

Psalm 119:57-64 || Ep. 928 – Midnight Meet-Up with God

Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

[lightly edited transcript]

Hey, welcome back to the Dwelling Richly Podcast. This is Jennifer. I'm Jennifer Richmond.

Thank you for jumping in and joining me today. Wherever you are listening from, say hi, leave a comment, let me know where you are and what's up and how you're doing.

I'm excited to be here in the Word together with you right now.

We are continuing in this series through this idea of how to study the Bible, and we have some exciting stuff coming up in the next couple of episodes. I'm not exactly sure when those are going to get out to you, but I'm really excited. It's a little bit of a secret. I've been having a hard time keeping it a secret, but I'm excited. I'm just, at least I'm telling you right now, I've got this something exciting going on. I'm going to keep it tucked away as a secret for a little while longer.

All right. Thanks again for being here with me.

You Dwelling Richly, Bible study, all of that, is to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and we return the favor. We don't just do Bible study. We don't just attend a Bible study or go look at God's Word. We dwell in the Word of God. We let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and we return the favor by Dwelling Richly in the Word. In other words, we don't just check it off of our to-do list.

part of that might be maybe learning how to study the Bible better and getting a little more intentional about how you approach God's Word. I want to say right now that I'm in a community, I pray you are too, I think a lot of you are as well, where we really love God's Word together. We love our church, we love worshiping, we love being in the Word. We are definitely a community of believers who really enjoy being and God's Word together.

And I want to give a shout out to all of my friends, my brothers, my sisters in Christ at La Mirada Christian Church, where I have been so encouraged and uplifted by your love for the Word of God and just your enthusiasm to be in it and to get it into your life in a variety of ways. I hear from people who love creating playlists and worship I hear from my friends at church who are listening to podcasts, obviously this one, but maybe others as well. And you just have this love to be in God's Word.

I want to thank you all for that. And you are an encouragement to me. wherever you're attending church, wherever your fellowship is, I want to encourage you to share with others what you're doing and how you're loving God's Word. Let that come up in conversation because I know for me, it's been an encouragement when I hear from other people and I pray that it will be an encouragement for you as well, as you talk to people about your faith and what you're learning and what inspires you and all those good things.

anyway, there's my little intro for today. We're going to get into the meat of our time together in this podcast. And of course, this series has been how to study the Bible this summer. I could very well have said the theme of this summer is how to enjoy the Bible, how to love the Bible, how to dwell in the Bible. All of those apply.

We began at the beginning of this series looking at Colossians 3.16. We read through 1 John, the entire book of 1 John, which was awesome, and a few other passages as well. And now we are in Psalm 119. And today, we're going to be reading through verses 57 through 64. grab your Bible. We're going to read through a couple of different translations because that's kind of the point of what I want to talk about and how to study the Bible today.

let's get your Bible open and let's take a look. And if you're listening, great. If you're reading along, that's awesome as well. I'm going to read straight through the Word like I love to do just to give us that overview. And then we're going to break it down and we're going to talk about principles of how to study, love, enjoy, dwell in God's Word, all the above, right? All right, here we go.

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Psalm 119, 57 verses 57 through 64.

*The Lord is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
I entreat your favor with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.
When I think on my ways,
I turn my feet to your testimonies;
I hasten and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous rules.
I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.
The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes!*

Wow. I think I've said wow at the end of every portion of Psalm 119. I might say wow at the end of every time I read God's Word. It's just wow. It's so good.

, how do we study the Bible? And about this particular Psalm, because the entire Psalm is a celebration of the Word of God in our life. And how much the author, David or Ezra, Jeremiah, whoever it is, I generally tend to refer to him as David, but it could be someone else. It could be Ezra also. But as we read through this, I just, I love his love for God's Word. I love his passion. I love how he wrote this Psalm as a forever encouragement to all of us to love God's Word the way he does, to be enthusiastic the way he does.

our first point today in talking about how to study the Bible, and back to what I said in the intro, how to enjoy the Bible, how to love the Bible, how to dwell in the Bible, all of the above, is to check your heart that you have an enthusiastic love for God's Word. Do you read it and just find yourself saying, you know, mic drop, amen, that's awesome? I pray for you that you do.

