

Season 5, Episode 9: Reflecting on Psalm 119: A Song of My Heart

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Felicity: This podcast is sponsored by 10ofthose.com. 10ofthose.com handpick the best Christian books that point to Jesus and sell them at discounted prices. I have been really enjoying a book called Sheltering Mercy by Dan Wilt and Ryan Whitaker Smith. It is a book which helps us to pray through the Psalms and the writers literally take each psalm and write a prayer in response to it. And it uses the word description. It has the heart of the psalmist very much, front and foremost, and it has been so helpful to me as I've been seeking to pray through the Psalms myself. I'd highly recommend it. Grab a copy at 10ofthose.com.

Sarah: Welcome to two sisters & a cup of tea. My name is Sarah, I live in the UK. This is my sister Felicity, she lives in the US.

Felicity: Hello, everyone.

Sarah: And this is our final episode of season five. We're going to be reflecting on Psalm 119, we're going to be sharing what's coming up next in season six. But before we get there, Felicity, what have you got in your cup?

Felicity: Well, just gone for a straightforward Yorkshire tea. If I do say it is very well made cup of tea. I'm enjoying it a lot. And to be honest, the biscuit I picked never made it down the stairs. It just got eaten while the kettle was boiling because I just really needed a chocolate digestive.

Sarah: Yeah, I mean, I've done exactly the same thing. I needed the sugar fix about ten minutes ago rather than right now, so I had a slightly melted orange club.

Felicity: Right, orange clubs are often slightly melted because are they not often the choice of a lunchbox biscuit? And biscuits just tend to melt in a lunchbox, I think.

Sarah: Well, that's a whole other question, isn't it? Lunchbox biscuit choices. We've got a whole nother season of chat in that.

Felicity: Well, lucky we do have another season to debate such important issues. What biscuit fits with your after lunch feeling? That's basically, isn't it? But anyway, before we get into that rabbit hole and before we reflect on the riches of Summer 119, which we're both so excited to be talking about, we have a summer survey, which we would love for as many listeners as possible to participate in. Sarah, tell us what it's all about.

Sarah: A survey always just sounds a bit boring, doesn't it, really? It's a couple of minutes. We need as many listeners as possible, we'd love as many people as possible to fill in this survey, just to kind of help us understand who's listening, really. We've been going now for about 18 months. It's flown the time. We've really enjoyed this journey and we'd love to just hear about the people who are listening and how we can best serve you with what we're doing in this podcast. So you can find a survey on our show Notes. We will be linking to it in social media. Those who are on our newsletter list that will come out as well. And as you fill in us on a survey, as you spend that couple of minutes, you will also receive a free ebook before You Open Your Bible by Matt Smith, a great and brilliant read. So please, we'd really appreciate your feedback and thank you.

Felicity: Yes, thank you so much in advance. We really appreciate it. We just would love to serve you as best we can as we think about serving you, serving our listeners. Actually, we're going to be serving each other because we love talking about Psalm 119. So let's get into this conversation, Sarah, as we were many months ago, thinking about whether we're going to do Psalm 119. Neither of us had really spent that much time in this longest chapter in the Bible. And so I think that for both of us, there's been some surprises as we've been going along. So tell us what surprised you as you've been studying and reading this psalm?

Sarah: Biggest surprise, but it's not about the Word itself. I mean, the Word is a big god's word is a big part of the psalm, but that's not the topic, is it? Like, I think as we've read it and as we've journeyed along with Him, this is just we've been flying on the wall to his kind of heartfelt prayer in his honest struggle with different afflictions and suffering. And the

Word has been the outbox and it's been the means of grace to keep him going, but it's not been what the psalm is totally about and all about.

Felicity: Yes, I think that's exactly right. The outbox of the psalm is not actually love the Bible more, which I think I had also thought that this psalm would just help me to love my Bible more, but so you're saying that actually the Word is a part of the means by which we come to love God more. Now, I think that's been one of the big surprises. But this is the most relational thing. Like this psalm is just all like the psalmist and God, isn't it? It's so intimate that relationship between them and the Word is the means by which the psalmist knows God better and seeks to love him more and is able to run in those commands.

Sarah: Yeah, and it's such a gift of God and a gift of grace, isn't it? And it enables him and it fuels him and it keeps him going, but I just didn't see that. That's been a really great and wonderful surprise and it's really shaped my view of the farm because we've just been in it so long, I think it's been surprising. What about the biggest challenge for you? What's challenged you the most, do you think?

