

Biblical Worship

119:105–112

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, May 13, 2018

Well, you can go ahead and turn in your Bibles to the book of Psalms, which we just read from a moment ago, the book of Psalms. And as you're doing that, if you're joining us for the first time today, we want to say a special welcome to you, and a Happy Mother's Day. Did you guys enjoy the little ones up here, earlier? Aren't they a lot of fun?

Also, I want to let you know that you're catching us right between sermon series here at Grace Fellowship Church. And what I mean is, we just finished one sermon series a couple of weeks ago. We're going to be starting another one next month on the Gospel of John. That's our next series as a church. We're going to do it like we did the book of Romans. Where we're going to look at one chapter at a time. Kind of do a quick survey of it. And we should finish it by the end of the year, Lord willing. And I'll give you some more information about that here shortly.

But for now, we're holding off on starting that to get through the month of May. We have a busy month of May as a church, amen? We have a lot going on. Just a few things that we have before we get into the sermon time. Next week, we have a guest preacher coming all the way from Fairfield Island. See, you guys thought I was going to say Russia or something like that, you know. Fairfield Island...our own Kevin Laser will be bringing the Word of God to us. Krista, your commute is what? Five minutes? Four minutes. He'll be bringing the Scriptures to us.

Last year we started, as many of you know, an Advisory Council, which serves to give advice and counsel to the pastor. And, one of their tasks is to be trained up to teach. To be trained up to bring the Word of God to you. We believe in a plurality of leadership here at GFC. Which means the pastor doesn't do everything. I'm not the CEO of the church. I'm not the boss. I want to share the leadership with other men of God. And to train the men up for that over the next year or so, we're going to have several men from the congregation preach to us, and Kevin will be the first. And you're going to really enjoy that. I won't be here, I'll actually be out of town, visiting family in the States. But I look forward to coming back and hearing all about that.

The week after that, on May 27th, as Chris just mentioned, we have another guest speaker. This one from a little farther away from the Country of Texas. If you're from the US, you guys know Texas is its own country. I think they call it the Republic. But Dr. Caldwell's the author of several books. He's also the pastor of Founders Baptist Church there in Spring Texas. You can look him up online if you want to catch some of his sermons. He's a great preacher. And before I came to GFC, someone actually came across his messages and introduced them to the church. So, our people actually listened to him up here on the screen before I came. And in light of that, we thought it would be good to bring him to minister to us, to bring the Word of God to us. And he's going to be doing that two weeks from today. So, you'll want to be here for that.

After that, we'll have a cookout on that Sunday afternoon at the Roseboom's Farm. You're all invited to that. And for the men, we have the Men of God Conference where Dr. Caldwell will be speaking on that Saturday.

So, just a couple of topics he'll be speaking on (I think we've mentioned this to you before) but he's going to talk about the man of God in his home, the man of God in his marriage. He'll be talking about the man of God in purity, that is sexual purity, and he'll do a Q&A with us as well. So, please be in prayer for that conference and that weekend. And the week after that we'll start the Gospel of John.

But all this is to say we have a lot going on this next month. We're busy as a church. Which is a good thing because you want to be busy for the Lord. You want to be found to be good and faithful servants.

In 2006, an English mountaineer died on Mount Everest after being frozen in place. And it was said he didn't die first, he froze first, and then he died. He stopped moving and that's what killed him. And I would tell you this morning, it's the same way with the church. If the church freezes, it dies. If it stops moving, if it stops working for the Lord, it's over. It has to stay in motion. Nobody wants to go to a passionless church. "You know, what do you guys have going on this week?" "I don't know." "What do you guys have going on next week?" "I don't know." You don't want to go to a church like that. You want to go to a church that has a lot going on for the Lord. And we're doing that here at GFC.

And with that said, I want to dive right into our sermon for today. Because if you do a study of church history, you'll see that Christians have usually gotten this. We have always been a busy people for the Lord, especially when it comes to the topic of worship. We talked about worship last week. And I would like to say a few more words about it here this morning.

Christians love to worship. It's what we do. It's who we are. It keeps us busy. And we've done this several ways. The word "worship" means "to give worth or value to something." It means "to treasure it in your heart." And if you study church history, you'll see that the churches treasured the Lord in several different ways. Let me just list a couple of these to you. If you like history, this might be interesting to you.

