

Psalm 119:41-48 || Ep. 926 – Bigger, Bolder, Braver

Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

[lightly edited transcript]

Hey, welcome back to the Dwelling Richly podcast. This is Jennifer Richmond, and I'm really glad you're here. Today we're continuing on in this series on how to study the Bible. This is episode 926, and we're going to be in Psalm 119, verses 41 to 48. Grab your Bible and join me. This whole series this summer has been about how to study the Bible, and today we're going to talk about that, but I think we're really going to be focusing on also why. Why we study the Bible and what is the result of studying God's Word and what it does for us.

As I was reading through Psalm 119, getting ready for our talk today, I was just overwhelmed by the power of God's Word to equip us in the areas that we feel the most weak. If you're like me, then maybe you have dealt at some point in your life with feeling like you don't know what you're going to say. You're worried. You have self-doubt. You lack confidence. You don't feel bold. You love God. You love His word. You want to share the truth in a great way, but you don't feel like you're going to be ready. Like somebody is going to ask a question that you're not going to have the answer to. You're going to feel nervous. You're going to fall apart. All the things that we can build up in our mind.

And you're not alone. I feel the same way. I think it's easy for us to think, oh, you know, someone who studies the Bible as a profession, maybe they'll be better and they understand it more. Maybe. I don't. I'm just a regular person who just needs God's word and I need to know that God's got my back. And here's the deal. This particular section of Psalm 119 reminds me so much that God's got my back, right? That I can be bigger in my faith, bolder in my faith, braver in my faith, because of God's word.

And so we study, you know, the whole series has been on how to study God's word. But today is also going to talk about the why and how powerful God's word is in that aspect as well. So grab your Bible. Let's take a look at Psalm 119 verses 41 to 48. I'm going to read from the English Standard Version. I'm going to read through the whole thing. So just listen along and let God's word wash over you. Think about it. And then we're going to go back to it and kind of break it down a little bit.

So here we go. Psalm 119 verse 41, English Standard Version.

Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise. Then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules. I will keep your law continually forever and ever, and I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts. I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame, 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.

Wow, wow, wow. Appropriate because if you look at the Hebrew, this is the wow (וַיְוָה) letter of the alphabet in Hebrew. So here we are reading David's words and David is the king of Israel. David is the defeater of Goliath. David is the one who was able to survive multiple murder attempts from the previous king, his former mentor, in a sense, and lived to tell the tale about it, bold and brave, went through a ton, of course, in his life in terms of his own personal sin and repentance and coming back and God calling him a man after my own heart.

It's this David that's writing this. And it's this David who makes statements like this in the passage of, we see him saying that, you know, I'll have an answer for someone who taunts me. David feeling taunted. You know, if any time you ever feel in your life, like, I don't know how it can stand up against someone who's taunting me or making fun of me or pressuring me. I feel so much anxiety. My goodness, we've got this incredible example right here. Let's take a look at what David says.

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Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise. In other words, he's saying your love doesn't waver. My love might waver. I mean, I'll speak for myself. I don't have consistency in the way I love people. I'm not steadfast, but God is. And David's saying, look, God's love is so steadfast. That's the love I want to come to me, O Lord. Your salvation saved me according to your promise. My promises are able to be broken, but God's are not. I'm not steadfast. I don't stand true to all my promises. I falter, but God's salvation, no. His salvation is solid and strong and true because God doesn't break his promises.

And then he says, as a result of that, the steadfastness of God, the true, the sureness of who God is, his salvation, what is the result of that going to be in his life? I shall have an answer for him who taunts me. Why? Because I trust your word. Not I trust in myself. Not I trust in my past experiences and who I am. I trust in your word. And as a result of that, I have an answer for him who taunts me. What an incredibly empowering truth that we can have that when we have God's word we have answers for those who taunt us.

I'll tell you right now you might not have someone in particular in your life who's like taunting you in the way you think of it somebody who taunts like on the playground a big bully or whatever. I'll tell you who you do have. You have an ultimate spiritual enemy, Satan himself, who is your adversary, who literally does taunt you, taunting you in the sense of causing you doubt, making you second guess. Maybe I'm not as good as I thought I would be in terms of my faith in God and bringing up past sins, making you believe those rather than who you are in Christ, justified, saved, set apart, sanctified.

Satan is your adversary. Satan's the one that taunts you. And maybe on top of that, you have someone else in your life who is a constant source of anxiety because of the way they treat you. And you're worried. I want to be able to share God's love and God's truth with them, but it's nerve-wracking and they're taunting. David reminds us here. Steadfast love of God, the promise of God, and trusting in God's word.

And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules. I need your words here, Lord, right here at the tip of my tongue, in my mouth. My hope is in your rules, the way that you have ordered the universe. I will keep your law continually, and then he reiterates that, forever and ever, continually, forever and ever. It's like this ongoing, never-stopping reality. I will never not keep your law, he's saying. And as a result of that, I shall walk in a wide place for I have sought your precepts.

