

Treasures of Grace

Psalm 119:41-48

Last week Brother Thom blessed us with a wonderful sermon from verses 33 through 40. In those verses, the psalmist focused heavily on learning, understanding, and being taught the Word of God. We saw a man who desired instruction. We saw a man asking God to teach him, give him understanding, and incline his heart toward God's ways.

In our text today, the focus begins to shift. The psalmist is still speaking about God's Word, but now he begins to show us some of the benefits that flow from knowing it, believing it, and applying it to our lives.

This morning I want us to think of this passage as a journey. Every journey has a starting point. Every journey has a destination. And every journey contains things to discover along the way.

In this passage, the starting point is found in verse 41. The destination is found in verses 47 and 48.

And between those two points we are going to discover four treasures of grace that every believer desperately needs.

But before we begin the journey, I want us to look at the destination.

Whenever you take a trip, it is helpful to know where you are going before you begin traveling. If you don't know the destination, it is difficult to appreciate the road that leads there.

So before we look at Point A, let's look at Point B. Let's look at verses 47 and 48.

"For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes."

These verses give us a glimpse into the heart of an ideal Christian. Now I am not saying that this person is perfect. I am not saying this person has arrived spiritually. I am not saying this person never struggles with sin. But I am saying this is the kind of heart every Christian ought to desire.

Notice what the psalmist says. He says he delights in God's commandments. Not tolerates them. Not endures them. Not obeys them reluctantly. He delights in them.

The commandments of God are not a burden to him. They are a joy to him. Then he says, "which I love." Twice in these two verses he says he loves God's commandments. Not merely that he respects them. Not merely that he agrees with them. He loves them. The Word of God has become precious to him.

Then he says, "I will lift up my hands toward your commandments." What a picture.

The image is one of desire. Longing. Affection. Imagine a man stranded in the desert for days without water reaching for a glass of ice-cold water. Imagine a starving man reaching for bread. Imagine a drowning man reaching for a life preserver.

That is the picture. The psalmist reaches for God's Word because he knows it is life to him.

And finally he says, "I will meditate on your statutes." His greatest desire is not merely to read God's Word. His desire is to think about it. To dwell on it. To ponder it. To chew on it. Day and night. God's Word occupies his mind because God's Word has captured his heart.

Brothers and sisters, this is the destination. This is where the journey leads.

The goal of this sermon is not simply to learn information about Psalm 119. The goal is to become more like this man. The goal is that we would

delight in God's Word. Love God's Word. Meditate on God's Word. And find our joy in God's Word.

Now before we begin our journey, I want us to do one more thing. I want us to divide ourselves into three groups. Not physically. Spiritually. And I want us to be brutally honest with ourselves before the Lord.

You do not need to raise your hand. You do not need to answer out loud. But answer honestly in your heart.

How many of you can honestly say that verses 47 and 48 describe you today? Not perfectly. But generally. You genuinely delight in God's Word. You love spending time in Scripture. You hunger for it. You miss it when it is absent. For some of you, by God's grace, that is where you are right now. You are in a sweet season of fellowship with the Lord. The Word is your delight. Praise God for that.

But let me ask another question. How many of you can say that you have been there before? You know exactly what the psalmist is talking about because you have experienced it. There was a time when your Bible was constantly open. Your prayer life was vibrant. Your fellowship with Christ was sweet. But if you are being honest this morning, that is not where you are right now. You know where you ought to be. You want to be there. But you feel stuck. You feel distant. You feel dry. Perhaps that is where many of you find yourselves this morning.

Then there is a third group. Maybe you don't know what this feels like at all. Maybe you have never delighted in God's Word. Maybe you have never experienced a genuine hunger for Christ. Perhaps the bigger question in your mind is whether or not you even belong to Him. You know there is a God. You know the Bible is important. But you have never experienced what the psalmist describes here.

Regardless of which group you belong to this morning, there is one thing that is true of all of us. We all begin at the same place. Nobody starts at verses 47 and 48. We all begin at the same starting line. And that starting line is found in verse 41.

Because before a man can delight in God's Word, he must first experience God's mercy. Before a man can love God's commandments, he must first be loved by God. Before a man can love the Word of God he must first be loved by the God of the Word. Before a man can treasure God's Word, he must first receive God's mercy and salvation.

And that brings us to the starting point of the journey.

The Starting Point: God's Hesed.

