

PSALM 119 – GOD’S TESTIMONIES

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Scripture: Psalm 119: 2, 14, 22, 24, 31, 36, 46, 59, 79, 88, 95, 99, 119, 125, 129, 144, 157, 167, 168

You’ll forgive me if I tell you that we’re still in Psalm 119 today. 176 verses. We’re going to get through them. But today, I want to do something a little differently. As I went through the psalm over and over again, I found little themes coming up. And so I want to read to you 19 verses out of Psalm 119.

Psalm 119:

- 2. “Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart.”
- 14. “In the way of Your testimonies, I delight as much as in all riches.”
- 22 “Take away from me scorn and contempt, for I have kept Your testimonies.”
- 24 “Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counsellors.”
- 31 “I cling to Your testimonies, O Lord; let me not be put to shame.”
- 36 “Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to selfish gain.”
- 46 “I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame.”
- 59 “When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies.”
- 79 “Let those who fear You turn to me, that they may know Your testimonies.”
- 88 “In Your steadfast love give me life, that I may keep the testimonies of Your mouth.”
- 95 “The wicked lie in weight to destroy me, but I consider your testimonies.”
- 99 “I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.”
- 119 “All the wicked of the earth You discard like dross, therefore I love Your testimonies.”
- 125 “I am Your servant’ give me understanding, that I may know your testimonies!”
- 129 “Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore, my soul keeps them.”
- 144 “Your testimonies are righteous forever; give me understanding that I may live.”
- 157 “Many are my persecutors and my adversaries, but I do not swerve from your testimonies.”
- 167 “My soul keeps Your testimonies. I love them exceedingly.”
- 168 “I keep Your precepts and testimonies, for all my ways are before you.”

It doesn't take much to recognize that there is a theme in these 19 verses. It's the Word testimonies. Right through, 19 verses out of 176 concentrate on the testimonies of God.

What does it mean to live by the testimonies of God?

Psalms 119 is a very profound meditation on the Word. And among many words used to describe scripture, we have law, precepts, commands, statutes. We find the word testimonies as well. I put all these words together – the law, statutes, precepts, testimonies, and commands. There are about 179 references to these words in 176 verses. So you can see how important God's law, His precepts, His commands, His statutes, all of these are for the psalmist, and by extension for each one of us.

There's something very, very important that he's trying to communicate to us. They are more than just rules. They are revelations about God Himself – a witness of God, His character, His purposes, and His promises. And they call us into relationship to anchor our lives in the truth.

So this morning, I'd like for us to explore how living by God's testimonies brings us assurance. Why it is that the psalmist is so bent on letting us know that the testimonies of God are very important and how do they bring assurance and guidance and invitation, and a deeper fellowship into Him.

But for that we have to ask the question: What exactly do we mean by God's testimonies? Consistently, he's talking about God's testimonies, but what do they mean? Or to be more specific, what does the Bible mean when it talks about God's testimonies that are so central to a life of obedience?

Obedience, love, meditation, boldness, and teaching all point to God's testimonies. *Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counsellors*, the psalmist says. In other words, Your testimonies are what speak to me when I need help, when I need guidance, when I'm in trouble, when I'm in deep water, when I'm in a conflict zone, when I need discernment. Your testimonies are like counsellors to me. So, it's something deeper. It's something personal. There's something very relational about the truth of God's heart being revealed to us and His promises.

So, what do the testimonies of God mean?

It means that they bear witness to who He is, what He has done, and what He calls us, His people, to be like.

- Who God is?
- What God has done?
- What is His expectation of us, the ones who bear His name, how we should be and how we should act?

So it comes to us in a kind of a legal or covenantal language which is of the Old Testament, especially as it's linked to witnesses. What are the witnesses that are all around that talk about God's glory? We see that in Psalm 19, *The heavens declare the glory of God*. Everywhere we look, there's witness of who God is. Then what are the things that affirm Him, that talk about Him, that affirm His goodness, His holiness, His trust, all these wonderful virtues? And then, what truth is revealed to each one of us day in and day out.

When God gives His testimonies, there are a couple of things we need to pay attention to.

