

THE VICTORY LIFE

in

PSALM 119

by

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CHAPTER TEN

THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH

JOD

**“Thy hands have made me and fashioned me:
give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.
They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.**

**I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right,
and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.**

**Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort,
according to thy word unto thy servant.**

**Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.
Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will
meditate in thy precepts.**

**Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.
Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed”**

(Psalms 119:73-80)

“Let my heart be sound in thy statutes” (Psalm 119:80).

THE BIBLE HAS MUCH TO SAY about soundness — sound words, sound doctrine, sound minds and sound hearts.

A sound heart is the keystone of spiritual stability.

Unsoundness in any realm is the surest way to failure and regret. By nature, the heart of man is very unsound. Indeed, it is **“deceitful above all things and desperately wicked”** (Jeremiah 17:9). God only can change the heart.

“Let my heart be sound in thy statutes” (v. 80), the young psalmist thoughtfully prays.

He had been very foolish in the past, but now he has burned all his bridges behind him. The future must be brighter. It can only be brighter as the power of divine Truth is allowed to operate in every phase of his being. It must begin in his heart.

If his heart is right concerning the Word of God, it will be right concerning the will of God. There is no question about the soundness of Scripture. If it governs his heart, there will be no question about the soundness of his heart.

Just how sound his heart is in the statutes of the Almighty is reasonably revealed within the confines of this brief stanza. He begins with an appreciation of the creative power of God. There is no room in his sound thinking for the evolutionary theory with its exposed, exploded and discredited “Piltdown man” fabrication.

“Thy hands have made me and fashioned me” (v. 73), he declares without mental reservation.

Take a hurried glance at this complex temple of man. Who is the architect and builder if not a wise and wonderful God? Who else could possibly conceive such features and functions? The miles upon miles of the intricate circulatory system is in itself a wonder of wonders. The plasma of life which courses night and day through the massive network of conduits is furnished by a self-contained chemical factory.

The raw material from which it is extracted is delivered by one of the most pleasurable exercises in human experience — eating and drinking. It is pumped at the rate of approximately 2500 gallons daily, purified and pumped repeatedly to every cell in the system by a vital unit which operates miraculously in accomplishing a stupendous job.

The fabulous network which communicates sensitivity and reaction from the farthest part is of Infinite design. The psychic processes which receive; record and retain impressions, and which produce balance, action and co-ordination are of supernatural origin. The twin-lensed photographic equipment with its countless cones and rods has been taking three-dimensional action shots and colored pictures ever since father Adam first blinked an eyelid.

Not only that, the exposure is developed simultaneously and mounted in the gallery of memory.

You are right, absolutely right! God made you and fashioned you. Such a position is not only sound but definitely intelligent to true faith and satisfying to an honest heart. The One whom we love and serve is the great Creator — the Infinite God.

What adoration and devotion He deserves! What thorough obedience He should be accorded! Especially so since the believer is His, both by creation and by salvation.

“They that fear thee will be glad when they see me” (v. 74), he conjectures with no thought of boastfulness.

Of course they will.

Godly people are greatly pleased always to see others getting on with God. What is more disappointing than to witness professing Christians living as though God does not exist and does not speak. Some:

- Never give a testimony,
- Never seek to win a soul to Christ,
- Never attend a prayer meeting,
- Never lend encouragement to the cause of righteousness.

They classify themselves as Christians, insist that they are going to Heaven, but they never bring spiritual blessing to anyone. This fellow is setting forth a very tender truth in this utterance. He is confident that spiritual people will at once recognize the genuineness of his testimony. And what is more, he is sure they will rejoice and be glad to know where he stands.

Intermittently the tonal quality of his testimony is enriched by an affirmation of the authority and authenticity of the Scriptures. **“I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right”** (v. 75) is an illustration in point.

- They are right in all they reveal and in all they require.
- They are right in the history recorded and in the prophecy presented.
- They are right concerning the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God.
- They are right in expressing the condition of the lost and in presenting the salvation of the Lord.
- They are right in condemning uncleanness in the life of a Christian and in calling for complete separation.
- They are right in magnifying the future bliss of the saved and in emphasizing the future doom of the unredeemed.

