

# Hebrews 4:12 || Ep. 920 Finding the Right Bible Verse

## Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

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[lightly edited transcript]

So, this is a tough one. This is a tough recording. To do this is getting a new season because just a few days ago, a friend of ours, my husband's and mine, passed away suddenly.

When something like that happens, it just makes everything pause. It just does. In one sense, it takes the breath away from you because you have to pause what you're doing. You have to grasp with, grapple with what you're feeling and going through and how you're going to move forward. Then life just keeps going. The sun set that night, and the sun rose the next day. I guess the Word surreal keeps on coming back to my mind as I reach out to friends. I reach into my life, and they reach into theirs. We talk it through, we share, we hold each other, and we cry. That Word just keeps on coming up.

As I was preparing for today's little podcast, our little time together here, I was thinking about what's been happening over the last several days. You can't escape that. We can't just move forward, but we can. How do we approach this? I think the one thing that kept coming to my mind was, where do we go? Where do we go when we need just that perfect Word from God, literally from His Word? We should go to God's Word. We've talked about that. That is the whole point of letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly so that when we are faced with challenges, the devastating things, and even the simple things of life, we have a well that is full. It is not empty, but full because we filled it with God's living Word.

So that's what we're going to talk about today. I want to talk about finding that perfect verse, not just for yourself, but also because people are going to come to you. You're going to want to reach out with hope and encouragement, and you don't want to have empty attitudes and feel at a loss for Words. What can I even say? So today, we're going to talk about what we can offer from God's Word and how we can find those resources when we need them. I have some thoughts on that, and it's going to kind of tiptoe close to a kind of a warning podcast I gave a few episodes ago. We talked about not using God in the bad sense of using a friend. We don't use people. We don't want to use God, but we want to be equipped with God's Word.

Thank you for being here again in this podcast series. The whole point is how to study the Bible and to be faithful in letting the Word of Christ, God's Word, dwell in us richly, to not just use God's Word, but to dwell on it. What does that look like? We're going to talk about that.

Alright, so I'm going to use a few different passages today. We're going to talk about some principles, the foundation of how we can find that perfect verse. Then I will close with moving forward in a chapter of the Bible that I believe is going to be extremely helpful for equipping us moving forward.

With that, let's dig into God's Word. I'm gonna just ask that you pray with me as we start today. Heavenly Father, we invite you to our time. This is a unique post-loss episode. This is an episode, Lord, that has come after the loss of a very special friend in my life. I just ask for your wisdom, and God, pray your heart around us, your love surrounding us, and the hope that we need from you to be together with us as we go into your Word. Thank you for your Word. It gives us life today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

So let's go. Let's review. Let's talk about a couple of things. First of all, we know that God's Word is not just Words, right? It's not just a book that we read. We know from an incredible message through Hebrews. The book of Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 12, says, "For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." That's God's Word. That's why the Word of Christ can dwell in us richly because it's alive. We don't put dead things in our body; we put living things in us, and that's what God's Word is. It's living, and it's not just sitting there. It's on the move. It's a sharp Word. It's powerful. It's alive. It's like a sword that slices in, through, and separates down to the core of who we are and who we need to be. It discerns thoughts. It discerns intentions of our heart. It brings us all into openness.

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God's Word is breathed out from God Himself. It is alive. Second Timothy 3, verses 16 and 17, remind us that it's profitable for teaching us, for reproof, for correcting us, for training in righteousness, so we can be complete and equipped to move forward with every good work. We also know from God's own lips, through Jesus Christ, that His Word is truth, and it sanctifies us. It separates us, it makes us holy, right? So thank you, God, for your Word.

Let's keep that in mind as we seek to answer that question, "Where can I go? How can I find the perfect verse that I'm looking for?" One of the best places is to go where so much love and devotion has been poured out. Think of the Psalms. A powerful Psalm that reminds me of the hope that we have and the refuge that we can go to is Psalm 73 when David is crying out to God, brokenhearted. Beginning in verse 1, he says, "When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered" (NIV).

Maybe, like me, you have felt grieved, sadness. I know over the last several days, coming to terms with the loss of our friends so suddenly, grief is overwhelming. He was a friend of mine. I wasn't even family in that sense. His wife, my friend, she lost her husband. Former students of mine, their children, they lost their dad, right? So challenging, so much grief, so much bitterness, senseless and ignorant.