His testimonies are records of His covenant. He's documenting His promises and expectations in the context of the relationship that you and I will have with Him.

So, His covenant with His people outlines for us that He will be our God and that we will be His people. And the testimonies serve as sacred evidence of God's faithfulness throughout history. When God gives His testimonies, they're also witnesses of His nature and His will.

Each testimony reflects who God is, His character, His values, and His divine purposes for each one of us. They testify that God is not distant or silent but has clearly revealed to us His heart and His desire for all His people. Through them we see that God is holy, merciful, just and loving, and that He calls us to align with His perfect will. So, it reveals His nature and will. And then God's testimonies reveal principles of His justice, His grace, and His holiness.

Jeremiah 29:13 says, *"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."* Beautiful verse! But see, if you look at this verse, it captures the invitation that is embedded in God's testimonies. They are not just about information. They are a personal call from God to know Him more deeply and more continually. It's not a one-off thing. It's something that must happen every day, day in and day out. So when the psalmist talks about Psalm 119, he says *He delights in the testimonies of the Lord*. He's not simply delighting in the laws; he is rejoicing in God's self-revelation. God is telling us who He is so that we can know Him better. We only have a better relationship with people when we get to know them better. And God is doing exactly the same thing. He's speaking, acting, and showing Himself through His words, His works, and His faithfulness.

God's testimonies through self-revelation. God is revealing Himself to us.

What are God's testimonies?

1. His Word is a testimony. The entire body of scripture, especially His spoken and written decrees are His testimonies. They testify of His character which is holy and loving and just. His will, how we are to live our lives and His promises and His covenants. *Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counsellors*. He says so. His Word.
2. His actions. Every act of deliverance, provision, judgment, and redemption throughout the Bible is a testimony. Think about the Exodus, God's faithfulness in bringing His people out of Egypt. The giving of the law, God's faithfulness, letting them know what His expectations of His people were.

The cross and the resurrection tell us about His incredible love for us. All are testimonies of what God has done.

3. His covenants. There are many covenants that He made – with Noah, with Abraham, with Israel, with David. And then the New Covenant in Christ. All of them carry God's sworn testimony that He will act in faithfulness.
4. Jesus Himself. The most vibrant testimony of all. Jesus says in John 18, *"For this purpose I was born, and for this purpose I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth."*

How do God's testimonies define who He is?

They reveal His nature: holy, faithful, merciful, consistent. They display His justice and His grace in action. They show His desire to be known. He is not silent. He is not distant. They highlight His faithfulness across generations. We hear stories from our parents and grandparents how God has helped, how God has been faithful. Those are wonderful stories that instil in us an inspiration to continue to seek Him.

In essence, God's testimonies are His biography, His love letter if you will, His legal covenant all in one. They are how He introduces Himself to us so that we will get to know Him better.

How do we respond to His testimonies? What do we do?

The psalmist shows us in Psalm 119. This is such a beautiful psalm and I hope that it has peaked your interest to go in and search and look at it in a new light. Pull it apart and then see how you can put it together in different ways.

1. We need to obey them. In v. 30, he says, *"I have chosen the way of truth. I have set Your ordinances before me."* We live in obedience to His revealed will.
2. We delight in them. v. 16: *I delight in Your testimonies. I will not forget Your word.* They are not a burden. They're not something that we look at as a dirge – every morning I've got to read the word and then go, but we delight in it. it's a source of joy for us.
3. We meditate on them. v. 15: *I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways.* Constant reflection always helps truth to sink in deeper. So does repetition. We need to constantly engage with it so that truth can come down into our hearts.
4. We cling to them in times of trial. v. 50: *This is my comfort in my affliction that Your word has revived me.* God's word revives us. how often do we find that we come into church and maybe it's a word that is spoken during worship, and it just clicks. Suddenly we find that we have a new sense of God's presence filling us because God's word is coming to us.

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." How often those words have spoken to us! When we come into church beaten, put down and in deep distress, nothing going our way, and we almost claw our way into church, and then hear these words from the Lord, *"Come unto Me."* And they minister so very deeply for we want that rest that He has.

