

# **The Disciple's Prayers**

Throughout his prayer in verses 5 through 176, the psalmist comes to God without reservation. He holds nothing back. He realizes God knows him completely but that it is his responsibility to acknowledge His hand in his life.

In the personal relationship he has with God, he recognizes God's sovereignty, knows his place, uses His words as a guide, asks God to teach him, pleads for His mercy, recognizes the need for revival, seeks understanding, wants to be free from sin, desires God's comfort and constant presence. As we look at these elements of prayer, we can identify with them. The heart's desire of the psalmist is captured in verse 133: "Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me." May our desire be the same.

## **I Recognize Your Sovereignty**

"You established the earth, and it abides" (verse 90).

As we have already seen, over 200 times the psalmist asserts God's ownership by using the word "Your" - Your precepts, statutes, commandments, righteous judgments, words, mouth, testimonies, ways, servant, law, wonderful works, mercies, salvation, ordinances, name, favor, merciful kindness, faithfulness, custom, face, lovingkindness, justice, hand. It bears repeating that God is sovereign, in charge and in control. We need Him.

## **I Know My Place**

"Establish Your word to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing You" (verse 38).

- With my whole heart I have sought You (verse 10).
- I am a stranger in the earth (verse 19) "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul" (1 Peter 2: 11-12).
- My soul clings to the dust (verse 25).
- I have declared my ways, and You answered me (verse 26).
- My soul melts from heaviness (verse 28).
- I long for Your precepts (verse 40).
- I have hoped in Your ordinances (verse 43).
- I believe Your commandments (verse 66).
- Your hands have made me and fashioned me (verse 73).
- Your law is my delight (verse 77).
- I am Yours (verse 94).
- I am Your servant (verse 125).
- I cry out with my whole heart (verse 145).
- I cry out to You (verse 146).
- I do not forget Your law (verse 153).
- Consider how I love Your precepts (verse 159).
- I have chosen Your precepts (verse 173).
- I have gone astray like a lost sheep --- for I do not forget Your commandments (verse 176).

## **Your Words Are My Guide**

"Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope" (verse 49).

The psalmist declares God's sovereignty ("Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven" - verse 89), knows his rightful place and recognizes the trustworthiness of God's word ("The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever" - verse 160).

Therefore, he has decided to use God's words as his guide.

He will:

- heed God's word (verse 9)
- hide God's word in his heart (verse 11)
- not forget God's word (verse 16)
- live and keep God's word (verses 17, 57, 67)
- be strengthened by God's word (verse 28)
- be saved according to God's word (verse 41)
- trust in God's word (verse 42)
- obtain life through God's word (verse 50)
- hope in God's word (verses 74, 81, 114, 147)
- search God's word (verse 82)
- restrain his feet from evil in order to keep God's word (verse 101)
- make God's words a lamp to his feet and a light to his path (verses 105, 130)
- love God's word because it is pure (verse 140)
- stay awake to meditate on God's word (verse 148)
- stand in awe of God's word (verse 161)
- rejoice in God's word as one who finds great treasure (verse 162)
- speak of God's word (verse 172)

His determination to listen to and follow God was answered with God's blessing on his life. "You have dealt well with Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word" (verse 65).

## **Teach Me**

"Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me Your judgments" (verse 108).

Nine times he asked the Lord to "teach me...Your statutes, judgments, good judgment and knowledge" (verses 12, 26, 33, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135).

He acknowledged God's answer to that prayer in verses 71, 102 and 171:

- "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes."
- "I have not departed from Your judgments for You Yourself have taught me."
- "My lips shall utter praise, for You teach me Your statutes."

## **Be Merciful to Me**

"Let Your tender mercies come to me, that I may live; for Your law is my delight (verse 77).

Six times he appealed to the mercy and lovingkindness of the Lord (verses 41, 76, 77, 88, 124, 132, 149).

God is sovereign and in control, but the psalmist knows Him as loving and merciful. He is Almighty God, but He relates personally to us through His Son Jesus Christ. "Great are Your tender mercies, O Lord; revive me according to Your judgments" (verse 156).

## **Revive Me**

"Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, so that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth" (verse 88).

Nine times he asked the Lord to "revive me" (verses 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159). Like this psalmist, we are in constant need of revival. That request is answered in a daily walk with the Lord.

## **Give Me Understanding**

"Your hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments" (verse 73).

Six times he asked the Lord to "give me understanding" or "make me understand" (verses 27, 34, 73, 125, 144, 169).

God granted his request:

- "I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation (verse 99).
- "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts" (verse 100).
- "Through Your precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way" (verse 104).
- "The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" (verse 130).

The psalmist recognizes that understanding is a continual process. He asked before and after he says he has understanding.

## **Keep Me from Sinning**

"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your commandments" (verse 176).

Five times he recognizes sin in his life (verses 10, 29, 37, 67, 176). In the very last statement this psalmist makes in this particular psalm, he recognizes the constant temptation to go astray. He appeals to God to seek him out because he belongs to Him.

God gives a believer the ability to withstand temptation. "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble" (verse 165). Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that God will always provide a way out. This psalmist knows the way out and peace are obtained by obeying God.

### **Comfort Me**

"Let, I Pray, Your merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Your word to Your servant" (verse 76).

The psalmist needed and wanted comfort in his relationship with God (50,52 and 76, 82). He needed comfort in his affliction and he found it in God's word. He was afflicted, but recognized God's hand in permitting it (verses 67, 71, 75, 92, 107, 153).

Jesus promised and sent His Spirit to guide and comfort His followers. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). "But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you (The Amplified).

### **Be With Me, Lord, At All Times**

Interspersed throughout this prayer are the psalmist's constant awareness of his need for God.

Deal bountifully with Your servant (17), strengthen me according to Your word (28), make me walk in the path of Your commandments (35), Incline my heart to Your testimonies (36), establish Your word to Your servant (38, let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes (80), accept, I pray the freewill offerings of my mouth (108), hold me up (117), be surety for Your servant for good (122), redeem me from the oppression of man (134), Make Your face shine upon Your servant (135), Let my cry come before You, O Lord (156), Let my supplication come before You (170), let Your hand become my help (173) let my soul live (175), seek Your servant (176).

God is faithful and true. The psalmist has confidence to ask the Lord to deal with him "according to Your word" eleven times (verses 25, 28, 41, 58, 76, 88, 107, 116, 154, 169, 170), according to Your mercy (verse 124), according to Your lovingkindness (verse 149, 159) according to Your justice (verse 149), according to Your judgments (verse 156).

"Look upon me and be merciful to me as Your custom is toward those who love Your name"(verse 132).

A child might ask something of his father and remind him, "But dad, you promised!" That is how intimate a child of God's relationship is with the Father. God delights in blessing His children and He is merciful to those who love Him.

## **Personal Reflection**

What have you learned from Psalm 119 and the relationship that the psalmist had with his God?

Were you encouraged to pray for guidance or for God to teach you more about Him?

Do you feel the need for His mercy? Have you been discouraged? Do you need a revival in your spirit?

Has God revealed things to you that the world cannot understand? Do you long for more understanding of His word and His will in your life?

Do you feel the need to continually ask Him to keep you from sinning? Have you felt the comfort of His Holy Spirit?

Do you feel the blessing of God on your life and your ministry?