Psalm 119:41

"Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise."

Before we discover any of the treasures that lie along this path, we must begin where the psalmist begins. And where does he begin? He begins with a prayer. He begins with a plea. He begins with a cry for mercy.

Notice that he does not begin by saying, "Lord, look at my obedience." He does not begin by saying, "Lord, look at my Bible reading plan." He does not begin by saying, "Lord, look at my church attendance." He begins with a desperate request: "Let your steadfast love come to me."

Church, that is where every Christian life begins. It begins with God's mercy. It begins with God's grace. It begins with God's initiative.

The psalmist understands something that many people today have forgotten. Before we can do anything, God must first do something in and for us.

Before we can love Him, He must first love us. John says in 1 John 4:19, "We love because he first loved us."

The psalmist understands this. He knows that if he is ever going to arrive at verses 47 and 48—if he is ever going to delight in God's commandments and love God's statutes—God must first act on his behalf.

The Hebrew word translated "steadfast love" is the word **hesed**. It is one of the richest words in the entire Old Testament. There is really no single English word that captures its full meaning. It refers to God's loyal, covenant-keeping love toward His people. It is not merely affection. It is not merely emotion. It is love expressed through faithfulness. Love expressed through commitment. Love expressed through action.

It is the kind of love that says, "I have made a covenant with you, and I will not abandon you."

This is the word God uses to describe Himself in Exodus 34:6. When God passes before Moses, He declares:

"The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

The psalmist is appealing to that love. He is saying, "Lord, treat me according to your covenant faithfulness." "Lord, keep your promises to me." "Lord, let your mercy come to me."

Now notice that the second request flows naturally from the first. "Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise." The psalmist links God's love and God's salvation together. Why? Because salvation is the greatest expression of God's hesed.

God's covenant love is not merely sentimental. It is saving. It rescues. It redeems. It restores. It delivers.

Spurgeon called salvation: "The sum and crown of all God's mercies." What a statement. Think about all the mercies God has shown you. The mercy that preserved you as a child. The mercy that protected you from dangers you never knew existed. The mercy that brought the gospel into your life. The mercy that opened your eyes. The mercy that forgave your sins. The mercy that sustains you every day.

All of those mercies find their crown in salvation. And notice something very important. The psalmist asks for salvation according to God's promise. That means salvation is not something we invent. It is not something we define. It is not something we negotiate. God determines the terms. God makes the promise. God provides the way. God accomplishes the work.

And that brings us directly to the gospel.

The Bible teaches that every one of us entered this world as sinners. We were not born neutral. We were not born spiritually healthy. We were born separated from God.

Romans 3:23 says: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

And Romans 6:23 says: "For the wages of sin is death." That creates a dilemma. A dilemma we cannot solve. No amount of good works can erase our guilt. No amount of religious activity can reconcile us to God. No amount of self-improvement can remove our sin.

God's law teaches us two things. First, it teaches us that we are sinners. Second, it teaches us that we need a substitute. Something—or rather Someone—must stand in our place.

And that is precisely what God promised to provide. God sent His Son into the world. Jesus Christ took upon Himself human flesh. He lived the perfect life we have failed to live. He kept God's law perfectly. He loved the Father perfectly. He obeyed the Father perfectly. He fulfilled every righteous requirement of God's law.

Then He went to the cross. There He bore the wrath of God that our sins deserved.

Isaiah 53:5 says: "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities." Three days later He rose from the grave. Death could not hold Him. The curse could not keep Him. The grave could not contain Him.

And now God promises that all who repent and believe in Christ will be forgiven and granted eternal life. That is the promise. That is the salvation. That is the hesed of God on display.

Brothers and sisters, before we go any further, we must understand something. The treasures we are about to discover do not produce salvation. They flow from salvation. Confidence is not the starting point. Hope is not the starting point. Freedom is not the starting point. Boldness is not the starting point. God's mercy is the starting point. Everything else is downstream from that.

Group A, if you love God's Word today, it is because God's mercy found you first.

Group B, if you long to return to God's Word today, it is because God's mercy is still at work in your heart.

Group C, if you have never delighted in God's Word, your greatest need is not a better devotional plan or more religious activities. Your greatest need is God's salvation. You need the hesed of God. You need the mercy of Christ. You need the Savior.

