

A SERMON SERIES ON
PSALM 119

**A Lamp to My Feet,
 A Light to My Path:**
The Way to the Blessed Life

Aleph

The Blessed Life is A Bible-Shaped Life

Psalm 119:1–8

Introduction: Psalm 119 opens in a surprising way. It does not begin with a command but with a declaration:

“Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD” (v 1)

- That matters a lot because the psalm begins not with pressure, but with promise.
- It doesn't start with a command but a description.
- Before the psalmist tells us what to do, he tells us what kind of life God desires for His people.
- The first word of the longest chapter in the Bible is “blessed.”
- This is the theme of the entire chapter; living the blessed life.
- God introduces His Word by speaking of flourishing, joy, wholeness, and life.
- This opening stanza establishes the heart of the entire psalm.
- Psalm 119 is not merely about reading the Bible, studying the Bible, or defending the Bible.
- It is about what happens when the Word of God shapes an entire life.
- It is for all “those” who desire blessedness.
- The psalmist presents the blessed life as a life ordered, directed, corrected, and formed by God's Word.

- And yet, almost immediately, tension enters the stanza.
- The blessed life is beautiful, but it is not effortless.
- The psalmist knows both the glory of this life and the instability of his own heart.
- So, the opening verses move from blessing, to longing, to prayer, to dependence.
- The stanza introduces not only the joy of the Word, but the struggle of becoming the kind of person the Word describes.
- In this, it is, as Spurgeon says in *The Golden Alphabet*, “always practical.”

First: The Blessed Life Walks According to God’s Word (1–3)

The opening verses describe the overall orientation of the blessed life: “*Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD!*” (v 1).

Note: there is a sense in which the author is following traditional Hebraic writing style in which a statement is made and the rest of the exhortation is an explanation and defense of the statement (like Gen 1:1 or Psalm 23:1). This verse sets the tone for the rest of the chapter.

The word “blessed” (אַשְׁרֵי, ashre) refers to deep flourishing, fullness, and settled joy. This is not superficial happiness rooted in favorable circumstances. It is the richness of a life aligned with God Himself.

The psalmist immediately connects that blessing to a “way.” He is describing the direction, pattern, and trajectory of a person’s life.

The Bible is not a collection of isolated stories. It tells one story; the story of the world God is creating and the people he has chosen to live in that world. It was originally a blessed world, and it will, once again, be a blessed world. Until then, we can live blessed lives. In the same way, Christianity is not merely a collection of isolated spiritual moments. It is a way of living. A person is always walking somewhere spiritually.

And notice where the blessed person walks: “in the law of the LORD” (Psalm 119:1).

IMP: The law here is not presented as oppressive restriction but as life-giving instruction. God’s Word does not diminish human flourishing; it creates it. The blessed life is shaped by walking under the authority, wisdom, and guidance of God’s revealed truth.

Verse 2 intensifies the picture because it reveals a key to living the blessed life, which is wholeheartedness: “*Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart*”

- The blessed life is not divided.
- It is not occasional or sporadic.
- It is wholehearted.
- It is “habitual holiness.” (Spurgeon)

- The psalmist is describing integrity, singleness of soul, an undivided orientation toward God.
- And it creates what I call, “the novice soul,” the soul as God created it and intends it to be.
- The person described here does not merely admire God’s Word intellectually but seeks God Himself through it and seeing Him, desires Him.

Verse 3 continues: “*who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!*”

This was not their character from their birth. Once they were doing nothing but iniquity[wrong].
- Charles Bridges

Romans 6:1-2 - *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*

This is only natural. The person who is walking in God’s way is not walking in an ungodly way. But the intent is not to avoid sin. It is to pursue righteousness. Our focus is not on the world but on God.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 - I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— ¹⁰ not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. ¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? ¹³ God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

Here, Paul says it is impossible not to rub shoulders with sinners. But his point is for the church to live purely. You cannot avoid temptation or live in a world without sin. But your emphasis is on the Lord, not the world.

IMP: The emphasis is also not sinless perfection but *the overall direction of a life* increasingly shaped by God’s Word and its resulting obedience.

The undefiled character described in this verse marks ...not one who is without sin...
- Charles Bridges

It is not the perfection of your life, but the direction of your life. It’s not theoretical and it’s not impossible.

The Bible forms

- 1 – priorities – this is right
- 2 – desires – I want to do right
- 3 – instincts – I naturally do right
- 4 – habits – rightness becomes natural to me

5 – reflexes – even when I’m not thinking about it

So that, over time, God’s truth reshapes the whole person.

This is the foundational claim of Psalm 119: The blessed life is a Bible-shaped life.

Second: The Blessed Life Requires Steadfast Obedience (4–5)

The stanza now shifts *from description to tension*: “*You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently*” (4).

