

Certain Word in an Uncertain World

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 June 2026

Preacher: Graeme Dodds

[0 : 0 0] It's good to see everyone this morning, and as Fiona's just prayed, it is our prayer and! it's my prayer that God speaks to us this morning. And you'll see here that we're still in Psalm 119, so if you haven't been here, well not last week, we had a little parenthesis last week, but the previous three weeks we were in Psalm 119 and we came up to verse 80, and this morning we're going to look at verse 8 to 1 to 112. So even if I speak less than 60 seconds in every verse, we're still over half an hour, so hopefully we won't be much more than that, but you can see that we've got quite a bit to get through today. Our little series that we have titled over Psalm 119 is called A Word Like No Other, A Word Like No Other. And over our little section today, I want you just to maybe just embellish that slightly and say it's a certain word in an uncertain world. And a certain word in an uncertain world. In an uncertain world. You know, when we come to Psalm 119, there are so many, I think there's maybe 10, some people might count 8, but there's 10, and it talks about laws, and your word, and your statutes, and your precepts, and most of us can get our head around what is being referred to there, but mostly is referring to God's Word. And for the psalmist, that would be the Pentateuch, the first five books of our Old Testament. That is what he is referring to there. But when we refer to God's Word, we are talking about this Bible that we have in front of us. And if you have a Bible in front of you, then I would suggest keep it open. What I would like to do this morning is go word by word, verse by verse. But as you can probably guess, that would take us way past lunchtime, and I'm sure Pete and Hannah wouldn't be best pleased. So we're not going to do that this morning, but there are a few words that we might look at, because I find that when you start to pull these threads in Scripture, they run all different places to different parts of Scripture, and you start to build them together. You know, I was watching Caleb yesterday, and we've got some new Lego, and he was putting the pieces together, and he probably didn't know what he was building. And even if he was to read the instruction book, on the first page, you place one or two Lego blocks together, and you don't really see the full picture until you get to that last page, and it's the, you know, it's a fire engine or whatever it is that we are building for Caleb. But I saw him there, and he was just taking one piece at a time, and he was building. And I did, when I was thinking about the sermon this morning, I was just pondering that, you know, when we come to God's Word, it's not like it's a puzzle that we need to put it together, but it is something that as we take one piece at a time, and we build on it, and we understand it, and we pull that little thread, you know, I was just looking at the word precepts, for example, in the Psalms, God's commandments and instructions that guide behavior and moral conduct. And all of a sudden, your mind goes to other verses that would reaffirm and emphasize these different elements of statutes and laws and precepts and all the other bits and pieces that we might come across in our section this morning. And it's like that. As we build on what we read and we experience and we obey, then we see a fuller and a bigger picture. And that is what the Psalmist is doing for us as he writes this wonderful poem or prayer. Now, I think JT mentioned this two weeks ago, and probably Graham did and Ian, but Psalm 119 is one of the best known Psalms, not because we actually know word for word, but we just know it's the longest book in the Bible, the longest chapter in the Bible. And as JT said, you know, even longer than a lot of our books in our New Testament that we know even better. It's made up of 22 stanzas or verses, these stanzas. And each of the stanzas correlates with the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. And as Ian, I think, maybe mentioned, each of the lines, the eight lines in each stanza starts with the, the first letter starts with the corresponding letter for that stanza, if that makes sense.

So the ones that we're going to look at today are 11, 12, 13, 14. So that's Cath, Lamed, Mem, and Nun. Don't ask me about the other 18 because I've not got a clue. But those are the ones that we are going to go through this morning. But what I want to think about is this, God's word brings

comfort, revival. And it helps us to understand and gives wisdom and guidance in every season of life. And that is why I want to focus our attention on this this morning, a certain word in an uncertain world.