How do we study the Word of God? We love it so much that we can't help but want to go back into it. And we hear in this portion of Psalm 119 David's love and enthusiasm for God and His Word. Listen to what he says. He says the Lord is my portion. A portion would be something that you were allotted. It's something that was given to you. He's saying, look, the Lord, that's all I need. The Lord is it. That's it. That's what my portion is, the Lord.

He begins talking about, you know, the opening of this is talking about how he's just basically saying, anything that I need in this life, my portion, everything I need, my source of security, everything that I desire, that the New English translation puts it nicely, the Lord is my source of my security. The portion that I have is God. And he says, all right. as a result of that, I promise to keep your words, right? And then he says, I entreat your favor with all my heart, or I have sought your face, says in the New International Version, with all my heart.

In the Living Bible, or actually in the Complete Jewish Bible, it says, I beg your favor with all my heart.

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All right, so he's everything he has. I'm going at it with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to your promise. Do you see the bookends there of the promise? The Lord is my portion I promise to keep your words I entreat your favor with all my heart be gracious to me according to your promise. What is the most unbreakable thing possible in this entire world in all of our existence? It's going to be God's promise. I might fail. I will fail, should just say that, but God will not. And so according to your promise, I'm going to promise, but God, according to your promise, be gracious to me.

I love how he says next, when I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies. In other words, my ways, my actions and things that I do, even in their most righteous moment I could possibly have, I turn it right to your ways. And I don't just turn my feet to your testimonies, look at verse 60. I'm quick about it. I hasten, I don't delay to keep your commandments, right?

as we think about how to study, how to love, how to enjoy, how to dwell on God's Word, come at it with love, enthusiasm. I love God's Word so much. And then following David's footsteps, his pattern of behavior here, think about our own ways, but turn quickly to God's. Make sure we do not delay in keeping God's commandments.

And all of this is a matter of prayer to give to God and say, look, I know, God, my tendency to think my own way is the right way. I want to turn quickly to your ways. I need to be aware of your ways. God, please keep your promise to me that you will never leave me or forsake me. Your Word will be true. I want to obey your Word. And so I pray for a heart that's open to understanding where I might be off in my ways.

Because he says next in verse 61, though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law. In other words, there's a lot going on around me. It wraps around me as if I was entangled by it, like it's swirling around me. The cords of the wicked are all around me. Don't we relate to this also in God's Word? Relate to feeling like this world is a snare, a trap? It's all around me. I can't get away from it. But I do not forget your law.

If you're like me, you turned on the news recently. We're in the middle of Olympic season starting up this summer. And we turn on to see what would have been a beautiful, maybe fun, inspiring opening ceremony, only to see absolute depravity displayed on our screens. something that we might have enjoyed being able to watch and be enthusiastic with our children, right? We turn on and we just see sexual depravity displayed and then an outright mocking of the painting that portrayed an artist's image of the Lord's Supper. Of course, it wouldn't have taken place if it had been like that. We know that. But the image of the Lord's Supper and Jesus himself portrayed by drag queens, the cords of the wicked ensnare me. It's a wrap. I can't escape how wicked it is. I do not forget your law.