Each of the last five verses in this stanza begins with the word “let.” **“Let thy merciful kindness come . . . let thy tender mercies come . . . let my enemies be discomfited . . . let godly companions come.”**

To find an individual who is ready for God’s richest favors is soul-refreshing to say the least. He has advanced to the point now where he can say in truth with David, **“Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.”**

Notice how thoroughly the psalmist exercises his God-given privileges in prayer. James tells us that “we have not because we ask not.” With this young man, there is frequency of petition and perpetual confidence in prayer. He honored God in humble dependence as well as in firm expectancy.

“Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort” (v. 78), he quietly petitions.

Since there is a steady trustfulness about his attitude, he will learn that the kindness of the Lord is not only merciful but marvelous, excellent and everlasting.

However the greatest exhibition of God's kindness is yet to take place. The Church should lift their eyes and long for that hour. Here is the record: **"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."**

In that hour, all the creatures of glory will stand agog! Then the Heaven of heavens will resound with exceeding joy, long anticipated, as the children of God are presented to the Father. In the meanwhile, the kindness of the Lord is for our comfort and encouragement.

"Let thy tender mercies come unto me" (v. 77), he continues.

This is not so much a prayer as it is the reaching out of a longing heart. It is not a repetition of the former request; it is an extension. Just as a reclining person extends the arms to bring a loved one within reach for a kiss or an embrace, just so intimately and so realistically, the psalmist is communing with God. He is saying, **"Come nearer."** And the added words in this request, **"that I may live,"** make the meaning both tender and impressive. To a thoroughly dedicated person, life is meaningless unless he is conscious of the nearness of the Lord.

The nearness of the Lord to one in this life is dependent upon the nearness of one's life to the Lord and this the main challenge of victorious living.

When Jacob awoke out of his sleep, he said, **"Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."** When we are awakened out of our sleep of indifference, we too will find that God is near. God is always near. **"He be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move and have our being;"** but, like Jacob we may be in such a condition as to know it not.

Some of us should tremble at the thought of what we must be missing in the way of hallowed wholesome, spiritual blessing. We seem to think that it is all reserved for Heaven. When we hear of those godly folk who have lived under the sensitive touch of the Spirit and have made such a mighty impact with their testimony, we are as those that dream. It seems too wonderful to be true.

"The proud . . . have dealt perversely with me without a cause" (v. 78), he complains ere he concludes his prayer.

It is never pleasant to be unfairly treated. It always rubs the fur the wrong way. We all wish that we could avoid such experiences, but come they will. We sob our lament into the ear of our loving Father, but He permits many things to try our faith and to test our patience.

He has asked that we **"count it not strange"** when fiery trials come upon us. Oppressors will oppress, faultfinders will find fault; and critics will cut us with their comments. We must keep on going on. We dare not be deterred. However rough the road, it will end some day; and at its end all will be well. Perverse dealers will deal with us then no more, forever.

You will notice that the maltreatment accorded the psalmist was entirely without provocation.

Satan instigates such matters, and he has no regard for fair play. However, afflictions and persecutions could be the tempering heat to give the ring of genuineness to one's testimony. But a trial, no matter its character, can never furnish an excuse for failure in the spiritual life.

The prominent point which the psalmist is emphasizing, of course, is that he had been suffering innocently.

Is this not bearing a likeness to our blessed Lord? Jesus did not occasion the indignities which were heaped upon Him.

The New Testament throws some interesting light on a matter such as this. It says, **“For this is grace, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.”**

Next comes a very logical request in the psalmist's prayer. **“Let those that fear thee turn unto me”** (v. 79), he appeals.

Here he is asking the Lord to furnish him godly companions.

This is not only a logical request, but a reasonable one, a proper one. The Lord is both able and willing to do this. When He supplies the companions, they are the right type.

- They will not lead us astray.
- They will not dull the luster of our witness for Christ.
- They will love the things we love.
- They will exalt the Lord we adore.

It is good to let the Lord lead us into such contacts, for companionship tells on character. Sooner or later we become like those with whom we associate.

“Let my heart be sound in thy statutes,” he pleads.

He wants to be a man of spiritual wisdom and stability. He means to build his devotion, his knowledge and his love on a firm foundation of heart soundness.

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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