[4 : 52] And as we've been, as Fiona read, you know, you just, you just skimmed through one of these, but one of these best known, one of the best known verses in our passage this morning is this verse here. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. And I'm sure for many of us, we learned that in Sunday school or kids' church or whatever version you had when you were growing up. And you probably learned the words, but you probably didn't really fully understand it. It's only as you mature as a Christian that you really understand what we are, what has been talked about here, about the word being a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. But there's so many other cracking verses in this little section, these 32 verses. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. And so many others, if your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. And there's so many others that we would have learned or that people can recite and they draw them in times of need, in times of uncertainty. And we live in uncertain times. You know, each day we just read the headlines and we are reminded of how fragile our world is. Wars continue. Economies fail or fluctuate.

Families experience loss. And as we have been thinking about already this morning, we pray for the Hutt family as they experience loss at this time and they grieve. But relationships fracture. Our health can change in a moment and you don't need to be young to be immune from that. So many of us experience just how uncertain this world can be. And even the things that we once thought were permanent can seem increasingly unstable. Yet uncertainty is not unique to us in the 21st century. The writer of Psalm 119, and I notice that nobody who has preached yet has dared to offer a suggestion as to who may have written Psalm 119, but a lot of people may suggest it's David or Hezekiah or others. But we don't know who wrote Psalm 119. And so therefore when I refer to the writer today, I'll just be the psalmist or the writer rather than trying to guess who this is. But whoever it was and whenever they lived, we can be sure that they lived in an uncertain time as well. And they probably understood uncertainty more than most.

You just need to read through this and you realize that he has experienced persecution. He's known about disappointment, what it means to wait. He experienced loneliness. And for many people, we experience these things too. But more than that, he experiences this intense spiritual struggle.

He experiences times of exhaustion. He experiences times where he's misunderstood. And he experiences times where he is attacked. But remarkably, his response is not to despair. Instead, he continually turned to one unchanging reality, the Word of God. And that's what I want to focus our minds on this morning. And as G.T. reminded us two weeks ago, it is the one, it's not just the Word of God, but it is the one to whom the Word of God points. As I've said, Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in Scripture. And every section celebrates the beauty and the authority and the sufficiency of the Word of God. The four stanzas, as I say, before us reveal how Scripture meets us in four of life's greatest needs. And I don't know if this is going to come up, but I'll just leave it for a wee second. But first of all, we need comfort. We're going to see that in the first stanza. If you've got your Bible open, you'll see there from verse 8 to 1 to 8 to 8, it says calf. And we are going to think about comfort. We need comfort. Then in the second section, from 8 to 9 to 96, that Lamed, as you see at the top there, we are going to think about the need for revival, personal revival.

[9 : 15] And then from verse 97, and you'll see the head and it says Mem, 97 to 104, we're going to think about understanding, our need for understanding or wisdom. And then in our last section, which is Nun, from verse 105 to 112, we're going to think about our need for guidance. You know, these are not just ancient words like those of Shakespeare when we come to read these words, this poem, this prayer.

But they are God's invitation for us today. You know, you can recite the words of Shakespeare, but it means nothing to you. Whereas when we recite these words, they will speak to every one of us. And we will find, every one of us in the room today and online, will find ourselves in one of these sections. So first up, we're going to look at God's word is it comforts the weary in verses 8 to 1 to 8 to 8.

You know, the psalmist, I think, is quite honest in his opening. My soul faints with longing for your salvation. This is not someone who's pretending that everything's all right. Like many of us do, it's the British way, you know, stiff upper lip, albeit that's maybe less of a thing nowadays as our culture

changes. But the psalmist is not pretending that everything is fine. He is spiritually exhausted. He feels dry. He is waiting. He asks, when will you comfort me? And many of us know exactly what that feels like. You know, some of the greatest acts of faith is to simply continue to wait. My soul longs for your salvation. My eyes long for your promise. I ask, when will you comfort me? You know, this is not the word that we're going to look at there, salvation. It's not the salvation of having our sins forgiven, of becoming a Christian, of being reconciled to God in that sense. He is thinking about being rescued by God. Now, our section this morning doesn't necessarily name the name of the Lord Jesus, but everything that we will read points towards him. And he is the ultimate salvation. He is the ultimate rescue. And even though we have been saved today, we aren't, we haven't, that is a process.