It also moves from general to personal, from “those” and “his,” “him” and “their” to “You” and “my.”

1 - God’s Word carries authority. These are not suggestions or inspirational reflections. God commands His precepts to be obeyed carefully, consistently, and diligently.

ILL: Spurgeon says it is like getting up and going to work every day. Or being a husband, wife parent, or friend. It’s something you do every day.

This is because He knows what is best and intends the best for us.

Proverbs 14:12 - *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

This tells us that human intuition, at its very best, is not trustworthy by itself.

2 – This is the way Christianity must be lived. Personally, not corporately.

God has seen it all: the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, joy and sorrow, peace and conflict, wholeness and the shattered life. And as the Author of creation, He knows what works and what doesn’t. And so he commands us to keep his precepts *diligently*.

At its core, מְאֹד (me’od) means:

- exceedingly,
- greatly,
- very much,
- to an extreme degree,
- with fullness or intensity

It is often translated simply as:

- “very”
- or “greatly.”

For example: *“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5).*

And that’s why, the moment the command appears, the psalmist immediately responds with a personal longing.

“Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!” (v 5).

It is also one of the first great **emotional turns** in Psalm 119.

The psalmist sees the beauty of obedience, the blessing of obedience, but he also feels deeply, the instability of his own heart. He knows what God commands, yet he recognizes how easily he is tempted, and turned away from obeying the Lord. He knows the world around him. He knows his own heart. And so, this verse command exposes both –

- the glory of God’s ways and
- the weakness of our human resolve.

- That tension is deeply important because Psalm 119 is **not** triumphalist spirituality.
- The psalmist does not pretend obedience is effortless.
- He knows the difference between admiring God’s Word and actually living under it consistently.

The word *“steadfast”* carries the idea of being firmly established, fixed, stable, and prepared. The psalmist is praying for a life that does not continually wander. He longs for spiritual consistency.

This movement here is profoundly honest. The psalmist is already teaching us that the blessed life is not created by occasional emotional experiences. It is formed through sustained obedience over time.

And yet even that obedience must ultimately become a gift of grace. The psalmist understands that unless God steadies his heart, he will not remain faithful. The command of God and his desire to obey the Lord has driven him into prayer.

Third: The Blessed Life Produces Confidence, Praise, and Dependence (6–8)

Verse 6 reveals the result of steadfast obedience: *“Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments” (Psalm 119:6).*

The psalmist is describing a life no longer fractured by hidden compromise. Sin always brings shame...ultimately.

ILL: Before the Fall, Genesis says about Adam and Eve -

Genesis 2:25 - And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

That verse is enormously important because it describes:

- openness,
- innocence,
- wholeness,
- no fear,
- no concealment,
- no fragmentation before God or one another.

Then, immediately after they sinned:

Genesis 3:7 - Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

The text never uses the exact word “ashamed” in Genesis 3, but shame is clearly present because:

- they suddenly feel exposed
- they cover themselves
- they hide
- they avoid openness with each other and God
- they begin self-protection.

Sin always promises what it can’t provide; success, approval, joy. But it forces a person to manage appearances, conceal reality, and live with the fear of exposure.

ILL: Lance Armstrong won the Tour de France 7 consecutive times from 1999-2005. But each time he stood on the platform he knew he had cheated. He carried that guilt, shame and hiddenness until 2012, when all seven titles were stripped by the United States Anti-Doping Agency after findings that he used performance-enhancing drugs. Officially, those years now have no winner recorded.

Each time he stood on the podium, as the world champion, Lance knew the secret that eventually unraveled everything. Long before the public shame came, the inward shame already existed and tormented him as he fought off accusations year after year.

ILL: Or think on David who committed adultery with Bathsheba and then murdered her husband. He kept that to himself for as long as he could.

Psalm 32:1-6 - Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up^[b] as by the heat of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah. Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;

Shame thrives in dividedness, double-mindedness, secrecy, and rebellion. But the person whose eyes are fixed upon God's commandments gains stability and confidence before God.

This is **not** self-righteousness. The confidence comes from alignment with God's revealed will. The blessed life increasingly becomes an unashamed life because it is walking openly before God.

Verse 7 moves naturally into worship: *"I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules" (Psalm 119:7).*

Notice the progression (what I am calling, 'movement' of this verse and these verses.

We have moved from a whole heart in v 2, to an upright heart in v 7. This is what the Bible does for us. It makes us whole.

"When" we learn God's righteous rules, we praise him with an upright heart. That's a heart that learns what is best and does what is best because God says it is best. It looks like this -

- Knowledge
- obedience
- praise.

The person who seeks holiness will find the happiness of the blessed life.

The more the psalmist learns the character and wisdom of God through His Word, the more worship emerges from his life. The Word does not merely inform him. It transforms his affections.

