow His manual. Listen to the Psalmist confession about this...

Psalm 119:65 Do good to your servant according to your word, O LORD.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:66 Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word.  
(NIV)

Psalm 119:68 You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.  
(NIV)

The Psalmist got to a place where he wanted God to teach him. He had learned so many lessons the hard way and now he wanted God to give him knowledge and good judgement! This takes us to a very vital issue this morning.

#### 4. Finding Victory by Understanding Our Responsibility to Read and Follow God's Word

Here's the deal. God's Manual, His Word, is there for us, however, it will do us no good if we neglect it. Like I said earlier, we can neglect it but we can't negate it! Just like an instruction manual for a product, it is the consumer's responsibility to read and to follow the instructions

given. Now that's a problem for many of us men. We just don't like to read the manual. It's a pride thing. We've got it! We don't need those pesky instructions. We know shortcuts. We've got an easier way. Sometimes, it's not until the thing breaks or simply won't work, we realize that little step we left out was actually very important!

Now we're going to go back and read the first verses we read in Psalm 119, but we're going to underline different portions. Underline the word I and the word or words that go with it.

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

Psalm 119:9 (NIV)

I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

Psalm 119:10 (NIV)

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11 (NIV)

Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.

Psalm 119:12 (NIV)

With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

Psalm 119:13 (NIV)

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

Psalm 119:14 (NIV)

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

Psalm 119:15 (NIV)

I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

Psalm 119:16 (NIV)

In other words, you've got to make a commitment to follow the manual of God's Word if you want to find victory in your life!

In order to follow God's Word, you've got to desire to know what's in God's Word. You've got to read the manual. You've got to follow the instructions. Meditate on the words. Stop neglecting the manual! You must come to the place where you desire the wisdom and instruction that comes from God's life manual He so graciously gave us! The Psalmist put it eloquently...

Psalm 119:18 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:19 I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:20 My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.

(NIV)

## 5. Finding Victory as You Experience the Results of Following God's Word

Once you start tuning your life up to God's manual and you start experiencing all the amazing benefits that follow, you will wonder how you ever made it in life without God's instruction book. You will have the same attitude as the Psalmist...

Psalm 119:41 May your unfailing love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise;

(NIV)

Psalm 119:42 then I will answer the one who taunts me, for I trust in your word.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:43 Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:44 I will always obey your law, for ever and ever.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:45 I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:46 I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame,

(NIV)

Psalm 119:47 for I delight in your commands because I love them.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:48 I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.

(NIV)

Did you see the benefits...

God's unfailing love! Salvation! An answer for those who taunt you! Hope! Freedom!  
No more shame! Delight!

There's more...

Psalm 119:50 My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:98 Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:99 I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:100 I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

(NIV)

Psalm 119:114 You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.

(NIV)

Psalms 119:165 Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.  
(NIV)

God's Word brings Comfort in suffering! God's promises preserves your life! God's Word makes you wiser than your enemies! God's Word gives more insight than your teachers! God's Word gives more understanding than the elders! God's Word is a lamp for your feet and a light for your path! God's Word let's you know that God Himself is your refuge and your shield. We can put our hope in God's Word and God's Word gives us great peace and keeps us from stumbling!

Knowing all this, why would anyone neglect this manual. It is a foolish thing and a tragic thing to neglect the manual that our Creator went to such trouble to give us. If you've got a copy of the God's manual, consult it, read it, meditate on it, love it!

If you don't have a copy, you can get the Youversion Bible App on your smart phone or get a paper copy. If you can't afford it we'll get you a copy. There's some amazing stuff in here you need! Let's pray! "Father God I thank You for Your precious Word! Thank You for inspiring Godly authors to write down Your commands, Your precepts, Your instructions, and Your guidance for our lives. We know it's because of Your love for us You have instructed us! Thank You also for sending Jesus, who was the Word become flesh. He came to show us Your love and to live a life that illustrated Your principles and Your ways! But we also know Jesus gave His life on the Cross so we might be forgiven for all the times we've neglected and ignored Your Word and sinned against You. You are so gracious and we thank You for Your love and grace. We pray this prayer, believing, in the Name of Jesus! Amen.

Thank you so much for being with us again today online! We will be online next week and will continue to be online even after we start gathering together again at the building. At this time, we are planning on having services on the 24th of May. Zach will mention this in our announcements as well. Our fire chief and the state fire marshal have been working with our local and state authorities to develop a safe plan to help churches regather safely and responsibly. I was at headquarters this past week filling out forms so we could work together to see how smoothly the process would be for our fire department and for churches. We will be sending out emails to let you know what our guidelines will be. I'm super excited to see you, but please know, we understand if you feel you need to continue being with us online for the time being. We respect that! For those who choose to come, we are going to do our very best to make sure our venues are as safe as we can possible make them! As I've said, we'll all do our part and put the rest in God's hands! Let's sing a closing worship song before our final announcements. Love you!