And if you will call upon Him, He will receive you. Jesus said: "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out." (John 6:37)

Church, there is nothing more important we could do this morning than join the psalmist in his prayer:

"Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise."

Because when God's mercy reaches a sinner, Everything changes.
Treasures begin appearing along the road.

And the first treasure we encounter is found in verse 42.

A treasure every believer desperately needs.

Treasure #1: Confidence Before Our Enemies.

Psalm 119:42

"Then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word."

Now that God's mercy has come to the psalmist and salvation has become his foundation, we discover the first treasure along the path.

Confidence. Not self-confidence. Not confidence in our own intelligence. Not confidence in our debating ability. Confidence that comes from trusting the Word of God.

The psalmist says: "Then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me."

The word translated "taunts" is the Hebrew word **ḥārāph**.

It means:

- To reproach
- To mock
- To insult
- To ridicule
- To scorn
- To defy

This is not a friendly conversation. This is not a sincere seeker asking honest questions. This is an enemy seeking to shame the believer.

The psalmist is being mocked because he trusts God. He's being ridiculed because he believes God's promises. He's being attacked because of his faith.

Now let me ask you something. Has anything really changed? The world still mocks God's people. The world still ridicules biblical truth. The world still laughs at the authority of Scripture. The world still mocks biblical marriage. The world still mocks sexual purity. The world still mocks the exclusivity of Christ. The world still mocks the idea of sin and judgment.

The enemies may have changed clothes, but they are still speaking the same language. Yet the psalmist says: "***Then shall I have an answer.***"

How? Because he trusts in God's Word. Notice carefully what he does not say.

He does not say: "I have an answer because I won the argument." He does not say: "I have an answer because I have a seminary degree." He does not say: "I have an answer because I am smarter than my enemies."

He says: "I have an answer... for I trust in your word." The answer is not found in him. The answer is found in God.

Brothers and sisters, one of the greatest mistakes Christians make is believing that confidence comes from having all the answers. It does not. Confidence comes from knowing where the answers are found. There is a difference.

I do not know everything. You do not know everything. But God knows everything. And God has spoken. Therefore, when we trust His Word, we possess something infinitely more reliable than our own opinions. We possess divine truth.

This is exactly what we see in the life of our Lord.

Turn your minds for a moment to Matthew chapter 4. Jesus has been fasting for forty days. He is physically exhausted. Satan approaches Him with temptation. And what does Jesus do? Three times He answers: "It is written."

Not: "I feel." Not: "I think." Not: "In my opinion." Not: "My truth is."

But: "It is written."

The Son of God confronted the father of lies with the Word of God. Every temptation was answered by Scripture. Every attack was met with truth. Every lie was countered with God's Word.

Why? Because the Word of God is sufficient.

Church, I am convinced that many believers are losing battles they never should have lost because they are attempting to fight spiritual warfare without spiritual weapons.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 6: "Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:17)

Notice something. Every other piece of armor is defensive. The sword is offensive. It is the only weapon listed. The Word of God is the weapon God has given His people for battle.

And yet many Christians carry it like a decoration rather than a weapon. Imagine a soldier going into battle with a rifle but no ammunition. Imagine an archer carrying a bow but no arrows.

That is what many believers look like spiritually. We own Bibles. We carry Bibles. We post Bible verses online. But we do not know the Bible. When temptation comes, we have no arrows. When doubt comes, we have no bullets. When Satan attacks, we have no sword ready for battle.

Brothers and sisters, neglected Bibles create vulnerable Christians. The psalmist is teaching us that God's Word equips us for spiritual warfare.

Perhaps the enemy says: "God doesn't love you."

The Word says: "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Perhaps the enemy says: "You can never be forgiven."

The Word says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (1 John 1:9)

Perhaps the enemy says: "You are alone."

The Word says: "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

Perhaps the enemy says: "God has abandoned you."

The Word says: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35)

Every lie has an answer. Every accusation has an answer. Every taunt has an answer.

Not because we are wise. But because God has spoken.

Now let me take this one step further. I believe there are three enemies in view by application.

First, there is the unbelieving world. Those who openly mock Christ and His people.

Second, there is our flesh. That old sinful nature that continually attacks our faith. Sometimes the harshest critic we face is not outside us but inside us.

Third, there is the devil himself. Jesus called him: "a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

All three enemies attack with deception. All three enemies attack with accusations. All three enemies attack with lies. And God's answer to all three is His Word.