So, for instance in the early days, the church practiced what is called "liturgical worship". You guys have ever heard of the term "liturgical worship" before. But it's worship that is liturgical or repetitious in nature. It follows a formula or a liturgy or a creed so that the worshippers do the same thing every week. And this might be one of the oldest forms of worship in church history. You see it in groups like the Greek Orthodox Church, the Anglicans, Episcopalians practice this. But in these churches, the congregations hear the same thing preached and sung and read over and over and over again. So, if you're in an Anglican Church here in Canada, you would hear the same thing on a given Sunday that you would hear if you were in an Anglican Church in Africa. They follow the same liturgy.

The minister also wears the same clothes, and they use the same calendar of events. So, every January you do this and this and this, and every February this and this and this. I served at a church like this before attending seminary. And I remember it very well, because the pastor wore a robe each Sunday. And I kind of joked with him. I asked him when I would get to wear a robe. And he said, "Well, you got to be ordained first." But in that congregation, that denomination,

that's what they did because they're liturgical. The idea is God never changes, so we never change. We stay the same and worship by repetition.

Which leads to another way that Christians have stayed busy with worship in history. And that is through tradition. What we would call traditional worship. Worship that is similar in nature. It's not repeated, but it's similar. It doesn't do the same thing each week, but it doesn't vary all that much. They're singing and preaching and Scripture reading every Sunday. You can expect that, that stays the same. But what is sung and preached and read, varies from week to week to week.

You see this in Baptist Churches and in some Methodist Churches. Reform Churches are this way. We're traditional in many senses of the term. You come here on a Sunday morning, it's going to be a similar flow, but there's going to be some variety to it as well.

And that leads to one more way (and I'm going to bring us to our passage here in a moment). Especially in recent years, there's another way that Christians have worshiped in history and that is through contemporary worship, or worship that is contemporary or dynamic in nature. It's always changing, it's always doing new things because it tries to reflect the culture around it and look like the world.

In other words, in contemporary worship, if people don't like hymns and preaching and Scripture reading, then we don't do that. We toss it out. But if they like videos and skits and sharing instead of preaching, then we do that instead. You don't preach at them, you share with them. You don't teach them, you have a dialogue is kind of the idea.

And to be fair, some contemporary churches are not that far along. Some are a little more laid back than that. For instance, we would be contemporary in the sense that we use PowerPoints and guitars on Sundays. So, we have some contemporary elements of worship here at Grace Fellowship Church. In fact, we're kind of a blend of contemporary and traditional.

Now, thank you for your patience in letting me walk you through that. But I bring all that stuff up to ask the question this morning, which one of these is right? Have you guys ever wondered that? All these different types of worship, which one is right? Which one is Biblical? Is there one of these that is taught in the Word of God?

We don't have time to get into charismatic worship, and all the elements that come up with that. We don't have time to talk about emergent worship, which was very popular here on the West Coast. Which I think is like worshipping to a lava lamp, if I understand it correctly. Maybe yeah, a little incense and a lava lamp and a carpet.

We could talk about a capella worship that forbids the use of instruments. We could talk about exclusive Psalmody which only uses the Psalms. But what does the Bible say about this? What does the Word of God tell us about worship? And to see this, turn with me to Psalm 119. Many of you are already there in your Bibles. But turn to some 119.

If you were with us last week, you'll remember that Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. It has 176 verses in it. And to put that in perspective, the next longest chapter is Numbers

seven, which only has 89 verses in it. So, Psalm 119 is by far the longest chapter in the Word of God. It dwarfs everything else in size. And you also remember that it's written by an anonymous author. So, we don't know who wrote it. Some say David did, some say Daniel or Ezra. I kind of personally like the idea of Ezra writing it. If you read the book of Nehemiah and all the things Ezra talked about, the Word of God, this kind of sounds like something he would write, but we don't know that for sure.

And it could be anonymous, because to highlight the theme of the chapter, the theme of Psalm 119 is the Word of God and how you are to respond to it. In fact, the word "word" appears more than 40 times in the Psalm. And if you add up all the different references to the Word of God, it comes to about 200. You see other words in here like "law" and "commandments" and "ordinances" and "testimonies" and "promises". When you add all those references up, it comes to about 200 different ways to describe the Word of God in this chapter. It's more than once per verse. And the author does this to say, "This is how you are to respond to the Word of God. This is how you are to live in light of it. You should worship. You should give glory to God."