But then the stanza ends with another surprising turn: *"I will keep your statutes; do not utterly forsake me!" (Psalm 119:8).*

- 1 - He declares his desire to obey God.
- 2 - He wants the blessed life.
- 3 - But even after declaring his commitment to obedience, the psalmist ends in dependence.

He understands that perseverance ultimately depends upon God's sustaining presence. He does not trust his own strength. He knows that if God abandons him, he will fall.

So, the stanza ends where the Christian life always ends; not in self-confidence, but in dependence upon God.

Fourth: This Is Where the Gospel Meets Us

Psalm 119 describes the life humanity was created to live.

- a) The Father commands this kind of life. He commands wholehearted obedience, steadfastness unwavering devotion to His Word, purity and worship.

But we immediately recognize the problem.

- We are not naturally steadfast.
- Our hearts divide easily.
- We drift, wander, compromise, and resist the very Word that gives life.

But Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled this stanza.

b) Jesus alone walked fully according to the law of the Lord. He alone sought the Father with His whole heart. He alone obeyed steadfastly without wandering.

1 - When tempted in the wilderness, He answered Satan with the Word of God (Matthew 4:1–11).

2 - When facing the agony of Gethsemane, He remained perfectly surrendered to the Father's will (Luke 22:42).

Everything Psalm 119:1–8 describes becomes visible in the life of Christ.

And then Jesus went to the cross for every time and way we have failed to live this life.

IMP: But the gospel does not end with forgiveness alone.

- c) The Holy Spirit now forms the life of Christ within us.

The Spirit re-creates the life of Jesus in us. He teaches us what is right, he steadies wandering hearts, deepens love for God's Word, creates increasing obedience, he convicts us when we stray and shapes believers into people whose lives are progressively aligned with God.

The blessed life is not self-created moral achievement. It is the life of Christ formed in us by grace.

Romans 8:28-29a - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...

What is the ultimate "good" of Romans 8:28? What is the apex for which we are "predestined?" It is "*to be conformed to the image of his Son*"

30 - ... order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers

The Father is creating an entire redeemed family that reflects the glory, character, holiness, beauty, and likeness of Christ Himself.

1 Timothy 6:15 - ... *he who is the blessed...*

He is our best 'good,' our blessed 'good.'

Conclusion:

The first eight verses are taken up with a contemplation of the blessedness that comes from keeping the statutes of the Lord.
Spurgeon in The Golden Alphabet

Psalm 119 begins by telling us that the blessed life is real.

It is not found in the autonomy of Eden, the independence of Samson, or the self-expression of Saul.

It is created by the Word of God, formed through ongoing obedience to God, and sustained through dependence upon God.

IMP: The world tells us blessing is found in getting what we want. Psalm 119 says blessing is found in becoming the kind of person God creates through His Word.

And over time, that Word produces what every human soul longs for:

- stability
- wholeness
- confidence
- joy and
- peace

All of which are byproducts of a single-hearted life before God.

Here are the fundamentals of this series (they could be of any series). This is what you and I believe but need to remember -

- Scripture reshapes the whole person, not merely behavior.
- The Word produces delight before duty.
- Transformation comes through meditation and practice, not mere exposure.
- Obedience grows from grace rather than moralism.
- The Bible forms our identity, affection and lifestyle
- Jesus is the true fulfillment of Psalm 119, the perfectly obedient Son
- The blessed life is with Christ as the model, the Word as the guide and the Spirit as the enabler

Final Thoughts:

1 – The daily devotions are on the web site and the APP. They will be listed by the Hebrew letter.