This treasure is confidence. Not arrogance. Not pride. Not self-reliance. Confidence rooted in divine truth.

Church, if we want this treasure, we must by the mercies of God become students of His Word. We must read it. Study it. Memorize it. Meditate upon it. Hide it in our hearts. Because when the enemy comes—and he will—the believer whose heart is filled with Scripture will never be left without an answer.

And that leads us to the second treasure found along the path. Not only confidence before our enemies. But hope in the midst of a broken world.

Treasure #2: Hope in the Truth.

Psalm 119:43

"And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules."

The first treasure was confidence. The second treasure is hope. And I would argue that hope is one of the most desperately needed treasures in our generation. We live in a world filled with despair.

People have more comforts than ever before and yet seem to have less hope than ever before. We have more technology than any generation in history. More information. More entertainment. More conveniences. And yet anxiety, depression, loneliness, and hopelessness continue to rise.

Why? Because people are searching for hope in places where hope cannot survive. The psalmist teaches us that true hope is found in God's truth.

Notice his prayer. "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth." This is an interesting prayer. The psalmist is acknowledging his dependence upon God.

Remember where this journey began. It began with God's hesed. It began with mercy. It began with salvation. And now the psalmist understands that the same grace that brought him to God's Word is the same grace that must keep him in God's Word.

He knows that if God removes His hand, he will drift. He knows his own weakness. He knows his own frailty. He knows that perseverance is ultimately a gift of God's grace.

The Christian life is not merely sustained by grace at the beginning. It is sustained by grace every day. We often think of grace as something that saves us from hell. But grace also keeps us from wandering. Grace keeps us believing. Grace keeps us trusting. Grace keeps us clinging to Christ.

Jesus said in John 15: "Apart from me you can do nothing." Not very little. Not less than you could. Nothing.

The psalmist understands that. And so he prays: "Lord, do not take your truth from my mouth." In other words: "Lord, keep me believing." "Lord, keep me speaking your truth." "Lord, keep me grounded in your Word."

Church history is filled with examples of people who once professed Christ and later abandoned the faith. The Scriptures are filled with such examples as well. Paul speaks of Hymenaeus and Philetus in 2 Timothy 2. These men once associated with the church. They once spoke the truth. But eventually they swerved from it. Paul says: "They have swerved from the truth."

Later Paul mentions Demas. A fellow laborer who traveled alongside him. Yet in 2 Timothy 4:10 Paul says: "For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me."

Those passages should humble us. They should remind us that perseverance is not something we boast about. It is something we pray for.

The psalmist understands that. So he prays that God would preserve him in the truth. But notice why he wants God's truth. The second half of the verse says: "For my hope is in your rules."

The word translated "rules" is the Hebrew word **mishpatim**. It refers to God's judgments. God's decisions. God's righteous verdicts. God's perfect justice. And the psalmist says: "My hope is in them."

Now that sounds strange to modern ears. Most people do not place their hope in judgments. Most people fear judgment. Yet the psalmist hopes in God's judgments.

Why? Because God's judgments are always right. Always fair. Always just. Always true. Think about the world we live in. Human justice is often flawed. Courts make mistakes. Governments become corrupt. People lie. Witnesses deceive. Evidence is hidden. The guilty sometimes go free. The innocent sometimes suffer. Justice is often delayed. Sometimes justice seems completely absent. Many of you know exactly what I am talking about.

Some of you have been wounded by people who never acknowledged their wrongdoing. Some have been betrayed. Some have been slandered. Some have been abused. Some have suffered deeply because of the sins of others. And perhaps the hardest part is that those responsible never seemed to face consequences.

What do you do with that? Where do you put that pain?

The psalmist says: "My hope is in your judgments." Why? Because God's justice never fails.

Romans 12:19 says: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'"

What a comfort. God misses nothing. God forgets nothing. God overlooks nothing. Every secret sin. Every hidden motive. Every careless word. Every act of wickedness. God sees it all. And He will judge rightly.

That truth gives hope. Not only because evil will be punished. But because righteousness will ultimately prevail. One day every wrong will be made right. One day Christ will return. One day justice and righteousness will reign. One day every tear will be wiped away. One day every wound will be healed. One day every sorrow will end. One day every enemy will be defeated. One day God's perfect judgment will fill the earth.

And because of that reality, the believer can endure, forgive, and can keep moving forward.

