

“Want to Make Wise Decisions?”

Psalm 119:65-72

(Part 9 of a Series in Psalm 119, “Magnifying God’s Word!”)

This section of Psalm 119 (“Teth” [pronounced, “Tayth”]; 9th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; has “T” sound) deals with two basic subjects: the purpose of affliction and the need for discernment. In some ways, they are connected, as we certainly need discernment, good judgment, during times of affliction, difficulties! Let’s see what God’s Word has to say!

1. The Purpose of Affliction (vss. 67, 69, 70, 71)

- The “bottom line” of all of these verses is that no matter what the trouble, affliction, difficult circumstance or situation, God’s Word is *always* dependable! It is always sure. It can be “well with our souls” even though all is not “well” around us! We need God’s wisdom, discernment to apply His Word to all of our difficult circumstances!
- “Affliction” (from a Hebrew word that means, “to be bowed down”, “to be humbled”) brings us back into a right relationship with our God (vs. 67). We tend to “go astray” (swerve, meander, err...) fairly often, particularly if we have not been in God’s Word! Our “going astray” often leads to difficult circumstances! This then brings us to our knees, brings us back to God and His Word. No wonder God *allows* afflictions in our lives!
- Sometimes (verses 69 & 70), our afflictions are caused by other people who are simply uncaring, arrogant, hateful, mean (etc.). Psalm 73! Note the psalmist’s response in both of these verses! He is *still* going to go to God’s Word and stand on it, claiming the precious promises of that Word!
- Note verse 71! Why is it “good” that we are afflicted? Because it drives us to God’s Word. Because we learn about God’s love, grace, mercy, strength. Verse 75! God has done this in “faithfulness”! Romans 8:28
- How do we view affliction, tough circumstances, difficult times? Could it be that God is using these things in our lives to strengthen our faith, to draw us closer to Him, to conform us more to the image of Jesus, to see Him work in mighty ways?

2. The Need for Discernment (vs. 66)

- We believers in Jesus need knowledge, wisdom, discernment, good judgment not only during times of affliction but also at every *other* time! How important good judgment, discernment is in these days! We are bombarded by thoughts

and philosophies all of the time. Are they from God? From Satan? From the flesh? Which are right? Which are wrong?

- The psalmist trusted in God's Word. He believed that keeping God's Word would help him have correct view, a correct understanding, of things in life. He is asking God to help him determine what is right and wrong, what is Godly and ungodly, what is right and what is foolish... The Hebrew word here for discernment is literally, "good taste." In other words, what is good, what is bitter, what is sweet, what is sour, in terms of morality and decisions. Philippians 1:9-11
- When a friend tells you that something is ok, right, proper... is it? What does the Bible say? You have a situation at home, school, at work. What decision should be made? What does the Bible say? Society says a certain way of living is ok. Is it? What does the Bible say? You have an important decision to make about finances, health, relationships, your future. What does the Bible say? **GOD'S WORD IS RELIABLE IN EVERY SITUATION OF LIFE!** Is whatever decision I am making in keeping with the Word of God? This is one of the reasons it is so important to read the Bible every day, so we can be a discerning Christian! "God, please give me discernment, good judgment by your Word so that I can make wise decisions!"
- We believers in Jesus must know the Word of God so well that when error comes our way, we will recognize it! We must know God's Word so well so that we'll know what to do when decisions need to be made! One of many "rules of thumb" for decision-making: Philippians 4:8
- Want to make wise decisions? Want to be discerning? Get into God's Word!

3. The Resulting Declarations (vss. 65, 68, 72)

- When we DO get into God's Word on a regular basis, we will agree with the psalmist:
 - a. "You have dealt well with Your servant" (65): God is faithful in bringing us back into a right relationship with Him as well as in giving us knowledge and discernment in our lives. Can any of us honestly say that God has NOT dealt well with us?
 - b. "You are good and do good" (68): Our faithful God is good to us all of the time, even when we may not be able to figure out what He's doing! We find this out during afflictions as well as in the good times of life. Psalm 25:8, 34:8, 100:5, 107:1
 - c. "The law of Your mouth is better..." (72) Psalm 19:7-11! The more we get into God's Word, the more we depend upon it, the more we get to know our God from it, the more we gain insight, understanding and discernment from it, the more we know that it is the most precious possession (besides Jesus!) we have. Riches fade, get stolen, go up in smoke, etc. But the Word of God stands forever!

Make sure to spend some time in God's Word this week!!