The songs that we sing – how often they minister to us. worship leaders spend so much of time thinking and picking the songs, believing that the songs they pick are the songs for this particular Sunday, for this particular congregation that God knows. God is already working before you came in their hearts so there will be an engagement. And how often there is wonderful engagement with the worship.

5. We proclaim His testimonies to others. *"I have told of Your ordinances before kings and shall not be ashamed."* His testimonies must be publicly shared and shared confidently.

What happens when we respond to God's testimonies?

God is then able to shape us. He shapes us in and within the situations and the circumstances that we are in, and shapes us to be godly people who depend on Him to get through a particular situation. We're opening ourselves to the Potter and saying, *"Fit this clay in the way that it will help me go through this situation."*

The Master Potter is at work. How does that happen? What happens in terms of shaping?

1. **He assures us.** His testimonies begin to assure us that His promises are real. So even when life feels shaky, we can feel confident that God is still faithful. Here's the thing, beloved. When things go badly with us, sometimes the one thing that can help us put away from our lives. We tend to enjoy the Lord and His mercy, and His love, and His word in times of joy

when everything is going well. We tend to retreat when things are not going well. And it's the exact opposite that must happen because for the word of God to impact us, to shape us, we draw into His word at a time like this. We draw into it and God tells us: "You can continue to have joy and peace and well-being even in the midst of this trial because I am with you. I'm making every promise that I've given you come true in this time. At this time, you will see that the waters have come, but they did not overwhelm you. It may never mean anything to you when everything is going well, but when things are not going well, you know exactly where the lever of the water is, and you know that it hasn't overwhelmed you."

That's what we must do when we go through difficult times. We press into the word and say, "Lord, I come back to You. I want Your promises, the covenantal relationship that I have with You to shape me in this trial, in this situation, so that there is still the aroma of the Lord God Almighty that comes out of my life even when it seems that I am crushed."

He assures us. the rainbow is a beautiful reminder of God's faithfulness that He will never again destroy the earth by flood. It's a reminder of His mercy and His restraint.

His word to Joshua, *"As I was with Joshua, I will be with you. I will never leave you or forsake you."* A promise of His ongoing presence.

The resurrection of Jesus, an ultimate testimony that death is not the final encounter, and our hope is not in vain.

Giving of the Holy Spirit to us – a testimony that God has made that says that He is within us, indwelling us, never leaving us, speaking truth into our lives.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Continuously, He'll give me what I want. How many times, beloved, have we been in situations where the cupboard was bare? Where we didn't know whether what we had in terms of finances would get us to the end of the month? And we saw the first of the next month and were in awe of how that happened. Those are testimonies that we all have. We've seen it with our own eyes, in our own lives that God has been faithful.

2. **His testimonies anchor us.** They anchor us when everything around us changes – people, opinions, circumstances. God's testimonies don't. They keep us steady like an anchor in a storm. I will not forget Your testimonies because they hold me firm when life gets tough. When we are tossed about with fear and doubt and sometimes the press of culture upon us, or even suffering, then God's testimonies come.

The ten commandments reminds us of the kind of moral law, moral values that we need to have within our world.

God's justice over Pharaoh reminds us that there's no earthly power that can stand against God's will. Psalm 119:89, *"Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven."* His word is not shifting; it's a fixed anchor.

Jesus calming the storm. A testimony that even the chaos that is all around us, the fear that enveloped the disciples is nothing for His who can say: Peace! Be still.

Habakkuk's prayer. *"Though the fig tree doesn't blossom nor fruit be in the vines, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, my God."* Even when there's no visible hope, we can rejoice because God is our strength.

3. **It guides us.** The shaping comes in terms of guidance. God's testimonies help us make good choices. They are like a light on a dark path. They don't just tell us what to do, but they show us who God is in the midst of that moment. And that shapes how we live.

The psalmist says, *"Teach me Your statutes and give me understanding."* So, it directs our paths, corrects us and reveals both the heart of God and how we are to live in His light. *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* How true it is. His testimonies illuminate our next steps along the road of life.

Jesus' sermon on the mount – testimony of values of God's kingdom, humility, peace, peace-making, and purity.