Hope is not wishful thinking. Hope is confidence in the promises of God.

The world says: "Hope for the best."

The Christian says: "I know who sits on the throne."

The world says: "Maybe things will work out."

The Christian says: "God has already spoken."

The world anchors hope in circumstances. The believer anchors hope in God's character.

And that is why the psalmist can say: "My hope is in your judgments."

Brothers and sisters, if your hope is in politicians, you will eventually be disappointed. If your hope is in courts, you will eventually be disappointed. If your hope is in money, you will eventually be disappointed. If your hope is in your health, you will eventually be disappointed. If your hope is in people, you will eventually be disappointed.

But if your hope is rooted in God's Word and God's righteous judgments, that hope can survive anything. That is the second treasure. Hope in the truth.

And as that hope takes root in the heart of the believer, something remarkable begins to happen. The person who once felt trapped by sin begins to experience genuine freedom.

Which brings us to the third treasure on our journey.

Treasure #3: Freedom.

Psalm 119:44-45

*"I will keep your law continually, forever and ever,
and I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts."*

Now, when most people hear the word freedom, they immediately think of political freedom. As Americans, freedom is woven into our national identity. We value freedom of speech. Freedom of religion. Freedom of assembly. And those freedoms are good gifts from God. I thank God for them.

But that is not primarily the freedom the psalmist is talking about. The freedom of Psalm 119 is far greater than political freedom. Political freedom can be taken away. Governments can change. Laws can change. Rights can be restricted. History has proven that repeatedly. But the freedom the psalmist is describing cannot be taken away by kings, governments, prisons, or circumstances.

It is spiritual freedom. And it is available to every believer.

Notice first what the psalmist says: "I will keep your law continually, forever and ever." At first glance that statement might create a problem for us.

Someone might ask: "How can the psalmist say that?" "Doesn't he still sin?" "Isn't he making a promise he cannot keep?" Those are fair questions.

The answer lies in understanding what it means to "keep" God's law.

The Hebrew word is **shamar**.

It means:

- To guard
- To watch over
- To preserve
- To carefully observe

The psalmist is not claiming sinless perfection. He is not saying: "I will never fail." He is saying: "God's law will be the compass of my life." He is declaring allegiance. He is describing the direction of his life.

Brothers and sisters, there is a difference between perfection and direction. The Christian does not obey perfectly. But the Christian's life is pointed toward obedience. When we fail, we repent. When we stumble, we get back up. When we wander, we return.

Why? Because God's Word has become our guide.

Jesus expressed the same truth in John 14:15: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." Jesus was not teaching sinless perfection. He was describing the normal direction of a believer's life.

Love produces obedience. Not flawless obedience. But genuine obedience.

And that leads us to one of the most surprising statements in the entire psalm.

Verse 45:

"And I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts."

The phrase "wide place" comes from the Hebrew root **rachav**, meaning broad, spacious, open, unrestricted.

The image is beautiful. Picture someone trapped in a narrow canyon. Or locked inside a prison. Or confined in a dark room. Then suddenly they are brought out into a vast open field. A place where they can move freely. A place where they can breathe deeply. A place where they are no longer confined.

That is the image. The psalmist says: "I walk in a wide place." And what is shocking is how he got there. Notice what he does not say. He does not say: "I walk in a wide place because I rejected God's law."

He does not say: "I walk in a wide place because I escaped God's commandments."

He says: "I walk in a wide place because I have sought your precepts."

This is completely opposite of how the world thinks. The world says: "Rules restrict freedom."

The Bible says: "God's truth creates freedom."

The world says: "If you want to be free, remove all boundaries."

The Bible says: "If you want to be free, walk in God's ways."

The world says: "Follow your heart."

The Bible says: "Your heart is the problem."

The world has confused freedom with autonomy. The Bible defines freedom as liberation from slavery. And every person serves a master. Jesus said in John 8: "Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin."

Think about that.

The world talks about freedom while being enslaved to:

- Lust
- Greed
- Anger
- Pride
- Addiction
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Bitterness

People often imagine that sin produces freedom. But sin always produces slavery. It promises liberty and delivers chains. It promises satisfaction and delivers emptiness. It promises joy and delivers regret.

The prodigal son thought freedom was found away from his father. By the end of the story he was feeding pigs and starving. The Israelites thought freedom was found in Egypt. But Egypt was slavery.