The psalmist writes in verse 22, "I was a brute beast before you." Just like an animal. I'm just sobbing and crying out, right? And yet, in verse 23, "I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand, you guide me with your counsel, and afterward, you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And the earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds."

This is where we go when we need God's hope. This is where we go when somebody reaches out to us and is so sad. This is where we go: God's Word. Because it's the only thing that can return to someone hope and life. Everything we've been talking about in this past series on how to study the Bible has been leading to this moment of how we find richness and hope in God's Word so that we can be filled inside of ourselves with that richness and hope and we can also share it with others, friends who are going through such loss, so much pain and sorrow and confusion, right?

The loss, the death of someone that we love, is the biggest, most devastating thing that can take our breath away, the thing that can just punch us in the stomach and make us wonder, "How am I going to move forward?" Right? It's God's Word. Why? Because it's alive. It's truth. That's where we can go when we need it.

As I was thinking about hope and God's Word and where we would go, these passages that I've just shared came to mind. Why did they come to mind? Because I'm already in God's Word. I'm constantly bathing myself in the Word of God. Paul says, "I'm bathing myself," in a sense, with His Word. Rather than just going to empty little devotionals of man's Words, talking about God's Words, I have made it a habit, a fierce commitment to just being in God's Word. We talked about this in previous episodes. Can we read devotionals? Of course. Should we read encouraging other books that help us to live through life? Of course. But not at the expense of God's Word first, right? We should train ourselves to be in His Word first.

Let me encourage you to do exactly what David did when he longed for hope. In fact, the chapter of the Bible that is most filled with longing for and needing hope is actually the chapter of the Bible most focused on God's Word itself. That's Psalm 119. We talked about Psalm 119 way back at the kickoff, the beginning of this whole series. As we move forward, we're going to just plug away one passage, one stanza—let's call it that—at a time from Psalm 119. There are 22 of those. There are going to be 22 days, 22 episodes left in this series. I thought, well, that's just God's perfect timing. We're going to take one stanza at a time and just read through Psalm 119 and let God's Word teach us the importance of His Word as we close out the series.

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I'm going to highlight those key verses. There are actually eight in the English Standard Version and seven if you're reading from the NIV. But the whole point is hope, no matter which translation you read from. We're going to hit those verses, and then tomorrow we're going to come back and kick off

this new series that focuses on Psalm 119 as we close out this particular series on how to study the Bible.

So grab your Bible, and we're going to close with these verses in Psalm 119. The first verse, David writes this: "Remember your Word to your servant, in which you have made me hope" (Psalm 119:49). What does the psalmist hope in? Your Word. That's what gives him hope, the Word of God. That's Psalm 119:49.

Moving down from there, let's take a look at Psalm 119:74: "Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice because I have hoped in your Word." That's the testimony we have. When people see us, they see our hope, and they see us rejoice. Why? Because we ourselves have hoped in His Word.

Verse 81: "My soul longs for your salvation; I hope in your Word." I'll read verse 82: "My eyes long for your promise; I ask, when will you comfort me?" It's through God's Word. We'll talk about that even more as we move forward.

Psalm 119:114: "You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your Word."

Verse 116: "Uphold me according to your promise that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope."

Verse 147: "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your Words." That's where our hope comes from.

Finally, verse 166: "I hope for your salvation, O Lord, and I do your commandments." See the connection constantly with God's Word and the hope that we have? That is where our hope comes from: living, active Scripture that was breathed out by God, that is there for us to teach us, redirect us, reprove us, correct us, and train us in righteousness. That's the living Word, and that's what we're going to be moving forward with.

Thank you for joining me again today in this episode of our series on how to study the Bible. If you want to know how to use the Bible the correct way for equipping, for teaching, for reproof, and not just abuse the Bible and wield it willy-nilly, then get into the Word. Be faithful in the Word. Going forward, we're going to be in Psalm 119 together.

Know, as always, that you are loved. You are prayed for.

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You can also, of course, always find this podcast and notes from my website, [JenniferGRichmond.com](http://JenniferGRichmond.com). I love you guys. Thank you for being with me today, and I look forward to being with you again real soon. Bye-bye for now.