And the parables that Jesus has given to us tell us about God's priorities and His character.

The life of Joseph – that you can live a life of integrity and that God will see you through.

4. **They invite us.** How? They invite us to know Him. God's testimonies, as they shape us, invite us to know Him better, to walk closely with Him and experience His heart. *"I long for Your testimonies"* is how the psalmist puts it. Long for them. He's drawn in because they help him know God personally. They open the door to relationship, calling us to seek Him, know Him, and be known by Him.

Remember the Garden of Eden. It says God was walking and talking with Adam and Eve. It tells us how much He longs for communion, to have a relationship with us. It should also tell us how much He longs for our prayer life to be vibrant. He wants communication with His children.

Jesus' invitation in Matthew, *"Come unto Me all who are weary and heavy laden."*

The cross of Christ – there is no louder testimony of God's love than the cross.

Revelation 3:20, we saw that last in the previous week in our Bible study. *"I stand at the door and knock."* He stands at the door and knocks at the church at Laodicea, which is a church of people who knew Him. And the point that we made was He's standing at the door of Christians and knocking and says, "Let Me in," which means it is possible for us to be Christians and not have Jesus inside our hearts. He's there in terms of the acknowledgement we made when we invited Him into our heart. But He has no further access in our lives. I stand at the door and knock. Let me in. I want to come in and have supper with you. Having supper is something that builds friendship and relationship. Relational God.

So, to live by God's testimonies, we don't just read them, but we live by them. We let the word shape us, how we see the world, how we feel, the choices that we make. That's how we find confidence and stability and direction and a deeper walk with God.

So, to sum up, they assure us that God has spoken and His word still stands. They anchor us when the world sways with shifting truths. They guide us not just to what is right but to who God is. They invite us to know a God who delights in being known. All of that is head knowledge that I've given

you. But knowledge left like that only puffs us up, says the writer of Proverbs. It must make its way from our head to our heart and begin to transform us.

How to make His testimonies transform us?

That's the last mile, if I can use that phrase. When we take that knowledge and make sure that it engages with our hearts, that's when transformation takes place. And the word of God, beloved, is not about information. It's about information that can transform you. If we stay with information, it is of no use to you. The word of God must come to us as information. Therefore we read it. But after reading it, we must allow it to transform us. That's the key. That's the endgame of the word of God, to bring transformation into our lives.

Practical applications of the testimonies of God transforming us.

- **Treasure God's word deeply.**

I have stored Your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Think about this. If we have 10 verses in our heart that talk about God, we have 10 ways in which we will not sin against Him. But this psalm itself has 176 verses. So we have a long way to go, and understanding all the verses that tell us what God likes, what He appreciates in the way we are, who we are, how we live our lives.

So memorize these verses. pick one verse per week and memorize it. one verse. At the end of the year, you'll have 52, that's 42 more than the 10 that you may have had. We've got to make the word of God richly dwell in us, and I'll be your accountability partner. Send me the verse that you're going to read or learn at the beginning of the week. Then I'll hold you accountable to it. 250 of you show up. Do that on a Monday. It'll be quite a job for me, but I have great faith that this is what God would want. And so, somehow He's going to help me to do it. I'd welcome that. That's the challenge. 52 verses, is what we'll have by the end of next July.

- **Meditate regularly and reflectively.**

I will meditate on Your precepts and fix my eyes on Your ways. That's what the psalmist says. Meditating is not just emptying of the mind. It's filling the mind with truth until it sinks into the heart. Meditation transforms information into intimacy. Information about God to intimacy with God. That's the journey.

- **Obey consistently and joyfully.**

Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart. they are not just theoretical truths; they're living directives. Obedience is not about duty, but about delight. I keep saying this over and over again. We must move from duty to delight. In the way we read the word, in doing His will, it must become delight. "Okay Lord, I'll do that if that's what You want."

We ought not to do a Jonah in our lives. Jonah failed to see the beautiful transformation of the city of Nineveh when they were forgiven and they celebrated. He lost it because he was still caught up in the fact that he had to do something that God had asked him to do which he didn't want to do. He missed the beauty of God's work in that city. Instead, he sat under a tree and sulked.