[11:32] In fact, some people say, have you been saved? They'll say, well, I have been saved. I am being saved. And I will be saved. But when the psalmist is talking about the salvation here, it is about God rescuing him from his situation. You know, perhaps we have prayed for healing. Perhaps we've prayed for a child.

Perhaps we've prayed for restoration in our relationship. And perhaps we've buried someone that we deeply love. And yet the pain continues. And the psalmist asks, how long?

That is maybe the hardest question. Quite often we ask why, but really in our heart of hearts, often we know why things have happened. Occasionally we don't, but often we know why things have happened or how they've come about in our circumstances. But maybe the harder question is how long? How long is God going to ask us to endure our situation? You know, the psalmist teaches us something important here. He doesn't run away from God.

Instead, he runs towards God. He doesn't try to suppress or cover up his pain. Instead, as I've said, I think this is a prayer more than a poem if you just read, if you just listen to the words of the writer. But too often, I think we imagine that spiritual maturity is, in our faith, means that we never struggle. We've got past that. We have a reliance on God. But that is not, I don't think there's a single believer who has ever figured it all out. We come to this four stanzas this morning, and I think it tells us something different. I think it tells us this, that Christian faith, biblical faith, relying on God is honest enough to lament, but not despair. That word lament just means a passionate expression of sorrow or of grief or of regret. And even though that can be the case, and it is the case that many people lament in that sense, for us as Christians who have our hope on Christ, we remain confident enough to hope and to trust in him. And as you can see, for every issue and situation that the psalmist faces himself, not only does he just recognise the situation that he is in, but he comes back to having that confidence in the word of God. And as I've said, the word of God is important because of the person who it points to. So where is our hope found? What are we hoping in? It's not, we don't hope as Christians, and you know, we don't, it's not about positive thinking. It's not about even changing our circumstance or our situation as much as we would like that. You know, often we think, well, have we had a better, if we have a different job, if we moved house, if maybe you're in a different relationship, maybe even you think, I could go to another church, and we think if we change the circumstance or the situation, then that would provide us some kind of hope of relief from our circumstances. But yet, that is not what the psalmist says. It's not about changing our circumstances. It's not even about thinking, it's not even about hoping in ourselves. Our hope is found in God's word because of the, that is where we meet God himself. A couple of weeks ago, I was preaching in Helmsborough, and the section was in Romans chapter 8. And in Romans chapter 8 and 18, it says this, for I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed in us. That is the hope of every Christian this morning, isn't it? The hope is that we don't last in our situation. And even though our situation and our circumstances might change, really, our hope is that there is a future, that there is an eternal future where we will be with our Saviour. And Paul writes, he says, I consider that the present sufferings, and the present sufferings that he was talking about was being persecuted for being a Christian, although the same principle applies for all of our sufferings. We endure them for a time. But our eyes should be on the future. Our eyes should be on the glory that will be revealed in us through Christ Jesus. And I think we often take our eye off the ball. We forget about that. We get consumed by our circumstances.

[16:00] We get consumed by our situation. And we lose hope. And so many Christians do that. But when you come to this little section here, you see this, that the psalmist doesn't, even though he's stuck in these situations, and he's asking God how long he comes back to this, I hope in your

word.

When will you judge those that persecute me? All your commandments are sure. I have not forsaken your precepts. In your steadfast love, guide my life, that I might keep the testimonies off your mouth. He comes back to the word of God, because in the word of God, he finds God himself. Now, I want to say this this morning. We get to know God through his word. What he wants us to know about him is found in this book. I won't be bold and say this, there is no fresh revelation of God.

Somebody comes to you, and I would say this carefully, but if somebody comes to you and says that God has told them something specifically that doesn't agree with scripture, then you should probably reject it.