One German commentator, Franz Delitzsch said, "Here we have set forth an inexhaustible fullness. What the Word of God is to a man, and how a man is to behave himself in relation to it. He should worship. He should give worth and glory to God." This may be why there's been so many wonderful stories told about this Psalm. I told you last time, Psalm 119 has inspired a lot of neat stories throughout the ages. Let me give you a few this morning.

When William Wilberforce was fighting slavery in England it was said that he turned to this Psalm for comfort. After a long day at Parliament or a long day in court fighting to end slavery, fighting to abolish that institution, he would come home just dejected and worn out, and he would open up Psalm 119 and meditate on this chapter and find strength to keep going. So, in some ways, Psalm 119 was responsible for some of the work that William Wilberforce did.

It was also used interestingly, by Matthew Henry's father to teach him the Bible. How many of you guys have a copy of Matthew Henry's commentaries? You might have that big ginormous thing. You can actually use that for home defense if you need to, it's so big. I have several books that are under my bed. If somebody comes in, I just hold that thing up. I've also thought by the way, if anybody ever robs my house, they're going to be so disappointed because it's just going to be full of books. That will be the most disappointing ... But Matthew Henry's father, Philip, would make each of his children memorize a verse from Psalm 119 every day, and recite it to them at the end of each day. It was kind of part of their school curriculum. So, you could say that Matthew Henry's commentary started in Psalm 119. His love for the Word of God began right here as well, in this chapter.

But this is such an important part of Scripture. I thought it would be good to spend at least one more week talking about it before we move on. One more week talking about this issue of worship. I mean all those different views aside for a moment (you know, liturgical versus traditional versus contemporary), what does the Bible say about this? What does the Word of God tell us about worship?

I've asked several people, "Have you guys had the worship wars here in Canada?" But in the

States back in the '90s, churches were splitting all over the place over this very issue, of how do you worship God. I had family members whose churches split over playing guitars versus pianos on a Sunday morning. That was the reason that they split the church. Some people wanted to wear jeans, some people wanted to wear suits, and they just split.

So, this is an important question, right? I mean are we supposed to focus on liturgies and repetition? Are we supposed to focus on clothes and whether we can use PowerPoints? Does the Bible tell us what instruments to use? What songs we can sing? Does it tell us we have to use the Psalms or we can go other places for our worship? What does the Bible say about this? And that's what we're going to talk about this morning. And I think the answer might surprise you because it doesn't get into all of that. I mean the Bible focuses on something else entirely, and that's what I want to talk to you about.

So, if you're taking notes this morning in Psalm 119, we're going to look in verses 105 through 112, just after the middle of the Psalm. And I want to give you four more responses to the Word of God. So, if you're taking notes, that's our outline; four more responses to the Word of God. Last week, we looked at four responses to the Scriptures. We saw this at the end of Psalm 119. This morning we're going back to the middle, to give you four more responses. And we'll tie them into the subject of worship.

The first one is this: you should show some discernment. That's the first way to respond to the Word of God that we'll look at this morning. You need to show some discernment. You need to be able to tell right from wrong. That's how you worship. You need to be able to tell a good idea from a bad one. And I don't mean as it pertains to instruments and music and all of that, although that's maybe part of it in a sense, but I mean as it pertains to truth.

Do you guys know God is not worshiped when you sing lies? That make sense? Did everybody get that? God is not honoured when you sing songs that are not true. There's no glory in that for God. There's no worship in that. And the Psalmist eludes to this in verse 105 when he says this. He says (and I'm sure many of you have memorized this, this is a wonderful verse in the Word of God). He says, "105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. 106 I have sworn and I will confirm it, that I will keep Your righteous ordinances."