Felicity: Yeah, well, I think a big challenge has been that the suffering, which is kind of one of the surprises, actually, though I didn't realize that suffering is so pervasive throughout the psalm. I don't think I had realized quite how much that is the prevalent circumstance and that circumstance doesn't change. And yet the heart of the psalmist is increasingly longing for the Lord and that kind of despite the circumstances or almost because of the circumstances, he is all the more in with the Lord. He says again and again, you are my hope, you are my refuge, you are my heart is all yours, you are my joy, my heritage, forever and ever, I'm all yours. And that anchoring is despite circumstances, the suffering is not knocking him off course in that. And I think that's a challenge to me because I think circumstances can be more knocking than the psalmist is letting it be and even bigger than that, not just knocking, but actually I think we get that the circumstances, his suffering draws him closer to God. And so I think there's a challenge there to how I view suffering and the real on the ground reality that God is definitely at work through his word by his grace in that suffering. And I feel like we say that quite a lot, but to actually know it and believe it and trust it and to really think that when you're in the midst of it, that's been big for me, I think big challenge.

Sarah: Yeah, I think for me I've got to the end of the psalm and I just feel like so far from the reality presented within it in terms of how much he is in the word as that means of keeping going. And I think I felt that at the beginning when I first read it and I think I really feel it having got to the end of it. And yet the biggest challenge on my heart isn't actually that, it's not stewing on the guilt of how I'm feeling because of that. I think my tendency is to kind of stew and kind of sit there and actually I think the biggest challenge for me has been kind of going back into the sun, finding those verses of encouragement that I need to hear, remembering how Christ is fulfilled and fleshed out that covenant promise and that grace. Remember that I'm just like the psalmist and that be straight like a lost sheep. I have to. And yet Christ is that good shepherd, wholly committed to seeking and finding me and tending to my way with heart. I think that's been the kind of journey for me. And the biggest challenge is just to keep remembering that the psalmist was always absolutely dependent on grace and so am I. And just keeping remembering that.

Felicity: The challenge because I think that's like the other side of the encouragement, it's huge encouragement there, which I'll talk about in a minute. But the challenge, the fact that you're speaking of it as a challenge is that challenge to remember it, isn't it to actually functionally, what does it look like to really trust what is being kind of out worked by the psalmist here? Because I think that's what we see as the psalmist doing that. And so the challenge for us is to keep going with the psalmist and get to the point where we're believing it and able to delight in the Lord and able to come out of the Lord in that honesty, that bold honesty.

Sarah: Yeah, but that's a daily thing, isn't it? That just doesn't happen overnight. Like that is a wrestle, that's a lifelong life, isn't it? Tell me about your biggest encouragement then?

Felicity: Well, I think my encouragement, biggest encouragement is like the other side of that is the reality that God is seeking out his servant. You know, in that very last verse, verse 1960 says that the psalmist cries out seek your servant. And I think that seeking is evidence throughout the whole psalm as we remember the wallpaper of the covenant promises so

every time we hear word precept command, all of those things declared in, that is the God who graciously moves towards us. And so I think we can read the psalm and be really challenged. Like, man, I'm not as obedient, I'm not longing, I'm not doing all that the psalmist is kind of talking about, but in that I know that he is moving towards me in grace God through the Lord Jesus. And how much more through the Lord Jesus can I be sure of that? I think that's been one of the other great encouragements has been just as we've been reading the psalm and knowing that this is ultimately Jesus's song. I feel like I know Jesus better through having spent time in these words and so I'm more convinced that he is for me that kind of took the grace in action that he is for me. Yeah. What about your biggest big encouragements?

Sarah: Biggest encouragement?

Felicity: I think it's quite a simple one.

Sarah: That the more I've been in it, the more fruit it's born from being in it, the more time I've spent dwelling on each stands are pouring over the words and why they're there, the more I found those words coming out in my prayers and in my conversations and encouraging my own heart and I hope others as well. And I think that's just been really great. It's been really good. And I guess it's not a surprise because I don't know. It's in Mark Four, isn't it, where Jesus says, the measure, you come to the Word, it will be measured to you and more. And whether you bring a teaspoon to God's word or whether you bring a bucket like that will come back to you. And actually there's no denying it's been hard work, isn't it? Like this harm has been hard and it's taken, it's taken a lot of effort and it's like, you know, I think we have poured ourselves into this because we've been keen to get all that we can out of it and that's come in abundance like the Lord has really worked in our hearts through it. And I think that's just been such an encouragement because I can see the impact on my heart in a massive way and it really has been changing us.

Felicity: I think that's huge, isn't it? Let us just remember when we first picked up the song, we were like, what? Let's just be honest about that. I think you're right, it has been hard. But as you say, the fruit has been big. And not even just a cut and dried kind of fruit and ongoing fruit as we've been in it. So you said the psalm has been changing us. I would totally agree with that. In what way, though? How has this arm been changing you?