Samson thought freedom was found in satisfying his desires. His desires eventually put him in chains.

The same pattern continues today. People chase freedom through rebellion and end up imprisoned by the very things they pursued. But Jesus offers something entirely different. In John 8:31-32 He said: *"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

A few verses later He says: *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."*

That is biblical freedom. Freedom from guilt. Freedom from condemnation. Freedom from the power of sin. Freedom from the fear of death. Freedom from the tyranny of self. Freedom to obey God. Freedom to become what God created you to be.

Charles Spurgeon beautifully described this verse when he wrote that the believer is:

"Free from prison, unimpeded by adversaries, unencumbered by burdens, unshackled, and allowed a wide range to roam without fear."

Then he adds something important:

"This liberty would be dangerous if one were seeking his own lusts, but when the object sought is God's will, there is no need to restrain the searcher."

What a statement. Freedom without holiness becomes destruction. Freedom guided by God's Word becomes life.

Brothers and sisters, many people are spending their entire lives searching for freedom. The psalmist tells us where it is found. Not in escaping God's Word. Not in ignoring God's commandments. Not in following our hearts. But in seeking God's precepts.

The irony of the Christian life is that the more we submit ourselves to God's truth, the freer we become. And as that freedom grows, it produces another treasure. A treasure many Christians desperately need today.

Because the person who knows God's truth, trusts God's truth, and walks in God's freedom begins to speak God's truth without fear.

Which brings us to the fourth treasure.

Treasure #4: Boldness.

Psalm 119:46

"I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame."

As we come to the fourth treasure on this journey, we arrive at something that many Christians desire but often struggle to possess. Boldness. Not loudness. Not arrogance. Not a combative spirit. But biblical boldness.

The kind of boldness that allows a believer to speak the truth when it would be easier to remain silent. The kind of boldness that allows a believer to stand for Christ when others are compromising. The kind of boldness that allows a believer to proclaim the gospel even when there may be consequences.

The psalmist says: "I will also speak of your testimonies before kings."

Let's stop there for a moment. Think about what he is saying. Kings possessed power. Kings possessed authority. Kings could imprison. Kings could banish. Kings could execute. Yet the psalmist says: "I will speak God's testimonies".

The Hebrew word here is **edot**. It refers to God's witness concerning Himself. God's declarations. God's self-revelation. The psalmist is saying: "I will publicly declare what God has revealed about Himself."

Church, this has always been God's method. God has chosen to advance His kingdom through the proclamation of truth.

Romans 10:17 says: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." People are not saved through silence. People are not saved through vague spirituality. People are not saved through positive thoughts. People are saved when the truth about Jesus Christ is proclaimed. That is why every believer has been commissioned to speak.

Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19) That commission was not given only to pastors. It was given to the church. Every believer is called to participate in the spread of the gospel.

Yet if we are honest, many of us struggle with fear. We fear rejection. We fear awkwardness. We fear losing relationships. We fear looking foolish. We fear saying the wrong thing. We fear being labeled. We fear being misunderstood.

The fear of man remains one of the greatest obstacles to evangelism.

The Proverbs warn us: "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe." (Proverbs 29:25)

The psalmist knew that temptation. Yet he says: "I will speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame." Why? Because the treasures we've already discovered have produced this boldness.

Think about the progression. God's mercy gave him salvation. God's Word gave him confidence before his enemies. God's judgments gave him hope. God's precepts gave him freedom. And now all of those treasures together produce boldness.

The believer who knows God's Word is not easily intimidated. The believer who trusts God's promises is not easily silenced. The believer who has experienced God's mercy cannot help but speak of it.

We see this pattern throughout Scripture.

Think about Daniel. Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar. One of the most powerful rulers in the world. Yet he spoke God's truth.

Think about John the Baptist. He confronted Herod concerning his sin. Though it eventually cost him his life.

Think about Peter and John. In Acts chapter 4 they were arrested and brought before the rulers of Israel. The authorities commanded them: "Do not speak anymore in this name." But Peter replied: "We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

Then Acts 4:13 says: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John ... they recognized that they had been with Jesus."

What a statement. They recognized they had been with Jesus.

Genuine boldness is not primarily the result of personality. It is the result of proximity to Christ. Boldness grows where fellowship with Christ grows. The closer we walk with Him, the less intimidating the world

becomes. The more precious Christ becomes, the less we fear losing the approval of men.