Just to unpack that a little bit. In the ancient world, people didn't have light bulbs and flashlights, they had lamps and light. Depending on the time the Psalmist wrote this, they would have had some kind of a clay, a little lamp you could hold in our hand. And in it, there'd be some oil or something that would burn and you would light it, and that's how you would go around and see your way through the dark. And they had a lamp to guide them by night, and they had a light to guide them by day. And here the Psalmist says, "Your word is like that to me. It's a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

In other words, it shows me that this idea is right and that idea is wrong. This road is a good road, that road is a bad road. And as a result, he says, "I have sworn and I will confirm it, that I will keep Your righteous ordinances." He says, "Not only does this show me the right road, but I will walk on it." He says. "It shows me the right path to travel on, and I will follow it. I will obey."

We could say it this way, he says, “I don't just make up a path, the path is already here. I don't just make up a light, the light's already here. I'm stepping into the light.” I don't show up on a Sunday morning and close this book and then just start making up the light. You close this book, you don't have any light.

And I mention that because there's an idea floating around in the church today when it comes to worship that says that as long as you're sincere, it doesn't matter how you do it, God will accept it. You guys know what I'm talking about? As long as you mean it with all your heart, as long as you're really into this worship thing, it doesn't matter what you sing. It doesn't matter what you do. The Psalmist says that's not true. He says, “You have to worship by the light.”

God is honoured by truth, and anything that goes against the truth does not honour Him. The Christian life is not a free-for-all. We're not just making this thing up as we go. You can't do whatever you want and call it Christian and sing whatever you want and call it Christian. You have to sing according to the light.

A little boy was once carrying a lamp for his Sunday school teacher at night. And as they went along, they kept splashing into the mud and falling into holes on the ground. So, the teacher said, “Carry the light closer to you and we'll be safe.” That's what the Psalmist says right here. You carry the light closer to you, and you won't splash through the mud. You keep the Word of God near to your heart, and you will be safe. You won't fall in a hole on the ground. And I think it's safe to say that a lot of Christians in churches today are falling into holes in the ground when it comes to their worship, because they're forgetting this.

I remember several years ago, I was visiting a church where we sang a song that was written by the Mormons. I mean you couldn't tell it at first, it sounded okay enough. But at the end of it, you know the copyright information comes at the bottom of the song, and it said, “Written by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” You can't do that and worship God, because they don't worship the same God.

I remember being in another church and the worship leader was telling us how Gandhi was a wonderful Christian. He said he was a wonderful example of what it meant to follow Christ. Listen, Gandhi might have been a wonderful man but he wasn't a wonderful Christian, because he didn't claim to be. It's the same idea. See, that's the wrong path. That's going in the wrong direction. That's like splashing mud on you, and it's not worship. You have to have discernment when you worship.

Listen, God's going to hold you accountable for the songs you sing in church, do you know that? He's going to hold you accountable for the things you believe. And the reformers used to refer to this (if you want to write this word down, it's a very helpful word when it comes to this kind of thing), they used to refer to this as the “doctrine of perspicuity”. The perspicuity of Scripture. Which means that the Scripture is clear. It's perspicuous or transparent. You can see through Scripture. It's not hidden from you. God's not trying to be mysterious, He wants to be understood in this book. Which means that you don't have to have a PhD to be a Christian, you just have to have a brain, amen? You don't have to have a degree from seminary or read a thousand books,

you have to read this Book and understand what it says. And God will make it clear to you.

You could say it this way, I think one of our men prayed this morning that, “Your word is a lamp to my feet.” That doesn’t mean a spot light, it means a lamp. You can see what’s in front of you. The idea is it has answers for us. You know, since coming to GFC, I’ve had people ask me, “What is our church’s position on this, or what is our church’s position on that?” I can answer that question because, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” I’ve had people come to me (and you have as well I’m sure) and say, “I’m going through a hard time right now. I’m struggling with sin, what do I do?” You can answer that question as well. Because the word is a light and a lamp.

It will help you with your marriage, it will help you with your parenting, it will help you with your job. And it will help the way you worship. It can guide you as you give glory to God. It can show you that this song is good and that one is bad. It can show you that this prayer honours God and that prayer doesn’t. This is humbling for me to say, but it can show you that this sermon is good and that sermon is bad for me. You can go to the Word of God and if you hear what I’m saying in the Word of God, then you worship that way.