Sarah: Yeah, I think that's why one of the best questions to ask, by the way, in terms of as we're kind of rounding up Bible books, how has this actually changed me? I think in really big ways, as you were saying earlier, like just processing suffering and what it looks like to view suffering in the light of God's word and the light God's character. And kind of coming back to those kind of checkpoints, each calling those things to mind about his character, his goodness, his efficiency, that's been a big thing for me. Most of all, it's really changed the way I'm praying in the immediacy of what I know about God, I feel like I'm praying more immediately. These last few verses where he's delighting, he's pleading, he's praising, he's rejoicing, he's straying, he's asking, he's requesting. I feel like I'm doing that more, and that can only be a good thing, I guess. I think I've got more confidence to pray in the way that he's praying, and I'm asking the Lord to show me more of Him in His Word than I ever had before. And I think just having that boldness kind of modeled for me, I want to do that too. And I know that it can because Jesus has shown me the way. So that I think what about you?

Felicity: Yeah, well, I echo that. I think my prayer life has definitely changed as a result for that same reason, really. You know, that the verse that says God is near. I can't say the Lord is near in verse 151, and that reality, that he is near and that I can pray like the Psalms. And I think being in this book for this long means that the words of the psalm are just closer to hand. And so I feel like I'm really enjoying praying in these stanzas and that's been really big. I think another thing actually is in my kind of understanding in my heart, I think there's been a shifting in the way I view God's commands and the way I view my heart seeking after the Lord, and that the commands are not a separate thing. It's not like our holiness and how we're living life is separate to that. But as I run in the commands of the Lord, I was really struck by that verse, verse 32, he says, run in the path of his commands. And I was really struck by that, that as we run in his path, as we are obedient, then my heart kind of all the more delights in the Lord. And I think just that's really shifted the way I view obedience

really being a heart level kind of thing and that as I am obedient and as I seek to be obedient, even when I stumble, actually my heart is all the more anchored in the Lord.

Sarah: It's been you're so great, isn't it? And this just like reviewing it together is so valuable, isn't it? Because it just like is really important to just actually just take time to reflect and it feels like it's been a massive journey and we're at the end of it, but it's been really valuable and yeah, that's it.

Felicity: That's it. Before we do the big reveal as to what is to come next, I think we should pray, I think. Response sarah, why don't you pray for us now and then?

Sarah: I'd love to do that. Heavenly Father, we just thank you. Thank you so much for your word through Psalm 119. We thank you for all the ways that You've been showing us more of yourself, more of what it is to trust you in the midst of affliction, what it is to run in the path of Your commands. We thank you most of all that it's shown us more of Jesus. It's fleshed out his fulfillment of this beautiful, wonderful, gracefield, covenant promise and it's shown us what it is to sing his song and to begin to live this song and to pray the song for ourselves. Just thank you so much for the way that Your word has really been at work in our hearts and we just pray Father, please, with what we've learned, not gets snatched away. We pray Lord, would you guard our hearts and help us to bed in these lessons that we've learned and these things that we've been dwelling on and how much we've seen of the Lord Jesus. We pray, Lord, that would fuel our worship, that would drive to our hearts and Lord, that we would obey more fully because as we do that, we know more of ye fully. We thank you so much Lord, for summoned 19. Amen.

Felicity: Amen. So we are already anticipating season six which will be coming after the summer and era. Do you want to do, I mean drum roll?

Sarah: Last time I did a drum roll it just didn't work on the recording. So you just go for it, just say it.

Felicity: So we are going to be in one thessalonians or in fact over here in America they say first thessalonians. So we're going to be spending our next season in thessalonians and we'd love for you to join us and in relation to that over the summer. I know some may be wondering what are we going to do? It's not happening. Two Sisters in a cup of tea. But we have a Two sisters in a cup of Tea book pack at ten of those.com and it is related to one thessalonians. So you can go on the website and you can pick it up. Everything is going to be 50% off within the pack. It's a scripture journal of first thessalonians. It is a brilliant biography called A London Sparrow and it is a fantastic book by Ed Welch called Side by Side. So we're going to be reading those books this summer. We would love for you to be reading those books as well as we anticipate getting into one thessalonians together.

Sarah: Yeah. Exciting. Great.

Felicity: And in the meantime, Sarah, what do.

Sarah: We need in the meantime? Go and click on the link and fill in our summer survey for us. We massively appreciate that and have a good summer. I think that's it, isn't it?

Felicity: Yes. Thank you so much for being with us through Sandwich and I think we are praying for great fruit as you've been in the world with us and yeah, we'll see you after the summer. Bye bye bye. Thanks for listening to this episode. It's sponsored by Tenfold.com. Check them out for great discounted resources that point to Jesus.