Now let me point out something else. The psalmist says: "I will speak." Not: "I might speak." He has already settled the matter in his heart. His allegiance belongs to God. And because his allegiance belongs to God, his mouth belongs to God as well.

Brothers and sisters, one of the reasons many Christians struggle to speak about Christ is because they are trying to create words in the moment that they have never stored up beforehand. Jesus gives us tremendous encouragement here.

In Luke 12 He says: *"When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."*

That does not mean we neglect studying Scripture. It means the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance the truth we have stored in our hearts. The Spirit often draws from a reservoir that has been filled by faithful exposure to God's Word.

This is one reason Psalm 119 repeatedly emphasizes meditation. We must put God's Word in so the Spirit can bring God's Word out. Many believers want the boldness of Acts 4 while neglecting the means God ordinarily uses to produce it. The believer who daily feeds upon Scripture is preparing for future opportunities to speak.

Every chapter read. Every verse memorized. Every sermon heard. Every truth meditated upon. God uses all of it.

The day may come when a coworker asks a difficult question. A neighbor experiences a tragedy. A child asks about salvation. A friend faces death. A family member asks why you believe. And in that moment the Holy Spirit often brings God's truth to mind.

Not because you manufactured it. But because you have been feeding upon it. Brothers and sisters, God has not called us to be silent observers. He has called us to be witnesses.

The psalmist tells us that one of the treasures found along the path of God's Word is boldness. The boldness to speak, stand, testify and proclaim Christ without shame.

And now, having discovered all four treasures along the journey, we finally arrive at our destination. We arrive at Point B. The place where confidence, hope, freedom, and boldness all lead. The place where God's Word becomes our delight. The place where God's commandments become our love. The destination found in verses 47 and 48.

Closing: The Destination of Delight

Psalm 119:47-48

We stood at the starting line and heard the psalmist cry: "*Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise.*"

We learned that everything begins with God's hesed. Everything begins with mercy. Everything begins with salvation. Nobody starts this journey delighting in God's Word. Nobody begins by loving God's commandments. Nobody naturally arrives at spiritual maturity. The journey begins with God's grace.

Then we discovered four treasures along the path.

In verse 42 we found confidence before our enemies.

In verse 43 we found hope in the truth.

In verses 44 and 45 we found freedom.

In verse 46 we found boldness.

And now we arrive at the destination.

Listen to these verses once more. "*For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.*"

Notice something remarkable. The psalmist does not conclude by celebrating the treasures. He concludes by celebrating the Giver.

He does not say: "I delight in confidence." Or "I delight in freedom." He does not say: "I delight in boldness." He says: "I delight in your commandments."

The treasures were never the destination. The Word of God was the destination. And behind the Word of God stands the God of the Word. The goal of the Christian life is not merely to become stronger. It is not merely to become wiser. It is not merely to become more courageous. The goal is to know God. To love God. To delight in God.

The psalmist has arrived at a place where God's commandments are no longer merely obligations. They have become his delight. They have become precious to him. He loves them because through them he has come to know the God who gave them.

I fear that many Christians approach the Bible primarily as a tool. A tool for fixing problems. A tool for answering questions. A tool for winning arguments. A tool for improving their lives. And certainly the Bible does all those things. But if we stop there, we have missed its greatest purpose.

The Bible is first and foremost God's revelation of Himself. Through its pages we encounter the living God. We see His holiness. His justice. His mercy. His wisdom. His power. His faithfulness.

Most importantly, we see His Son.

Jesus said in John 5:39: "*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.*"

The Scriptures ultimately point us to Christ. The more we know Christ, the more we love Him. And the more we love Him, the more we delight in His Word.

That is exactly what happened to the psalmist. The journey that began with mercy ends with delight. The journey that began with salvation ends with affection. The journey that began with a plea ends with worship.

Notice also that the psalmist says: "I will lift up my hands toward your commandments." This is a picture of desire. Of longing. Of affection. Of worship.

Throughout Scripture, lifted hands are often associated with dependence and worship. A child lifts his hands to a father. A beggar lifts his hands for help. A worshiper lifts his hands in praise.

The psalmist is saying: "I want God's Word." "I need God's Word." "I treasure God's Word."

Brothers and sisters, can we honestly say that? Can we honestly say: "I delight in it." "I love it." "I long for it."