Now, Fiona and I have had this conversation a couple of years ago. We do experience God. We encounter God through our experiences. We take what we know about God from his word, and as we live day by day, and as we obey him, we experience God in our lives. We do experience God in our lives, and each one of us will experience God in different ways. He will give us comfort. He will give us revival. He will give us guidance, and understanding, and wisdom. He will give us different hope in different circumstances that we face, and each one of us face different circumstances. But God will never reveal himself in a way that does not agree with what we read in scripture, and I think we should be, I think we should take comfort in that today. I think we should affirm it in our beliefs today. I think we should be very careful if somebody comes and says, God has told me something that doesn't accord with his word. I kind of pondered this when I was thinking about the psalmist writing this. I wondered if the traps that they had set, as if they were catching a wild animal, was to attack. You think of Eve in the Garden of Eden. The serpent comes in and says, did God really say? That is what people say today. Did God really say? Things about morality, sexuality, the way that we live in our families, the way that we behave, our integrity, and that is all under attack. The word of God is under attack. And maybe some of the things that the psalmist experiences is the same, that people are coming and they're attacking him because he wants to live for God. He wants to obey God. He wants to keep his statutes and his precepts, and he wants to delight in his word. He's meditating on night and day, and yet the attack is there. Maybe that's, maybe that is something. But the psalmist is asking, how long will this last? How long until God rescues him from the situation? You know, waiting is never a waste of time with God.

[19:02] There's a lot of people who are impatient. You don't even need to ask Rachel. You probably know that I'm one of them. But there are a lot of people who are impatient. And we want things to happen.

We want them to happen instantly. We want relief from our circumstances. We want comfort, etc. But it may be this, that God does his deepest work in our lives in the waiting. When we are waiting for an answer, when we're enduring, when we are looking for that relief, maybe God is doing something, teaching us, humbling us, allowing us to depend on him in the waiting. Waiting teaches us to depend on God. It deepens our trust. And waiting should remind us that God's salvation, God's salvation, his rescuing of us from our situation. And our situation is this, this morning, that we have all like sheep gone astray. We've turned everyone to our own way. We've fallen short of the glory of God in the biggest sense. And that is what we are. That is what we are. That's what we need to be rescued from. But in the different situations of life, when we're looking for God to rescue us, it always comes from outside of ourselves. When we meet here and we listen to God's word and you read it in your own time and space, you realise that it is not a self-help book. It's not about you coming up with ideas and, you know, being a better person. We realise that we must depend on God,

God's way and in God's time. You know, the Samus describes himself as this, as a wineskin in the smoke. And unlike today where we've got glass bottles and cans, etc., all the water and the wine that would have been held in that day was held in wineskins, the skins of an animal. And as you can imagine, as long as they are moist, they keep their suppleness and their flexibility. But when they're finished and they've been hung up in the tent and they've got a fire in the tent and the smoke goes up and dries out the skins and they're not being looked after, you can see how they've become dry and cracked and brittle. Well, maybe there's people today here and elsewhere that know what that spiritual dryness feels like. And I think maybe some of us or all of us at some point in our life have all experienced some kind of brittleness or dryness in our life. You know, serving can become exhausting. Family pressures do drain us and life's disappointments can be hard at times.

They can harden our hearts. But yet the Samus says this, I will not forget your statutes. What an incredible faith. Regardless of the situation, regardless, and you come to the first few verses in 81, my soul faints, my eyes fail. He's feeling this dryness in his life. And yet, and yet, God's truth remained. When his strength disappeared, God's promises endured. And I think we should take comfort in that this morning. Whatever we're going through, and there'll be people in here and you are, your life is good in that sense. You've got fewer worries than others. Your exams are over. You've got a free summer. You don't really have the responsibility of mortgage and family or whatever situation you may be in. There may be people that are not in this situation that the Samus is in today.