Look at David's continued enthusiasm. He can't wait to be with God. He says, at midnight, I rise to praise you because of your righteous rules. I might go to bed sleeping on it, but I wake up and I can't wait to be back. This is powerful enthusiasm that we see from David. And again, it reminds us in terms of our approach to the Bible, that we love it. We're excited to be in God's Word like David is here. At midnight, I rise to praise you. The cords of the wicked might ensnare me. It might be all the way around me like a trap, but I cannot wait to be in your Word. And if you're like me, waking up at midnight, 2 a.m., 3 a.m., 4 a.m. just because of hormone changes or just restless nights for whatever reason, why not go to bed with God's Word already on your heart so that when you do, if you do happen to wake up at midnight, 1, 2, 3 a.m., you have God's Word right there in front of you.

another way to study God's Word is to have it available to you at times when you are entrapped by the world, by the world or by your own body, your own hormones, things that keep you from feeling restful, might as well have God's Word ready to go. if it's on your nightstand, whatever it is, put something there so that when you wake up in the middle of the night, you have some illumination into your mind and your body and your spirit that you can just go back to God's Word, right? When you wake up in the middle of the night.

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At midnight, I rise to praise you because of your righteous rules. I don't have to worry about the wicked, the ensnaring, the entrapment, the pervasive evil in this world because at midnight, I just wake up and your righteous rules are right there for me. And he says, verse 63, I'm a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts. And this goes back to what I said in the beginning. What a blessing it is to fellowship with people who love God's Word so that when I need encouragement, I need wisdom. I need guidance. I need prayer. I have people in my life who will speak truth from God's Word into me, into my life. I'm a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts. Those are my friends. Anyone who follows God, that's me. Sign me up. I'm with them, right?

And then this beautiful closing verse here, the earth, oh Lord, is full of your steadfast love. The wicked might ensnare me. I might have friends who will help me get through that, admit that I rise to greet you. But I know, Lord, no matter where I go, your steadfast love is there. I ask you, God, please teach me. And I want to close on this.

I want you to do a quick little word study at some point between now and the next time we get together this podcast of this idea of steadfast love. It probably is one of my pet words, my favorite words in the Bible. It's a Hebrew word that is chesed, chesed. Maybe you could spell it C-H and then hit that hard in the back of your throat, chesed. And it has the idea of mercy, goodness, love, kindness. In fact, in your Bible, it might not be translated steadfast love. It might say just your love. Your love. The earth is filled with your love. The earth is filled with your grace. The earth is filled maybe with your mercy. But the difficult to translate and encapsulate the word is in Hebrew. It's the word, I would encourage you to do a word study on this, a beautiful, beautiful word in the Hebrew.

And it's the root of two of my favorite songs, one by Third Day and one by a musician. I'm not sure the original author, but it's this song from Lamentations. It uses the same word, steadfast love. Maybe you're familiar with it. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. Remember that song? And then Third Day came out with a song based on Psalm 36, a year years ago and he says your love alone reaches to the heavens that is the idea of God's steadfast love. I want to close today encouraging you to do a short little word study on steadfast love just look that word up on a concordance and meditate on that because David says in this Psalm the earth is full of your steadfast love and as a result of that Lord I just want you to teach me your statutes, your decrees, your laws, the truth about who you are, the truth about the way this world works. Teach it to me, oh Lord.

All right. I enjoy our time together. I love it because I get to be in the Word. I get to share it with you. And I would love to hear from you. If you've listened all the way through to the end, this is a good time to go ahead and hit that like button. If you haven't already, I would love it if you follow my blog where I post these. If you're listening also, and you're not familiar with my blog, you'll see it in the show notes below, JenniferGRichmond.com. Go over to the Dwelling Richly, the podcast page where I host these messages. Passages you can get a complete transcript there you can read this.

There's resources for you where you can get into God's Word

I love being in the Word with you together I love this podcast time that we have I look forward to being with you each time we get together I try to post these on Wednesdays and Saturdays and also just a quick reminder fall Bible study is going to be starting up pretty really soon.

And this year we're going to be going through the book of Galatians. I am busy this week prepping that and doing my studies and getting that Bible study written and ready for everybody to join me. if you haven't already plugged into that, be a part of that Bible study and start looking for more announcements coming up about that.

All right. God bless you. It's always great to be with you in God's Word together. I know as always that you are loved and you are prayed for. And I look forward to Dwelling Richly in the Word together with you again real soon. Bye-bye for now. Thank you.