

Psalm 119 – Session 2

Week 15, v. 31-32

Ps 119:31 I cleave to Thy testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame!

We discussed the definition of clinging to something when we looked at verse 25. The Psalmist described his propensity to sin as his "soul cleaving to the dust". This is something he didn't want and asked to be renewed by God's word.

In verse 31, we see the same idea of clinging, from the same Hebrew word, yet this time David says he cleaves to God's testimonies. The KJV says "I have stuck unto Thy testimonies". In Psalm 119:30, David says he has chosen one way above the other – the faithful way.

What are you clinging to? Which way have you chosen? The dust as in Psalm 119:25 or the truth as in Psalm 119:31? Is this a choice we make once then we're done?

De 4:4 "But you who held fast to the LORD your God are alive today, every one of you.

De 10:20 "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name.

De 11:22-23 "For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you, to do it, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him; then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.

De 13:4 "You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

Ver. 31. I have stuck unto thy testimonies, -- or I have cleaved, for the word is the same as in Ps 119:25. Though cleaving to the dust of sorrow and of death, yet he kept fast hold of the divine word. This was his comfort, and his faith stuck to it, his love and his obedience held on to it, his heart and his mind abode in meditation upon it. His choice was so heartily and deliberately made that he stuck to it for life, and could not be removed from it by the reproaches of those who despised the way of the Lord. ... It is pleasant to look back upon past perseverance and to expect grace to continue equally steadfast in the future. He who has enabled us to stick to him will surely stick to us. TOP

The last half of verse 31 says, "O Lord, do not put me to shame". There are only two ways that shame could be brought upon David as he follows God's

commands. One possibility is impossible. Does God's word fail? Are His promises trustworthy?

Tit 1:2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

Nu 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

2Ti 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.

1Ki 8:56 "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.

Ro 15:8 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises [given] to the fathers,

Jos 23:14 "Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.

Lu 21:33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

The second possibility and only way that shame could be brought upon David as he follows God's testimonies is David's failure to stick to them. God is always faithful; man is not. The fear of shame lies in our inconsistency to follow.

What does it mean to be shamed? <buwsh> to pale, to be ashamed, to be disappointed or delayed

When we are ashamed of something we have a sense of guilt. We have discredited or dishonored something or someone. The reaction we have when we are ashamed is described as turning pale, as if in fear. It's like feeling sick when we realize we have messed up. It's the disappointment we feel – we can waiver in our confidence and hope when we are guilty.

What covers my sin so I don't need to stay ashamed when I truly repent? *Adam Clarke's Commentary* says God blots them out by His mercy. What happens to our testimony when we bring disgrace upon ourselves? How do we keep from falling into shame?

Ps 119:6 (KJV) Then shall I not be ashamed, *when I have respect unto all thy commandments.*

Ps 25:2 O my God, *in Thee I trust*, Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies exult over me.

Ro 5:1-5 Therefore having been *justified by faith, we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this *grace in which we stand*, and *we exult in hope of the glory of God*. And not only this, but *we also exult in our tribulations*, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; *and hope does not disappoint*, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1 Jn 2:28 And now, little children, *abide in Him*, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

If we stick to God' s commands, there is no need to live in shame! How would you respond to Psalm 119:31?

Let' s strive to be heartily faithful to God' s commands, not having confidence in ourselves but a healthy and true evaluation of our bent towards sin, continuing earnestly to have our eyes and heart focused on God as we plead with Him to use us to bring Him honor and not shame.

In Psalm 119:31, the resolve is to stick to God' s commands. Verse 32 adds an energy of confidence to this resolve – *I shall not only follow them but run towards them!*

Ps 119:32 I shall run the way of Thy commandments, For Thou wilt enlarge my heart.

I shall run <ruwts> especially to rush, divide speedily, bring hastily

The way <derek> a road (as trodden), a course of life or mode of action, journey

Of Thy commandments <mitzvah> a command, whether human or divine, law, ordinance, precept

How is the Psalmist able to come to this resolve? Look at the second half of this verse: David knows God will be faithful.

For Thou wilt enlarge my heart.

Enlarge <rachab> to broaden, make larger, make room, make wide

Heart <leb> the heart, feelings, will and intellect; the center of anything; care for, [a heart of understanding and wisdom]

1Ki 4:29 Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

1Jo 5:14 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

1Jo 3:22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

Ps 34:15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, and His ears are [open] to their cry.

Ps 145:18-19 The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them.

Pr 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Mt 7:8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

Mt 21:22 "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."

We could go on and on with scripture to support the fact that God gives understanding – perhaps not complete but enough - and wisdom to His children in order to accomplish His purposes. **How does this truth encourage you? If someone were to remain confused and unattached to the peace found in God, what might you suggest?**

Because of God' s grace we can choose to follow Him, we can choose to stick to His commands and we can be confident that He will give us what we need to run towards His ways. I don' t have to be bogged down by sin.

We see an excitement to obey in David' s example. **What does your obedience look like?**

John Wesley' s Notes says " I will obey thy precepts with all readiness, fervency, and diligence...when thou shalt replenish my heart with wisdom, and love to thee and thy law. "

With energy, promptitude, and zeal he would perform the will of God, but he needed more life and liberty from the hand of God. Treasury of David

Heb 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

1Co 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but [only] one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

Isa 40:28-31 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His

understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, And to [him who] lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; they will mount up [with] wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.

How would you describe the tempo of your desire to follow God? A standstill, a crawl, a leisurely walk, a power walk, a jog, a run, a race.....?

### Application Questions

If you were to describe a picture of your efforts at faithfulness to following God' s ways, what words would you use? Read the following scriptures. What words are used to describe a faithful relationship with God?

Deut 4: 4

Deut 10: 20

Deut 11: 22-23

How are we affected when we fail?

What is David' s action in Psalm 119: 32?

There is an energy expended when we use the word " run" . Take some think about the energy you are willing to put into following God' s commands. What things get in your way?

Look at the second half of verse 32. What does it say about the certainty of our success?

Look up the following verses:

1 John 5: 14

Psalm 34: 15

Psalm 145: 18-19

What do the above verses say about God' s help? How does this encourage you?  
How can you use these references to encourage someone else?

Read this quote from *John Wesley' s Notes*:

“ I will obey thy precepts with all readiness, fervency, and diligence...”

How can you work on including these adjectives in the description of your faithfulness to follow God' s commands?