You know, another way to say this (I think this is helpful) is one of the Hebrew words for “fool” meant “open minded”. We can say so much about being open minded today, but one of the words for “fool” in Hebrew means “open minded”. It means everything goes in your head and everything goes out. If you told a Jew you were open minded, he would tell you, “You need to shut your mind to the things that are wrong and open it to the things that are right. You need to have a filter.” And that’s what the Psalmist says here. This is how you worship. You have to be able to tell right from wrong.

You know a Pastor once had to leave his church due to poor health. And he was known for being a great preacher but being really wishy washy in his doctrine. He was a little too open minded in that sense. And a young came to him as he was leaving and he said, “Pastor, I’m so sorry to see you go. Because before I came here, I didn’t care for God, man or the devil. But now after your preaching, I love them all.” Friends, God doesn’t want you to love them all. He wants you to have some discernment. That’s the first response to the Word of God.

The second one is this: not only do you need to have discernment, but you need to be alert in your worship. You need to be alert or awake or alive to the things of God when you worship. You need to have your eyes wide open when you come to church. I mean you can’t see the light when your eyes are shut, can you? And you can’t follow the path if you’re asleep. We can look at it this way, there’s no end to the lies that are spreading through the church. There is no end to the bad ideas. The devil is a very busy devil. And to have discernment, you have to be awake.

This is what the Psalmist says next in verse 107. When he writes, he says, “I am exceedingly afflicted; revive me, O LORD, according to Your word.” The word “revive me” there in Hebrew is the word *chayah* which means “to live”. Some of you have the ESV version. It means “to give life” there. The King James says “Quicken me.” Some translations say, “Preserve me,” but the idea is, “Lord, preserve my attention, preserve my focus, and in doing so, You’ll give me life.”

We don't know why the Psalmist says this. He says that he was exceedingly afflicted, but he doesn't go into any detail. Apparently, he was going through a hard time. Something was wrong and so he prays, "Lord, please keep me alive or awake." "I don't want to sleep through life," he says, "I don't want to go through it in a fog." If you've ever suffered something, you know that it gets real foggy at times. And he goes on to say, "Lord, if You do this" or "as You do this, O accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me Your ordinances." Which is a way of saying, "Do this so I can worship You."

The Old Testament had several types of offerings and most of which were mandatory. You didn't really choose when you offered them. But, one of their types of offerings was called the "free will offering" which means you could offer it at any time. And he says, "I want to offer you that through worship."

And I wonder as we read this passage, if there's anyone here who needs to pray like this, this morning. I wonder if there's anyone here who needs to wake up to the things of God. There's probably nothing more common in churches today than sleepy Christians, would you agree? Anybody agree with that? They're not awake at home, they're not awake at work. They're not awake at church, they're not awake anywhere. They just sleep through everything. And because of that, they have no discernment. There's no filter for their brain. It all goes in, it all goes out, right?

They sing everything, they repeat everything, they listen to everything, because they can't wake up. I mean the ordinary pattern is to go to work, come home, watch TV, go to bed. Go to work, come home, watch TV, go to bed. Go to work, come home, watch TV, go to bed, without thinking about anything, without processing anything. They're just out of it. You can't worship God that way. You can't give God glory that way. You can't walk in the light that way.

I remember talking with a Pastor several years ago in Los Angeles. And I told him I was worn out was studying. I was in school at the time. I said, "I've never studied so hard in my life, my brain needs a break." And he told me, he said, "Jeremy, we have to get smarter." He said, "We have to get smarter. We have to learn more of God's Word. We have to learn more of the Bible. That's how we worship. That's how we give Him glory. But whatever you do, you can't stay asleep. You have to wake up."

Jonathan Edwards was a real good example of this. But when he was 17 years old, Jonathan Edwards wrote 70 resolutions for his life. If you've never read these, I encourage you to do so. It's quite a thing to write from a 17-year-old man. But here's some of them.

He said, "I'm resolved never to lose one moment of time; but to improve it the most profitable way that I can." Jonathan Edwards said, "I don't want to sleep through life. I don't want to go through it on autopilot, I want to improve it the best way I can." He said, "I want to live with all my might while I do live." And he said, "I'm resolved to endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigor and vehemence...(He has passion. I think you could use "violence")...that I am capable of."

