

Sermon Notes – March 22, 2015, Pastor Alan Smith

“Hidden Word”

- Word search puzzles. On my Bible program I can make them for any scripture I want.
- I like doing them. I like doing hidden object games while I watch TV
- Maybe I like to find stuff that isn't easily seen
- **1. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses. It has a similar length to some of the Bible's shorter books like Philippians, James, or Ruth!**
- **2. The purpose of this Psalm is to celebrate God's word and instruction to his people. It is used in Jewish tradition to celebrate Rosh Hashanah (which is Jewish New Year). 3. The structure of Psalm 119 is comprised of 22 stanzas, each starting with a different letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Each stanza has 8 verses with two lines each.**
- The Psalmist starts out in vs 9 with a question and answer.
- **9 How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word.**
- I feel that is an important question in today's world
- We live in an upside down world. It seems if we speak truth then we are criticized about speaking that truth or that truth may be offensive to someone.
- Our young people are bombarded by the idea of political correctness in this nation. If they have an opinion that doesn't follow the norm or is considered to be intolerant then that opinion isn't tolerated by those that talk about tolerance.
- I know that's a mouth full.
- The psalmist answered his own question. To stay pure we must be obedient to God's word
- **James 1:22 (NLT)**

- **22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.**
- Then the question that pops in my head is how do we keep obeying His word
- Think about it we are drawn in many directions.
- Tempted every day. Anger creeps in, hatred, greed, gluttony, lust, being judgmental, coarse jokes, gossiping, etc.
- We can face any one of these every day. How can we be obedient?
- First I see in this Psalm is our attitude. We need to pursue God.
- **10 I have tried hard to find you—don't let me wander from your commands.**
- **The message I'm single-minded in pursuit of you; NRSV 10 With my whole heart I seek you; NIV 84 ¹⁰I seek you with all my heart;**
- In **Matthew 6:33** Jesus tells us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness
- The pursuit of God is important to living the life that He wants us to live.
- The next stanza of this Psalm I see probably the most important item to being obedient to God.
- **11 I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.**
- The Hebrew word for hidden has the sense of; to treasure, to regard as highly valuable.
- Don't we lock up in a safe place the things we consider valuable? Shouldn't we store up in our hearts God's word?
- Remember **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)?**
- **16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.**

- It is only through keeping God's word in our hearts that will keep us from wandering from His commands.
- I believe as we put God's word in our heart there will be praise on our lips for Him
- **Psalm 139:14 (NIV84)**
- **¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**
- **12 I praise you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.**
- We praise God because of the wonderful things we learn about Him as we hide His word in our hearts. Praising Him is a natural response. We get hungry to learn more and like the Psalmist prays teach me your decrees.
- When we have His word in our hearts we will want to tell others.
- **13 I have recited aloud all the regulations you have given us.**
- We are to tell others, declare His truth! Remember I talked about our upside down world? Speaking God's truth will not make you popular in some circles. We are not here to be popular but to further the good news about Jesus.
- **14 I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches.**
- Can you imagine getting just as excited about God's word as you would if you had won millions of dollars? Actually His word is more valuable than all the riches in the world!
- **15 I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways.**
- We need to commit to studying His word!
- **16 I will delight in your decrees and not forget your word.**
- Are we going to be like the Psalmist and rejoice, share, hide this great treasure of God's word?
- You may say I don't know how.
- Here are some tools to help you store up God's word.
- **1. Write it down ...**
- Keep a journal! As you copy each passage into a journal or notebook, consider each word carefully and prayerfully. Focus as much as you can on writing and leave every potential distraction behind
- **2. Say it out loud ...**
- Say the passage aloud as you read it. Do this at least 10 times—and also as you write it in your journal or notebook.
- **3. Don't do it all at once ...**

- It's best to memorize well a few verses at a time rather than memorize poorly dozens of verses at once. We suggest tackling up to three or four Bible verses each week. Doing more than that might make remembering hard and you could get discouraged. This is about your relationship with God—not a contest of memory with others.
- **4. Make it personal ...**
- At first, choose passages that speak to your life and needs. Have a sin you can't seem to overcome? Find a passage that speaks to that kind of sin or a passage about how God can help you overcome. Worried about your salvation? Find passages that affirm the gospel. The more personal it is in your life, the stronger your memory of it will be.
- **5. Stick to a schedule ...**
- It's important to adopt a routine at a certain time each day. Wake up your brain with prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. When you feel lazy or tired or discouraged, remind yourself of the reasons to memorize Scripture.
- **6. Share It ...**
- As much as you can, share the passage with others—but also with yourself as you go about your day. Make it a practical part of your life and practice living the message as much as you are able.
- **7. Review, Review, Review ...**
- Repetition is key! Some experts suggest you keep reviewing new verses each day for seven weeks—and then once a month for seven months after that.
-