

HIDING GOD'S WORD

PSALM 119: 11

Introduction:

I brought with me today a valued part of the my life. It is a Thompson Chain reference Bible that was given to me by home church on the Sunday that I was ordained to the ministry in May 1954. For my first years of preaching as a college student, this was the Bible that I read and preached from. Parts of it are well worn. When Alice and I began to date as college students, the Bible went with us on every date. In fact I usually placed it on the seat between us when we were in the car. It was a visible reminder to me that our relationship must be controlled by our shared relationship with Christ.

This Bible was retired many years ago, and I have worn out many other Bibles as I have preached and taught from them across the years.

Years ago I read a comment on our text for this morning that stuck in my mind. The comment may have originated with Charles Spurgeon, the famous Baptist Pastor from London. Of the text it observed, "You have here the best of things, in the best of places, for the best of reasons." And we do.

On this third Sunday of the New Year I believe this verse has some counsel for us. We will be helped if we put the best of things in the best of places for the best of reasons.

Let us let that comment be our guide as we study this verse.

I. THE BEST OF THINGS--YOUR WORD.

The Hebrew word could be translated "saying, utterance, or promise." Let you mind get around this word. God has spoken, and His words are preserved in this book that I hold in my hand. The Apostle Paul declared that "All scripture is inspired by God" or more literally "God breathed". The Creator of heaven and earth and the Sovereign Redeemer has breathed His word through His chosen prophets and servants. What a treasure we have!

1. His word reveals His character.
2. His word reveals His nature.
3. His word reveals His will.

This is the reason that David wrote in Psalm 19

Psalm 19:7-11 (NKJV)

⁷The law of the Lord *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the simple; ⁸The statutes of the Lord *are* right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord *is* pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹The fear of the Lord *is* clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord *are* true *and* righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired *are they* than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover by them Your servant is warned, *And* in keeping them *there is* great reward.

II. THE BEST OF PLACES--IN MY HEART.

The heart is the best place for the word of God.

1. Because it is in the heart that we know and make decisions.

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV)

²³Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.

2. Because it is in the heart that sin originates.

Jesus warned about the heart. Matthew 15:18-20 (NKJV)

¹⁸But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. ¹⁹For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. ²⁰These are *the things* which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

III. THE BEST OF REASONS--THAT I MIGHT NOT SIN.

When I first received this old Bible, a friend wrote in the front of it, "This book will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from this book." He was right.

1. All sin is against God.

2. The word will warn about sin.

Psalm 19:11-13 (NKJV)

¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned, *And* in keeping them *there is* great reward. ¹² Who can understand *his* errors? Cleanse me from secret *faults*. ¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous *sins*; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, *And* I shall be innocent of great transgression.

3. The word has sanctifying power.

Jesus affirmed this in His great prayer.

John 17:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

But how do I hide it in my heart?

This beth stanza gives us some suggestions. The bottom line is that you allow the word to guide your behavior. You intentionally make it the guide for your daily life. (v. 9)

Then you daily delight in the word. (14) When you delight in the word, it will be a joy to read it, to soak your life in its light.

Then you can memorize and meditate on the word. (v. 15)

I have put in your hand a little book marker with the help of our staff. It presents some personal choices that you can make for this year ahead of us. Review them with me. Register you choice, and keep this marker in your Bible as a reminder.