But regardless of that, what we'd like to say this morning is that God's word comforts the weary. And we can stand on every promise. I think you sang that two weeks ago. We can stand on every promise of his word. Now that leads us to the second stanza, Lamed. And this is this, that God's word revives the discouraged. So it may be that you're not necessarily down, you're not weary, you're not being worn out or feeling dry and brittle, but you are just discouraged. It says this, forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in heaven. You know, the Samus does something here. He lifts his eyes. His circumstances haven't changed. His enemies remain the same. His suffering continues, but his perspective changes. He moves from looking inward to looking upward. And I think that is a needed reminder for us today. I think so often we just take our eye off, off God, off his word, off his promises, off the hope that it should be within us. And a small picture, as many of you will just, if your mind goes quickly, Peter in the boat, takes his eye off the Lord Jesus, and he is in a situation. But the Samus, he does the opposite thing here. He lifts his eyes up and everything in his world changes. Sorry, everything in his perspective changes. And he doesn't focus on his situation. You know, that is the same for us.

[24 : 07] You know, everything in our world changes. Technology changes, politics change, cultures change, opinions change, and even our emotions fluctuate daily. But God's word does not change. His promises don't expire. His character never shifts. If you're quick with it, you know the verse that I'm thinking about. But there is no shadow of turning with him. His purposes never fail.

You know, in our little section here, in our little section here, in the first three verses, it says, Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations. You have established the earth, and it stands fast. By your appointment, they stand to this day, for all things are your servants. So because God's word is firmly fixed in the heavens, because it is fixed forever, our faith has a firm foundation. Notice another wonderful truth here that the psalmist says. It says, your faithfulness continues through all generations.

You know, God has never failed his people. Generation after generation, I've discovered the same thing, that God is faithful. I wonder if we really appreciate that this morning. You know, he was faithful to Abraham, he was faithful to Moses, he was faithful to the prophets, he was faithful to the apostles, he's been faithful through church history, and he will be faithful to us. The psalmist goes on, and he says this, if your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

You know, interestingly, that he uses that word delight, not duty. You know, many Christians read scripture out of duty. And I would say this, that reading out of duty is not necessarily a bad thing.

I'm not going to ask you to put your hands up if you go to the gym. But if you did go to the gym, many people will have a little card that they have, or if you're a fancy gym, you might have an app.

[26 : 17] And I think Marion might have an app. But so you have an app, and when you log in, you tick what you've done, you know, the different weights and different machines, and you can see I've never been to a gym. But that's what you do. That's what I've told you to do. And you tick it off, right? And you build, you build on day by day, knowing that at the end of the week, at the end of the month, at the six months, you will be, I think the word is jacked. As I hide the rules, I'm assured. But that's what happens. You do it out of sense of duty. When you're motivated, when you're not. When you feel like going to the gym, when you don't, you go because it's your habit. And it is a good thing for us to get into the habit of reading God's word. You know, I read a blog at the beginning of the year, and I was kind of disappointed in it. A good friend of ours, and I'd written something on Facebook, and he said, you know, don't worry about doing reading plans.

It's just a guilt trip into reading God's word. And I'm going to do a little bit of disservice to the article, but it left me really discouraged because reading plans are good. If you think you're going to read God's word, and you're just going to take a verse or two here or there, and somehow you're going to end up with that Lego fire engine all built up, I think you're sadly mistaken.

