

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Nineteen (He) - The Hard Versus Blessed Ways Of Becoming Faithful In Our Walk (Psalm 119:33-40)

I. Introduction

- A. Proverbs 20:6 asks the rhetorical question, ". . . but a faithful man who can find?" after stating that "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness . . ." That is, many can put up an attractive front, the fact remains that their actually **remaining** what they initially claim to be or do over the long haul is a very difficult thing. Faithfulness, true consistency in goodness is hard to come by.
- B. Since faithfulness in the believer is upheld as a positive quality, and necessary for one to be productive in service for the Lord (cf. 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:1-2), we find great value in focusing on that part of Psalm 119 that addresses how one becomes faithful in his walk with God:

II. The Hard Versus Blessed Ways Of Becoming Faithful In Our Walk, Psalm 119:33-40.

- A. If one delights in Scripture, faithfulness in one's walk with God is readily available, 119:33-35.
 - 1. When one delights in God's Word (119:35b), when God thereby points out the way he must go in life, he does so faithfully, Ps. 119:33 with Philippians 2:12-13.
 - 2. When one delights in Scripture (Ps. 119:35b), when God makes one understand the Word, he keeps it faithfully, 119:34 with Philippians 2:12-13.
 - 3. When one delights in Scripture (Ps. 119:35b), when God leads him to take particular steps, he is faithful, Ps. 119:35a implied and Philippians 2:12-13.
- B. If one delights in **worldliness**, faithfulness is a problem, Ps. 119:36-37. Delighting in unjust gain (Ps. 119:36) and vain things (119:37) picture the lusts and vain things in the world described in 1 John 2:16.
- C. The **cure** God has for this is a two-fold **rewarding-and-painful** ministry, Psalm 119:36-40:
 - 1. To create faithfulness out of faithlessness, God needs to "bend" the heart toward His Word and away from the lure and false ideas offered in the world's false system, Ps. 119:36-37.
 - 2. To **do** just that, God uses both a **positive** and a **negative** effort as follows:
 - a. Positively, God "pulls" the troubled believer toward Scripture by fulfilling promises he **does** faithfully trust, enticing him into more Scripture, Ps. 119:38. The appetite is thus whet to rely more on Scripture, to delight in it more and to acquaint himself with more of it.
 - b. Negatively, God "pushes" the troubled believer into Scripture through utilizing godless reproach that pains him to flee to Scripture to seek its contrasting comfort and reprieve from reproach, Ps. 119:39.
 - c. In the end, the weak believer learns to long for Scripture so that his experience will **shift AWAY FROM** negative "pushes" to uplifting, encouraging, rewarding "pulls", Ps. 119:40. Accordingly, he **consistently** follows God's ways, becoming **faithful** in that walk!

Lesson: Faithlessness is caused by a delight in the **WORLD**, and faithfulness is the result of a delight in the **WORD** of God itself. Because of the will of God to conform His godly ones to a higher walk, the believer who struggles with faithlessness in his exposure or lack of use of God's Word will find God's negative-positive, contrasting painful-versus-rewarding or "push-pull" activity at work to make him **LONG** for the Word. That **LONGING** will be rewarded, leading to a more **CONSISTENT** walk out of the impulse to minimize life's pains and produce more blessings.

Application: (1) Do **not** WAIT for God to bring **NEGATIVE**, disruptive discipline in order for us to get into and apply Scripture consistently! Opt rather to **RESPECT** God and keep His **WORD** regularly to **STAY** blessed and not get **DISCIPLINED** of the Lord. (2) However, recall that the Christian era often contains troubles not caused by one's sin or lack of faithfulness, compare 2 Cor. 4:8-10. However, as in the case of Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, if we are properly keeping God's Word, our **RESPONSE** to such troubles will be to "take pleasure in infirmities" because we know the plan of God thereby is to bless, making us "strong" for life and service!