The idea of a wide place in the Old Testament is the idea of it's safe, it's open. I can see any threats coming from far away because it's not a tight little corner. It's open, right? I can see the bounty before me. I'm not going to be tripped up by rocks and thorns and bushes and things on a tight little path that's going to make me trip. I'm safe. It's open in a beautiful, wide place where I have sought your precepts. That's why I'm wide in my place. It's open because I have made seeking after your precepts a priority.

Now listen to what he says in verse 46. I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame. Now, honestly, you read a verse like that and you think, well, okay, I'm never going to be before a king. You know who you are before? People in your life who are elevated up high in your mind. And in a sense, like a king. David is saying, look, I could go to the biggest ruler right now in this world and I would not be put to shame. I'm going to be able to speak of your testimony because I've delighted in your commands.

I want to make the connection from this truth about having an answer for those who taunt me because I trust in your word. Walking in a wide place because I've sought your precepts. Being able to speak before kings because and not being put to shame. I want to make that connection from this foundational truth in the Old Testament to the fulfillment of this in the new. You might still feel ill-equipped, like having anxiety to ever

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share your faith or speak boldly the truth of God's word and I want you to leave today very confirmed and confident in God.

Let's take a look at what Jesus says in the New Testament. We'll take a look at Matthew chapter 4, verse 4. And right off the bat, when he says, he answered him and he's talking to Satan. It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes to the mouth of God. He goes right to God's word and we shut down Satan immediately with that. I'm gonna live by every word that comes from the mouth of God, right? Then let's take a look at John chapter 15, verse 7, where Jesus says to his disciples, and that's you and that's me as well. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

When you ask God according to his will, abiding in him, you're already abiding in him. You've got his words in you. Of course, you're going to be able to ask whatever you need to ask and it's going to be done because you are in tightly in and abiding in God and he in you. Can you have his words coming out of you? That's why David is reiterating over and over and over again about the importance of having God's words in him. You abide in me, my words abide in you, whatever you wish. And David's saying, look, here's what I wish. I want to have an answer for the person who taunts me. I want to be able to go and speak before kings and not be put to shame. And Jesus, in a sense, is saying that same thing to us. You will.

Listen to what he says in Luke chapter 21, verse 15. He says, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. Luke 12, verse 11, he says, And 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. Why? Because the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. In Matthew 10, we have a similar passage to that. When they deliver you, expect it basically, Do not be anxious about how you're going to speak or what you're going to say. For what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. Why? Because you have the Holy Spirit.

This is also why David was saying in Psalm 51, take not your Holy Spirit from me. That's what empowers me from within to have the words of life. And listen, God fulfilled that promise in Acts chapter 1, verse 8. We see him saying, you will receive power. When the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. That is not an isolated scripture that doesn't apply to you and me today. If you are a disciple of Christ, you have said yes to him, you confess to measure Lord and Savior, then you have that power in you. I have that power in me.

Whenever I feel potentially anxious, which has happened to me many, many times, that I'm not going to have something to say. It's God's word that comes back to me and reminds me, that's not true. You're going to have what you need to say in that moment. If I'm going to go teach or preach or witness, or even just have casual conversations with people, I can have confidence that I will have what I need to say. Why? If I abide in him, if his words abide in me, I will have what I need to say.

Paul, talking about his weakness and about his struggles in life, prayed that God would remove a thorn in his flesh, he said. And this is how Jesus answered. And I'm sure you remember this, but he said to me, this is 2 Corinthians 12:9, but he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you. My power is made perfect in weakness. And then Paul says, all right, therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weakness so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

This is the truth that we can have in our own life today now. Any area of weakness that you have, anything that you feel like this is, I'm not going to make it in this moment. We can go back to God's word and say, you know what? It's God's grace that's going to be sufficient. God's power is going to be perfect in my weakness. And we

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can be like Paul and say, all right, fine then. I'm going to boast all the world gladly in my weakness. In other words, if I feel anxious and I'm not going to be able to speak it, I don't know if I'm going to have the words to say, bring it on because then I'll only be able to give credit to God for any result that happens.

We can be like David in Psalm 119. I will speak of your testimonies before Kings and shall not be put to shame. I shall walk in a wide place. I will have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust your word.

And that's the very core of the Dwelling Richly podcast, that we would let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing songs and hymns and spiritual songs with thanksgiving in our hearts to God. He will give us the words when we need them in the exact way we need them. Our confidence will be wholly in him.

I pray that this has been an encouragement to you today to be bold, to be brave, to be strong in your faith and not worry about what you're going to say, trust God, dwell in his word, let his word dwell in you, and you will have the ability to speak and to say what you need to say when you need it.

Thank you for being with me on the podcast today. I always look forward to our time together. Be sure to say hi, leave a comment, share, encourage others in their faith as well, and know as always, you are loved, you are prayed for, and I look forward to being back here again with you real soon. Bye-bye for now.