I think we need to get into God's word. I think we need to read it. I think we need to recite it. I think we need to memorize it. I think we need to meditate on it. I think we need to hide it in our hearts that we might not sin against God, as the psalmist would say. A quick flick through scripture once a week when you come to church is not going to feed you. It's not going to be the basis of which you can stand on every promise of the word. It's not going to be your comfort. It's not going to provide revival or wisdom or understanding or guidance. It's not going to provide any of those things. The psalmist says that he meditates night and day. He mulls them over. So be careful about what we read and how we read, and be diligent to read God's word. You know, it may be that we, in fact, I would, if we were doing a day, I would ask you to bring your mobile phone out and go into the settings and look at your screen time and just see how much time we've spent on Facebook or TikTok or Instagram or any of these other ones. And I would be ashamed of that compared to the time that I might have read God's word, where I find these promises, where I find comfort and guidance and encouragement and wisdom. And yet I can doom scroll, and I'm sure that there's many others find in that. So reading God's word is not just a duty, and it shouldn't just be a habit. Even if those things are true, the psalmist goes on to say, but he reads because he delights in hearing God's voice. You know, these duty, the duty that I'm talking about might establish the habits. It might be that tick in a, and he's read some of the books like James Clear's Atomic Habits, you know, tick it off every day. It gives you some kind of, kind of boost, and you start to build habits, and then things become easier when they become a habit. That might be true, but delight transforms the heart. So duties might drive some of the habits, but delight transforms the heart. You know, we're encouraged in the New Testament to be transformed with the renewing of our minds. If you want to just read a verse a day on your Bible app, the little one comes up, and I'm not, I'm not putting it down, but it's probably not going to transform you by the renewing of your mind, is it? And neither is knowledge, right? Neither is just reading God's word for information or knowledge, even though by reading it, it leads to life. And I'll be careful when I say that, because the Lord Jesus has said to them, you know, you search the scripture because in the scripture you think you have life. And he says, but these are that which testify of me. So yes, we read the scripture, but we find Christ in the scripture, and it's Christ who is our life. It's Christ who came to give us life and to give us it more abundantly. But not only does it give us life, it revives our weary souls, it strengthens discouragement, and it provides us hope. You know, when scripture fills our minds, it shapes the way and it begins to reshape the way that we think. Instead of fear controlling us, I think there's so many people that I talk to out and about, at work, etc., and they are gripped by fear. And it's because they consume the news. And if you just flick the news on, and probably some of you have done that this morning, you will just see how uncertain our world is, and the chaos that ensues, and people really fear for the future. Namely, mostly because they have no hope. But yet, when we come to the word of God, and we fill our minds with it, it reshapes how we think. Instead of this fear controlling us, it is truth that controls us. Instead of anxiety dominating us, God's promises take root in our lives. And the more God's word shapes the mind, the more that Christ shapes our lives. The desire of us should be that Christ would be reflected in our lives, that he would be demonstrated in our lives, that Christ would become our life. And that starts with this transform, being transformed with the renewing of our minds. Either the word of God is going to shape us, and encourage us, or the culture, and the news, and the fear out there is going to shape us. I know which one I would choose. So just think about how much time we spend reading God's word, as opposed to other things. And then we come on to this section, Mem. So it's from 97 to 104. And this is about God's word giving us wisdom. You know, it starts with this beautiful declaration, Oh, how I love your law. [32 : 19] Again, just look at the words that he chooses. Thankfully, he didn't say, I tolerate your law, or I occasionally read your law. But he says, I love your law. And they say that love, it changes everything. I don't know if that's true, but it certainly changes some things when you're in love.

But loving God's word would certainly change how we treat it. And by default, it would change the way that we see ourselves. It would change the way that we see the world around us. And it would change the way that we treat each other. It would just change so much about us. The psalmist says here that he meditates it all the day. Meditation, I think Ian maybe said this on the first week, meditation is not us, as sometimes we think of meditation about emptying our minds. No, when we're meditating on scripture, it is about filling our minds with God's truth. It's about reading it. It's about reciting it. It's about memorizing it. It's about meditating on it. You know, I am a slightly proud dad. I haven't counted them up. I should have done it before I got on the platform. But Caleb has

been learning a number of memory verses. And he's only two. And he probably could say five or six memory verses. And it's quite cool to see, you know, and sometimes they're not all laid out in the right order. And sometimes we blend from one to the other. But he is there and he's memorizing. And then when he sings a song, and I am the way, the truth and the life, for example, when he sings these songs, he gets really excited. Well, you and I, if you've been to Sunday school, and you've come through church, and I know that there'll be people in our audience that haven't, you know, you've been saved as a university student, or maybe as an older adult, and you've come to know the Lord at a different point.

