

Psalms 119:57-72 – Thursday, May 16th, 2019

57 You are my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep Your words. 58 I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; Be merciful to me according to Your word. 59 I thought about my ways, And turned my feet to Your testimonies. 60 I made haste, and did not delay To keep Your commandments. 61 The cords of the wicked have bound me, But I have not forgotten Your law. 62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You, Because of Your righteous judgments. 63 I am a companion of all who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts. 64 The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy; Teach me Your statutes.

- Here in this section the Psalmist contrasts those who are wicked surrounding him, with those who fear God surrounding him.
- I don't know if it's possible to overstate the importance of the principle of carefully choosing whom we surround ourselves with.
- This because, if their influence in our lives is ungodly, it's just a matter of time before we find ourselves as ungodly as they are.

Proverbs 13:20 - He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

1 Corinthians 15:33 - Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

65 You have dealt well with Your servant, O LORD, according to Your word. 66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge, For I believe Your commandments. 67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word. 68 You are good, and do good; Teach me Your statutes. 69 The proud have forged a lie against me, But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart. 70 Their heart is as fat as grease, But I delight in Your law. 71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes. 72 The law of Your mouth is better to me Than thousands of coins of gold and silver.

- This section in Psalm 119 is very interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that it speaks to a powerful truth.
- Namely, that of how God deals with us in order to keep us from straying, which is to allow affliction, trials, pain and suffering.
- Truth be made known, when things are good and our lives are comfortable, we are prone to become lukewarm and backslide.

- It's for this reason that the Psalmist could pen the words of verse sixty-five declaring that God had dealt well as His servant.
- I point this out because the way God dealt with him was that He afflicted him, and in so doing, brought him closer to the Lord.
- So much so, he had an intimacy in his relationship with the Lord that he could have never experienced absent the affliction.

When I was a young believer, over 35 years ago now, I happened upon a writing by G.D. Watson titled, "Others May, You Cannot." While God has used it in my life over the years, it wasn't until recently, that He would bring it more often to my remembrance. The last time He did so was during one of my devotionals back in February of this year, and I sensed that the Lord would have me to share it in the context of this section in Psalm 119 concerning the ways in which God may choose to deal with us. Especially when it seems that other Christians aren't dealt with in the same way, in particular when it comes to affliction.

Other's May, You Cannot -- If God has called you to be really like Jesus, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility, and put upon you such demands of obedience, that you will not be able to follow other people, or measure yourself by other Christians, and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do. Other Christians and ministers who seem very religious and useful, may push themselves, pull wires, and work schemes to carry out their plans, but you cannot do it; and if you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent.

Others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing, and if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

Others may be allowed to succeed in making money, or may have a legacy left to them, but it is likely God will keep you poor, because He wants you to have something far better than gold, namely, a helpless dependence on Him, that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day out of an unseen treasury.

The Lord may let others be honored and put forward, and keep you hidden in obscurity, because He wants you to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade. He may let others be great, but keep you small. He may let others do a work for Him and get the credit for it, but He will make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing; and then to make your work still more precious, He may let others get the credit for the work which you have done, and thus make your reward ten times greater when Jesus comes.

The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or for wasting your time, which other Christians never seem distressed over. So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. He may not explain to you a thousand things, which puzzle your reason in His dealings with you, but if you absolutely sell yourself to be His love slave, He will wrap you up in a jealous love, and bestow upon you many blessings, which come only to those who are in the inner circle.

Settle it forever, then, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that He does not seem to use with others. Now when you are so possessed with the loving God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of Heaven.