

Psalm 119:1-8 || Ep. 921 A Blessed Life Begins Here?

Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

[lightly edited transcript]

Hey, welcome back to the Dwelling Richly podcast. This is the kickoff of our focus on Psalm 119. In the remaining episodes of this series on how to study the Bible, we're going to really meditate through Psalm 119. Just a review for those of you who are new joining us recently, this is episode 21 of our series. So, you can go back and listen to the first 20 episodes in this series to get a running start. I encourage you to do that if you haven't already, because it lays the groundwork of our intention here. What we're about, what we're doing here.

The main idea is that we are intentional about letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. Not just using the Bible like a self-help book. We certainly need help for ourselves, and God's Word provides that help. But we're going to be more disciplined, more thoughtful, and loving toward God's Word. To be honest, not just using it in a superficial sense, but allowing God's Word to equip us, to train us, to teach us, to redirect us, to convict us, and to help us move through life well. There's a lot going on in your life. There's a lot on your mind, from simple things like regular living, bills, health, relationships, to the really difficult corruptions of life, like the loss of a friend, which I talked about in the previous episode.

So, God's Word has been given to us to bless, encourage, and guide us. But our focus needs to be on God and what we gain in our understanding of who God is, because that's where the idea of dwelling richly will best blossom in our lives. Thank you for being here with us. We're going to use the remaining episodes of this series to just use Psalm 119, let us dwell on the Word of God and equip us to do it well.

I encourage you to set aside time, if you haven't already, to make God's Word a daily part of your life. Even if it's just one minute a day, pick up God's Word, read a portion, and be intentional about avoiding getting into a devotional that talks about God's Word, but to be disciplined in actually reading God's Word itself. So, maybe Psalm 119 is going to be the beginning of that for you, and moving through Psalm 119 is going to be a way for you to say, "Alright, 22 days, I know what I'm going to be reading." And that'll be these 22 episodes as well in this podcast.

So, thank you once again for being a part of it. If you haven't already, make sure you subscribe wherever you're listening to this podcast—YouTube, Spotify, or wherever. Just follow, subscribe, share it with a friend, and invite a friend to be a part of being in God's Word together with you as well.

Alright, so Psalm 119. Just a real quick reminder, this is not a Bible study podcast. I don't approach this podcast from the point of view of really studying the Bible. I hope you do that on your own. But we are going to be talking about how to study the Bible, and we're going to allow these passages to teach us about how to do that. So, I know that's an interesting split, but that's really the focus here. How to study the Bible. There are great sermons about Psalm 119 you can listen to. I have written a Bible study that dives into portions of Psalm 119. You can read that study. But that's not the point of this podcast. Just set your expectations if you're new to this podcast.

This particular portion is about how we study the Bible, and we're going to talk about Psalm 119 and use that as a guide to help us understand how to study the Bible. Alright, here we go, Psalm 119. I'm going to read from the New International Version, and you can follow along in whatever version of the Bible you're reading from. I recommend the English Standard Version, the NET, or the New English Translation, along with a couple of others. But for today, we're going to read NIV.

"Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart. They do no wrong but follow His ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees, then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands. I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws. I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me."

Psalm 119:1-8 || Ep. 921 A Blessed Life Begins Here?

Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

David opens here talking about people who are blessed and what they look like. Blessed are those who are blameless and how has that happened? They walk according to the law of the Lord. Keep in mind that at the time David wrote this Psalm, the law of the Lord would have simply been Genesis through Deuteronomy. That right there, my friend, should be your encouragement. If that's all you had to read, that would be enough. If those were the only books of the Bible that you had to learn from, that should be enough. Isn't that incredible? We have the blessing, this side of the cross, to have the full counsel of Scripture. We have all the prophets, all the Psalms organized. We have all the Gospels, all the epistles, and the final revelation of all things in the book of Revelation. David, writing this Psalm, had what we call the Torah, in Greek. That's the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible.

He's saying, "Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord." The law of the Lord would have been those five books. "Blessed are those who keep His statutes—all the statutes that are listed in the law of the Lord—who seek Him with all their heart." If you want to have a blessed, happy, joyful, content, and at peace, hope-filled life (and I'm sure you do), then that's where you start. I'll put a plug in for the previous couple of studies. I've written a Bible study through the entire book of Genesis, and then I also wrote a Bible study through the rest of the Torah, which took us from Exodus through Deuteronomy. If you want to study the Bible right, there's a place to start. Use the Bible studies I've written, find another Bible study, or just read it—read Genesis through Deuteronomy.

Then he continues and says, "They do no wrong but follow His ways." Obviously, he's not saying they don't sin. They do no wrong, but those who are blessed keep His testimonies, who do no wrong but walk in His ways. In other words, the opposite of walking in His ways would be doing wrong. Don't do that. Walk in His ways. "You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed." Everything that's in His Word—His statutes, His laws, His precepts—they are to be fully obeyed. Let that be our prayer today. "Oh, that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes." That is our morning wake-up call: "Make my ways steadfast in obeying your decrees. Guard my steps, Lord, according to your Word."

Then he says in verse 6, "Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands." In other words, when I look at your commands, I don't have to feel shame because shame would come from not obeying your commands, not being steadfast, not being faithful. I won't have shame. I can look back on my day and say, "Oh, thank you, God. Thank you for helping me obey your commands." In verse 7, "I will praise you." Then he turns back to himself, what he's going to do every day of his life. "I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous rules." When I'm learning, I can praise with an upright heart. And he closes with this promise, "I will obey. I will keep your decrees." And then this plea to God, "Do not utterly forsake me. Don't let me go on my own. I can't do this without you," he says. And that's the cry of our hearts today as well.

Read back through Psalm 119, verses 1 through all. That's just the beginning of this whole chapter, this longest chapter, 176 verses long—the longest chapter in the Bible. Read back through just this portion and pray with the heart of David: joyful, humble, submissive, saying, "There's nothing I can do on my own. I'm following you. Admit that to him." As we continue in this series going through Psalm 119, I'll pray for you, and I hope you'll pray for me as well. That God would dwell in us richly. And that Psalm 119 can be such an encouragement to us to do that as well. And then also, one final encouragement: I want to challenge you. I want you to write out Psalm 119. Wouldn't it be amazing if, at the end of this series, you would have Psalm 119 written out, verse by verse? Choose a translation of the Bible that blesses you, that encourages you, that you can read easily, whichever translation that is. Make sure it's a translation and not a paraphrase. And then write it out, word for word, just a little bit every day. I started writing Psalm

119 back in—I had to pause, and I'm going to get back to it. So, next time you hear from me in this podcast, I pray I will have had a couple more sections of Psalm 119 handwritten out in my notes as well.

Alright, thanks again for being here with me in this podcast. I love our time together. I love reading your comments. Thank you for sharing them. A great place to leave comments is over on my website where I host this podcast,

Psalm 119:1-8 || Ep. 921 A Blessed Life Begins Here?

Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

JenniferGRichmond.com. Find this particular episode of the series and leave a comment. Tell me what you think, and share it with a friend as well.

Know, as always, that you are loved. You are prayed for. It's especially easier for me to help to pray for you by name if you leave a comment. So, thank you for doing that in advance, and look forward to being back here again with you next time on this podcast.

Before Next Time:

1. Commit to Daily Scripture Reading: Set aside time each day to read a portion of Psalm 119 or another meaningful passage.
2. Engage in Personal Reflection: Journal about how God's Word is impacting your life and thoughts as you study.
3. Join the Challenge: Write out Psalm 119 verse by verse and reflect on its meaning in your life.