And this is not your experience. But for a lot of people, maybe even you've learned these at school, you don't necessarily need to have learned these in church. But we learned verses, and we can recite them when we're older. The older you get, the harder it is to learn and remember and recite. So my encouragement would be, when you're young, learn as many verses as you can. And that's one of the reasons it's good for us as a church to get our young folks and our children that are up in the kids' church to learn memory verses, to hide them in their heart, and so that they can draw on them in times of need. And the result of this, the result is this, it is wisdom. Three times the psalmist says that he has become wiser, wiser than his enemies, wiser than his teachers, greater understanding than the aged. And how can this be? He's not being boastful here. He's not saying I'm smarter than these guys that went in the past. But what he is doing is he's coming back to the Word of God. That is where wisdom comes from. It doesn't come from experience and age necessarily. You know, the number of years that you've lived on this earth doesn't automatically give us spiritual wisdom.

Wisdom comes through obedience. You see, knowledge fills our head, but obedience transforms our hearts and our lives. And many, there's many educated people that remain spiritually foolish. They could maybe recite the words of Scripture, but they don't know them. The understanding that is given by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit and provides understanding for us as Christians. That is where true wisdom comes from. And similarly, in the same vein, there's many ordinary believers, and they've got, they possess this remarkable wisdom. And it's because they have walked faithfully with God. They have obeyed him. They have taken one step after the other in obedience. And we're just going to see that in a second. The psalmist also says that your words are sweeter than honey. And that is a challenge for us today. Do we hunger after God's Word? Or do we hunger after entertainment and social media? Do we crave God's voice more than we crave the news or TV or film? Do we spend more time listening to that than we do God's Word? You know, what we feed our souls will shape our lives. God's truth should not only inform us, it should transform us. And as we learn to love truth, we also learn to reject falsehood. Verse 104, through your precepts, I get understanding. Therefore, I hate every false way.

[36 : 56] This here, love for the truth naturally produces discernment. I got a book for my birthday. I haven't read it yet because I've been on holiday, but I'm about to dive into it in July. It's a book that's called Reckless Faith, and it's when the church loses its will to discern. And mainly because we've taken an eye of Scripture, we've taken an eye of the Lord, we're looking more to the culture outside, and we want to implement it in here, and it is just a recipe for ruin. Love for the truth naturally produces discernment. And as we understand, as we contemplate, as we meditate on God's Word, and as we obey it, then we will be given wisdom. And that just brings us lastly to this, a guide for our path. Perhaps it's the best known verse in Psalm 119, your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. And as I've said, many of us learned it as a, maybe as a child, and yet we maybe fully didn't understand it until we were more established in our walk with God. You know, God rarely shines a big floodlight ahead of us, you know, several miles along the road. Instead, he gives us enough light for the next step. Many of us, as I've said, are impatient. We want this roadmap. We want to know what happens to us in five years' time. And yet God actually only promises us direction for today.

So it requires faith for us, faith from us, to come to God's Word and to see it as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Walking with God requires us to trust him, that he knows the way ahead, that he knows what the future holds. And as he reveals it to us bit by bit, we see a greater plan. We see God at work more in our lives. And as I say, just reflecting on that little Lego that Caleb was building yesterday, you see it starting to take place the longer that we spend walking with God and in his Word. You know, Abraham didn't know where he was going. Moses didn't really understand where, how God would deliver Israel. And even the disciples, when we come to the New Testament, didn't

really appreciate what awaited them after the Lord's resurrection. But they knew the one who led them.

You know, sometimes we are frustrated because we can't see five years ahead. But what God asks us to do is to simply obey him. And in that trusting and obey him, character is built. You know, deep roots are formed and we are given confidence in the hope that we have in God. And this produces faithfulness.

And it is this, this is, this is, this is the, the choice of the words that the psalmist is using when he says it's a lamp to my feet. It is one step after another. It is, it is trusting and obeying and building character and, and deepening our roots and relying and building our dependence on God. And we do that through understanding and reading and meditating and memorizing his Word. You know, faithfulness and doing that, it produces faithfulness. Faithfulness today prepares us for what may come tomorrow. And as I've said, it is an uncertain world that we live in. The psalmist also, as you can see in our last section here, understands that obedience involves commitment. He says, as I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep your righteous rules. You know, in our day and age, our culture prizes having options. When you don't like it, you just move on. It's why there's so many broken relationships. It's why, you know, we just like to keep our options open. We never like to be committed and loyal and faithful and obedient in that sense. But God values faithfulness. God values obedience. Let me just say this, obedience is not legalism. No, obedience is this, it is love expressed through faithful living. And while we are surrounded, indeed, as the psalmist was by dangers and traps and suffering, the psalmist continues to follow God's path.