That is the destination.

And then he says: "I will meditate on your statutes." The journey ends exactly where Psalm 1 begins. "His delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night."

Meditation is not emptying the mind. Biblical meditation is filling the mind with truth. Turning it over. Thinking about it. Praying through it. Applying it. Allowing it to shape every aspect of life.

The psalmist has arrived at the place where God's Word occupies his thoughts because God occupies his heart.

And now I want to return to the three groups we discussed at the beginning.

Group A

Perhaps you find yourself in a sweet season of walking with the Lord. The Word of God truly is your delight. Praise God for that. Do not become proud. Do not become complacent. Continue to abide in Christ. Continue to feed upon His Word. Continue to depend upon His mercy. Because the same grace that brought you here is the grace that will keep you here.

Group B

Perhaps you know exactly what this feels like because you have been here before. You remember seasons when your Bible was constantly open. You remember seasons when prayer was sweet. You remember seasons when Christ felt near. But today you feel distant. Dry. Cold. Discouraged.

The answer is not despair. The answer is not guilt. The answer is not giving up. The answer is to return to the starting point. Return to verse 41. Return to God's hesed. Return to His mercy. Return to His promises. The God who saved you has not changed. The God who loved you has not changed. The God who drew you to Himself has not changed. Run back to Him.

Group C

Perhaps you have never experienced what the psalmist describes. You have never truly delighted in God's Word because you have never truly known the God of the Word. You may know facts about Christianity. You may attend church. You may believe certain things about Jesus. But you have never experienced His saving grace.

Then let me encourage you to start where the psalmist started. Cry out for mercy. Cry out for salvation. Call upon Christ. The promise of God remains true.

Jesus lived the perfect life you could never live. He died the death your sins deserve. He rose again in victory over sin and death. And everyone who trusts in Him will be forgiven.

Everyone. No exceptions. No matter your past. No matter your failures. No matter your sins. Christ is a willing Savior. Jesus Himself said: "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out." (John 6:37)

Church, as we conclude this morning, I want you to remember something. Confidence is a treasure. Hope is a treasure. Freedom is a treasure. Boldness is a treasure. But those are not the greatest treasures in this passage. The greatest treasure is God Himself. The greatest treasure is knowing Christ. The greatest treasure is reaching the place where we can honestly say with the psalmist:

"I find my delight in your commandments, which I love."

May God grant us His hesed.

CG Discussion Questions

1. When you think about your relationship with God's Word right now, which of the three groups from Sunday's sermon best describes you?

Group A: Delighting in God's Word

Group B: Have been there before but feel distant

Group C: Struggling to understand what delighting in God's Word even looks like

The Starting Point: God's Hesed (v. 41)

2. Why do you think the psalmist begins with a prayer for God's steadfast love and salvation rather than beginning with his own obedience?

3. The Hebrew word hesed refers to God's covenant-keeping love. How has God's steadfast love been evident in your life recently?

4. The sermon emphasized that nobody starts at verses 47-48; everyone starts at verse 41. Why is it important to remember that spiritual growth begins with grace and not personal effort?

Treasure #1: Confidence Before Our Enemies (v. 42)

5. Who or what most commonly challenges your faith today?

Unbelieving culture?

Your own doubts?

Temptation?

Fear?

Something else?

6. Jesus answered Satan's temptations with Scripture (Matthew 4). Can you think of a specific promise or passage of Scripture that has helped you combat fear, temptation, or discouragement?

Treasure #2: Hope in the Truth (v. 43)

7. The psalmist says, "My hope is in your rules." What are some common places people look for hope today that ultimately fail them?

8. How does trusting God's perfect justice help us deal with hurt, betrayal, unfairness, or unresolved conflicts in this life?

Treasure #3: Freedom (vv. 44-45)

9. The world often defines freedom as "doing whatever you want." According to Psalm 119:45 and John 8:31-36, how does biblical freedom differ from the world's definition?

10. Can you think of an area in your life where obeying God's Word has actually brought freedom rather than restriction?

Treasure #4: Boldness (v. 46)

11. What usually keeps Christians from speaking openly about Christ? Which of those obstacles do you struggle with most?

12. The psalmist says he will speak God's testimonies "before kings." What is one practical opportunity you may have this week to speak about Christ, share your testimony, or encourage someone with God's Word?