Now friends, let me ask you this morning, are you violently pursuing the other world? Are you

pursuing eternity with all the power, might, vigor and vehemence that you are capable of? Is that on your radar? Do you ever think about eternity? Or are you living like there's nothing more to life than the next hockey game or the next basketball game? Are you living like there's nothing more than just your job or your family or your pets? See one day you'll wish you had lived for something more than that. One day you'll wish you had lived to find happiness somewhere else - in eternity. And then, it may be too late. You need to live for eternity now. That's how you worship God. That's how you give Him glory.

I did some research on this, this week, but, the Globe and Mail website recently did an article that says that the average Canadian watches TV for about four hours a day, and 30 hours per week. Other sources say, he spends up to 24 hours a week on the Internet. And if you add all of that time up, it comes to about 104 days a year. About a fourth of the average person's life in our country is spent doing nothing but staring at a computer screen.

See, Christians don't live that way. We don't want to waste our time. We want to worship God by preparing for the next life. I just told you about the devil, but it's said the greatest preacher in Canada is the devil because he never takes a day off. He never takes a break. He's always spreading lies, always sowing seeds of disunity. And if we're going to defeat him, we can't take a break either. We can never rest from God's truth, we have to be alert.

And that leads to another response to the Word of God, and that is dependence. If you're responding the way the Psalmist tells you here to the Word of God, you will have discernment, you will have alertness, you'll be awake and third, you'll have dependence. You'll depend on God. You'll admit, "I can't do this on my own. I don't have the strength. I can't be alert like this. I can't be awake like this. God, I need Your help." The Psalmist says that in verse 109.

I told you last time, that this whole Psalm by the way is just one long prayer essentially. So, the whole thing is really about him being dependent on God. But in verse 109, he says, "My life is continually in my hand." Meaning, "It's constantly in danger, it's constantly in jeopardy because of my affliction." "My life is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget Your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have not gone astray from Your precepts."

If you notice, there's a progression of thought here. He's saying, "My life is in my hand right now, the wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I do not forget Your law. I have not gone astray from Your precepts, because I depend on You. I rely on You God, I need You. I can't get through this on my own. I can't do this on my own power." And I can't emphasize this enough, because worship starts here. You can't treasure something until you depend on it. That makes sense? You can't value something until you need it.

This is the difference between a believer and a hypocrite by the way. A believer depends on God, and a hypocrite doesn't. We could say it like this, a believer prays when he's at home and nobody's around and a hypocrite doesn't. I think it was Robert Murray McShane who said that, "A hypocrite is a man who's a Christian everywhere but when he's alone."

You know, to give you another thought on this, J. C. Ryle said, "Prayer and private worship are the most important subjects in practical religion." He said, "All other subjects are second to it.

Reading the Bible, listening to sermons, attending public worship, going to the Lord's Table, all these are very important matters, but none of them are as important as private prayer." He said,

A man may preach from false motives. A man may write books and make fine speeches and seem diligent in good work, and yet be a Judas Iscariot. But a man seldom goes into his room and pours out his soul before God in secret, unless he's serious. The Lord Himself has set His stamp on prayer as the best proof of conversion.

You know, it would be easy if we could spot hypocrites by what they wore to church. Wouldn't that be easy? If they had a big "H" on their shirt, "Okay, that's a hypocrite. You know, I will counsel him accordingly," or by what they drove to church. You know, all you guys in the minivans, you know you guys are ... I'm just kidding. I have a minivan too. It'd be like what? Half or three fourths of our church. We have an army of minivans out there.

You can't spot a hypocrite that way. It's not the way it works. But you can spot him by the way he prays, you see. You see a Christian prays. A Christian worships and a non-believer doesn't. And this is something you see all throughout this Psalm. I want to move on to the next point in a second. But, let me quickly show you this. All throughout this Psalm, the author says, "Lord I need You, I depend on You, I can't do this on my own." So, if you just want to write these verses down or just quickly turn to them.

But in verse two of Psalm 119, a couple of examples of how he depends on God. He says, "How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all their heart." The Psalmist says, "I will seek You with all my heart. I hold nothing back." "All my heart" is quite a phrase. I mean if you think about it, how many things do you really love with all your heart. The Psalmist says that's how you worship the Lord. You seek Him with all your heart.

Verse 11, he says, "Your word, have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against You." Now we go back to this idea of treasure. You know, a man will sell everything he owns to buy treasure, right? If you guys knew there was gold out somewhere in Alberta, you would sell everything you had to go buy the plot of ground it was on. He says, "Now You are my treasure in my heart."