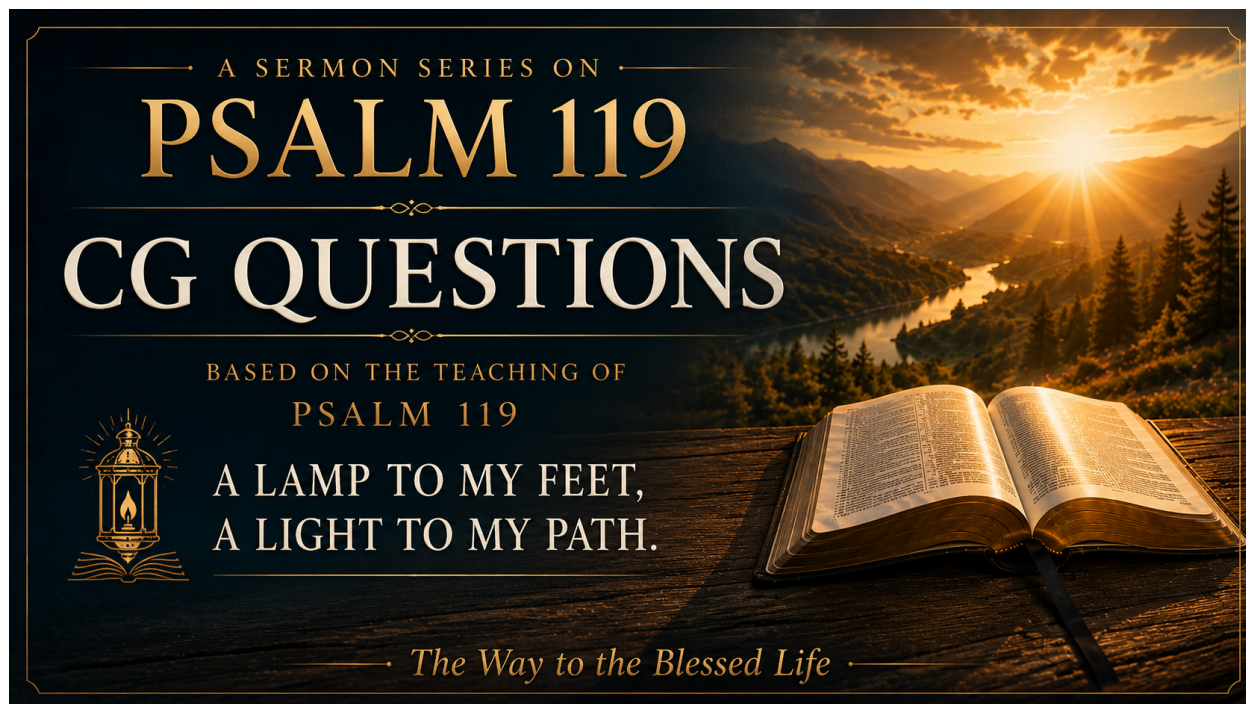
2 – There are 8 of them so you need to do only 7 or double up one day in order to be devoting on the appropriate preaching text the week after the sermon.

3 – God can use them to teach us the blessedness of knowing, loving and obeying him

4 – It will take time.

*“It takes a moment to become a Christian.
It takes a lifetime to live the Christian life.”*

4 – Which verse will you memorize this week? (Adult AWANA)



Observation: What does the text say?

1. What repeated words, themes, or ideas stand out to you in Psalm 119:1–8?
2. How does the psalm begin, and why is it significant that it begins with blessing rather than command?
3. According to verses 1–3, what characterizes the “blessed” person?
4. What does the psalmist say about the relationship between God’s Word and the direction of a person’s life?
5. What emotional shift takes place in verses 4–5 when the psalmist moves from description into personal longing and prayer?

Interpretation: What does the text mean?

6. What does the word “blessed” (אַשְׁרֵי, ashre) communicate about the kind of life God desires for His people?
7. The sermon emphasizes that Christianity is a “way” of life rather than isolated spiritual moments. Why is that distinction important?
8. What does it mean to seek God “with their whole heart” (v. 2)? What does wholeheartedness look like practically?
9. Why does the psalmist immediately move from God’s commands to prayer for steadfastness in verse 5?
10. The sermon states that Psalm 119 is not describing sinless perfection but the overall direction of a life shaped by God’s Word. Why is that clarification important?

Correlation: How does this connect to the rest of the Bible?

11. How does Proverbs 14:12 help explain why we need God’s Word to direct our lives?
12. How does Romans 6:1–2 reinforce the idea that grace leads believers toward holiness rather than away from it?
13. In what ways do Adam and Eve’s experience in Genesis 2–3 help us understand the relationship between sin and shame discussed in verse 6?
14. How does Psalm 32:1–6 deepen our understanding of hidden sin, shame, confession, and blessing?
15. The sermon connects Romans 8:28–29 to Psalm 119. How does being “conformed to the image of his Son” help define the blessed life?

Application: How should this change us?

16. What is currently shaping the overall direction of your life most deeply? How can you tell?
17. Where do you feel the tension between admiring God’s Word and consistently living under it?
18. What habits, influences, or patterns most easily pull your heart away from wholehearted devotion to God?
19. The sermon emphasizes that transformation comes through meditation and practice, not mere exposure. What practical changes might help you place God’s Word more consistently before your eyes this week?
20. Which verse from Psalm 119:1–8 do you most need to memorize, meditate on, or pray through right now? Why?

The Gospel of Grace

21. How does Jesus perfectly fulfill what Psalm 119:1–8 describes?
22. Why is it important that the blessed life is ultimately formed by grace rather than self-created moral achievement?
23. How does the Holy Spirit help believers grow into the kind of life Psalm 119 describes?
24. In what ways does the gospel bring hope when you recognize instability, dividedness, or inconsistency in your own heart?

25. How does Psalm 119 reshape the world's definition of blessing, happiness, and flourishing?