And that is what we are encouraging ourselves to do this morning. His confidence rests not in easy circumstances and comfort. That's one of the things that we like to do. We like to make ourselves comfortable.

[41 : 23] Well, is that not true? And yet, that is not what the psalmist has here. His confidence in God, in God's faithful guidance, one step at a time. So there are real challenges that face us today. We live in a culture where biblical truth is increasingly questioned. Moral standards are lowered every day. People disagree about what is good and true and beautiful. And yet, the psalmist writes here that, and he reminds us that God's truth remains unchanged.

And thankfully, our confidence doesn't rest on cultural acceptance. We should be very careful of wanting to fit in. I'm not saying that we should go around and be odd. You can be odd for odd's sake and it doesn't really produce anything. But if we live by God's word, if we obey it, if we meditate on it and it transforms us and changes our life and changes the way we behave and the way that we think, then we might be slightly different to those that live round about us. Try not to fit into the culture just for fitting in's sake, because you will compromise on God's word. You know, the church doesn't need to imitate the culture either. The church needs to remain faithful to Christ. And to do that, we need three things. Firstly, we need a biblical understanding of reality. Scripture tells us who God is. Not the culture, not the world, not what people think. Scripture. It tells us who we are. It tells us why our world is broken. And it tells us where history is heading. Secondly, we need a living relationship with God. You know, Christianity is more than just attending a church. It is walking daily with our risen saviour. And then thirdly, it is about faithful discipleship. God has placed us here for his purposes and his mission. Just like everything else in verse 91, by your appointment, they stand this day for all things are your servants. Everything in this world serves God's purpose and we should too. Every conversation, every workplace, every home, every friendship becomes an opportunity for us to reflect Christ in our lives. But let me just finish over the next two minutes with this. Psalm 119 ultimately points us beyond the written words to the living word. Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled everything that this psalm celebrates. He is the word made flesh. When we need comfort, he says, come to me all who labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest. When we need revival, he declares, I have come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. When we need wisdom, Paul tells us that Christ has become our wisdom. In 1 Corinthians 1 30, it says this, and because of him, you are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. And when we need guidance, the Lord Jesus says, I am the way. Everything the psalmist longed for finds its fulfillment in Christ. The written word continually leads us to the living word. So as I said when I opened, every single one of us we'll find ourselves in one of these four stanzas this morning. Some need comfort because we are grieving. Some need revival because our spiritual passion is worn out. Some need wisdom because there is difficult decisions that lie ahead. Or we need guidance because the path is

unclear.

But what I want to leave you with is this. God's answer remains the same. We should come to his word. We should listen to his voice. We should trust his promises and we should walk in his ways. The same God who governs the universe also sustains our people. I'm glad that Sam prayed that this morning.

It is God who sustains us. It might not remove the suffering. It might not remove us from the suffering. We might have to endure that, but he will always sustain us within it. His word is certain in an uncertain world. So let us build our lives upon it. Let us delight in it. Let us meditate on it.

[45 : 48] Let us obey it. And above all, let us follow the one to whom it continually points, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Shall we pray? Heavenly Father, we come before you this morning.

We thank you for your word. Father, we thank you that you speak to us in all of our situations and experiences in life through your word. Our Father, we thank you that you sustain us, that you provide for us. Our Father, we thank you for the great provision that we find in your son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Father, help us to come to your word and to hear your voice and to meditate upon it and to allow it to comfort us, to provide revival in our lives, to give us wisdom and understanding and guidance when it is needed. Our Father, help us to obey your word, to submit to it and to make it a big part of our lives. We pray this in Jesus' precious name. Amen.