In verse 16, he says, "I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word." Now there is, delight in the Lord, "I depend on Him with my delight." Skipping forward a little bit, I'm just going to go through these quickly. Verse 97 says, "O how I love Your law! It's my meditation all the day." Some of you guys know what that's like. You go through the whole day, and there's just a verse or a passage of Scripture that's just continually on your mind all day. That's what he's talking about. "I love Your word this much, I depend on You this much."

Verse 131 says (sorry some of you are turning there too), "I open my mouth wide and panted, for I long for Your commandments." One more I'll read to you here, verse 147. Says, "I rise before the dawn and cry for help; I wait for Your words." But all this is to say to the Psalmist depends on God. That's the mark of true worship, that's the mark of a believer.

Some of you have heard the story before. But the story is told of an elderly Christian who went

to a party with the actor Richard Burton. He was an actor from the 1920s. And Richard Burton was asked to recite the 23rd Psalm at the party; “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...” And the actor had a really deep voice and he recited this Psalm. And afterwards, the people cheered and applauded, and they patted him on the back, and said, you know, “Way to go, that was beautiful.”

And then they asked the old Christian to do it. Someone heard he was a follower of Jesus. They heard he was a believer. So, they asked him to recite it and he did that. And when he was done, the people wept. They actually cried over the beauty of it. And someone asked Richard Burton why that was. Why did they respond that way to him? And the actor said this, he says, “Because I know the Psalm but he knows the shepherd.”

Friends, do you know the shepherd this morning? If you do, you will depend on Him. You will pour out your heart to Him in prayer.

And that leads to a final response to the Word of God that sums all this up, and I'll go through this last one quickly. When you respond to the Word of God like you're supposed to, you have discernment and alertness and dependence and forth and finally, you have joy. Which means you have all these things because you have joy. You worship because you want to worship. You sing because you want to sing. It is your delight, it is your treasure.

And the Psalmist sums it up this way in verse 111, when he says, “111 I have inherited Your testimonies forever, for they are the joy of my heart. 112 I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, even to the end.” Which means, “This is such a joy to me that I could do this forever. I could worship You Lord, and never stop.”

By the way, you will be worshipping the Lord forever, amen? That's what heaven is all about. Which means if you don't like doing it now, you've got to really check your heart because that's what you're going to be doing for all eternity. And that's what the Psalmist says. He says, “I look forward to that day. I look forward to the time when I can worship You this way.”

My friends, let me ask you this morning, is worship your joy? Is it your delight? Do you sing because you want to sing? Do you come to church because you want to come to church? Or are you like that bumper sticker that says “I Owe, I Owe, It's Off to Church I Go? I'd rather be somewhere else?” Listen friends, you can't worship God like this, if you want to be somewhere else, right? I mean all the different worship styles aside; liturgical versus traditional versus contemporary, you can't worship God if your heart isn't in it. That's what this passage is talking about. This is what matters most to Him. God cares about your joy. He wants you to worship Him with all of your heart. And that's what we want as a church.

If you've heard all those different worship styles we talked about in introduction and wondered which one is right, where do we fit in with all this? I mean I guess technically we're something of a blend between contemporary and traditional worship, or a mixture of the two. But that's our choice. What matters most to us is that this is our joy, amen? What matters most to us is this is our treasure; seeking and glorifying Christ, loving and adoring Him. This is what it's all about, and this is what we want to stay busy with.

R. A. Torrey, an evangelist in the 1900s said, "There is more joy in Jesus in 24 hours than there is in the whole world in 365 days." He says, "I've tried both, and I found the world wanting, but Jesus has never let me down." That's why we worship. And let me pray as we enter into a time of the Lord's Supper here together, with that in mind.

Father, we thank You, Lord for what Your word here teaches us about the topic of worship. And I pray this would be beneficial to our people. Lord, there's no one here, like any other element of the Christian life, that says, "I worship You the way I'm supposed to at all times." But I do pray for our people Lord, that this would be their joy and their delight. Father, as we come to the Lord's table, would You help us to have our heart set on You, our hearts focus on the things of You. May Christ be glorified and exalted in this time. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.