That's what duty often does. But delight, we see. Our eyes are open to see what God is doing through this thing that He wants us to do. We delight in Him. We delight in God's character, not just His commands. Go beyond the things that He's asking you to do and seek

God because testimonies speak of a testifier. We always need to go back to the source. Get to know the source better.

- **Surround yourself with a testimony-soaked community.**

Share with people. Find somebody that you can talk to or call up even and say, “Hey, you know what happened to me this week? This is what I was going through and God’s word spoke to me, and I just wanted to share it with you.”

How wonderfully God will take those things and work. That person may have just been down in the dumps and suddenly they say, “Hey, it helped you. It might help me.” or they call you. So, there’s a wonderful synergy that happens.

- **Cry out for understanding and help.**

Give me understanding that I may keep Your law and observe it with my whole heart.

I pray that every time I do my Bible study. I keep telling you this. I’m in the first 5 books. I went through Numbers and Leviticus and I think: “Oh gosh, Lord. How do I get past all of this?” And then I thought to myself, “This is God’s word.” And I began to pray. “Lord, I want You to put ‘horse blinkers’ on me so that I am only focused on these words. Whatever it says, show me beauty in Your word.” That became my prayer. And I began to enjoy it. I began to see lines that suddenly made a whole lot of sense in the midst of what we typically call boring books.

God answers those kind of prayers. Turn to Him and say, “Lord, today’s reading. Will You show me a facet of Yourself that I didn’t know before? Would You show me a character trait that I didn’t know, that I can stand on today?”

- **Return quickly when you fail.**

The last verse, v.176 in this psalm says, *“I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your commandments.”* Seek Your servant. Come looking for me, Lord. and the Lord can and will, because we are keeping His commandments still. I’ve gone astray. Lord, leave the 99 and come looking for me. I still have a relationship with You. I still belong to You. I’m still the sheep of Your pasture. The psalmist was so honest about failure but always returned.

So, God’s testimonies are not just about information. They’re about revelation and relationship. Revelation revealing who He is, and the relationship that He wants to have with us. When we live by His testimonies, we learn to walk with Him, to trust Him deeply, and to mirror His character in the world that we live in.

CONCLUSION.

Psalm 119 is not just beautiful poetry, which it is. It’s a personal testimony of a psalmist who’s saying: “This God, these testimonies about Him, they are all you need to navigate the world.”

Let’s move away from the psalmist and Psalm 119, and be a little personal about this. This morning, do you need assurance today from God? Do you need to know that God has spoken His word and it still stands? You need His promises to calm your fears. You need that assurance today.

Or are you longing for something to hold on to, something that is stable and firm? His testimonies will help anchor you in a world that feels like shifting sand. They will. Do you need direction this morning? wondering where to go, to turn to the left or the right, unsure at a fork in your road? His

word will show you what is right. It will reveal who He is in the midst of that situation and circumstance.

Are you feeling distant? Are you feeling weary this morning? His word still says, *"Beloved, come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. The waters may come, they will not overflow you. The fire may come, it will not singe you."* His word is true.

So I would say during these last minutes, even while we sing our closing song. If God is speaking to you and saying something to you – "You don't need to be up the creek in a boat without a paddle. I'm enough for you. Turn your gaze up to Me. I'll take you through this situation. I'll give you assurance. I'll be your anchor. I'll be your stability. I'm inviting you to take My hand. I'll hold you." Do what He's asking of you this morning. don't go away saying, "I've heard the voice of the Lord, but the door is still shut."

Heavenly Father, to You we turn this morning. we have heard Your voice, Lord. You know every situation that each one in this room is facing. You know what they need and Your word can supply it, Lord. we ask that Your word would come either as a thunderclap for those who need to hear it like that, or in the gently whisper of a light breeze.

But Lord, as we respond to You this morning, would You shape and mould us? Would You let Your testimonies come alive in our lives, reviving us that we may walk out of here with hope and strength and stability, knowing that You are the absolute, unshakeable One, the unchangeable One, the same yesterday, today, and forever. And that it is You who holds our hand and will never let go.

Thank you for that assurance. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.
