

“THE MARVEL OF GOD’S WORD”

Psalms 119:130-136

Pe

129

**Your statutes are *wonderful*;
therefore *I obey them*.**

130

**The *unfolding* of your words *gives light*;
it gives *understanding to the simple*.**

131

**I open my mouth and pant,
longing for your commands.**

Psalms 19:7-14

7

**The law of the Lord is perfect,
refreshing the soul.**

**The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.**

8

**The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.**

**The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.**

Ecclesiastes 8:1

Who is like the wise?

Who knows the explanation of things?

***A person's wisdom brightens their face
and changes its hard appearance.***

Psalm 119 is a sustained meditation of praise to the word of God.

This text in its entirety speaks of many things: obedience to the word of God. Talks about faithfulness to the Lord even in times of conflict and affliction. It points to the delight and joy we experience when savoring and meditating on the scriptures. Talks about the positive effects of delighting in the Bible. It speaks of the negative consequences of straying from the path of God's word.

These themes are repeated over and over again throughout the 176 verses of this psalm.

The psalm is divided into 22 sections, each consisting of eight verses. It is an acrostic, in which each section begins with one of the letters of the Jewish alphabet. It has a very complex structure.

This passage makes clear how important the Word of God has been and is for the Hebrew people. It calls us, the Church, continuers of the Jewish tradition, to equally value and exalt the beauty and wisdom of the divine word.

Like the psalmist who wrote this text, whose name we do not know, we too should experience that **sense of wonder and delight** when we realize how wonderful and profound the Scriptures are.

There are **several truths that emerge** from this section of Psalm 119, especially the first two verses 129 and 130.

First, let's notice **the psalmist's sense of wonder and delight** over God's word. "Your statutes are wonderful."

The word "wonderful" says it all. When he speaks of "your statutes," the psalmist is referring to the Scriptures. Psalm 119 uses different expressions to refer to the Bible.

It speaks of "the statutes, the law of the Lord, the commandments of the Lord, the judgments, the precepts." All are expressions that refer to the Word of God and give variety to the text.

The beauty, complexity, and wisdom of the Scriptures provoke a sense of wonder in him.

Evidently, he has spent a lot of time exploring the Word, and as he becomes aware of its wisdom and depth he comes to understand that the word of God is truly “wonderful”.

It is not just any “word”. When he reads it and meditates on it, he experiences a sense of deep admiration and wonder.

This sense of wonder and admiration probably enables him get more out of the Word when he reads it.

To take full advantage of the word of God, you must first **admire it, revere it, take delight in it**. You have to understand that it is not just any “word”, but that it comes directly from **the mouth of God**, and that it is inspired by the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

*13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, **the word of God**, which is indeed at work in you who believe.*

As we receive it for what it is—divine revelation for our lives—our faith activates the power that God's word

contains, and allows it to work in us in a transforming way.

It is our faith that unleashes the power contained in the word of God. And when we begin to see the transformative power that the Bible has, then we can't help but come to admire it and see it as something truly wonderful.

That verse from 1 Thessalonians contains another great truth about the word of God: That Word **acts within us as a living thing**. (*“the word of God, which works in you who believe.”*)

To interact with the word of God is not to acquire mere passive knowledge. It is not merely about receiving information.

It is rather a process in which the Word of God enters inside us and reconfigures our interior, our personality, the very neurons of our brain.

The Word of God is living energy, and it always fulfills the purposes for which God sent it. Whenever we come into contact with the word of God, it *does something*, it has an inevitable transforming effect on us.

That is what the Bible says about itself.

Isaiah 55:11

11 so will be my word that proceeds from my mouth; it will not return to me empty, but will do what I want, and will prosper in that for which I sent it.

Whenever we read or study the scriptures, we will inevitably get something out of it. They are programmed to always *produce an effect* in us.

Understanding that the word of God is alive, powerful and transforming **should inspire us to want to have contact with it** as often as possible.

Reading it is a way of **introducing the word of God within us** and activating its transforming effect in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 brings into focus that characteristic of God's word being alive in a very powerful and memorable way:

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Notice **how active the word** of God is (*alive and active; penetrates, dividing soul and spirit; judges thoughts*). Notice all the things it does: it enters into our spirit and acts within us like a living thing.

It has intention and consistency in its actions. It helps us understand the secret aspects of our personality, and the hidden reasons for many of our actions and behavior. It discerns and clarifies the intentions and thoughts of our heart.

It is like a perceptive psychiatrist who examines and analyzes the secret springs of our mind, and teaches us the true motivations behind our actions and shortcomings.

The Bible is an excellent **source of self-knowledge**, and therefore of wisdom to live life. A person who knows himself is a truly wise person.

Let's recount and summarize what we've discussed so far: We're looking at the psalmist's opening statement that God's word appears wonderful to him.

And that Word is wonderful because it is **alive**, because it is effective, because it promotes self-discernment in us.

This means that we should dedicate a lot of time and energy exploring it and getting to know it.

When we experience the wisdom contained in the Word, we experience a sense of wonder and great appreciation.

This extreme appreciation of the word of God allows us to take advantage of it, ensuring that it releases all the nutrients it has within it.

Therefore, we have to *cultivate* that sense of appreciation and delight in the word of God.

Many believers do not grow in their spiritual life because they underestimate the importance of studying the word. They do not understand its power and its value.

They see it as something religious, or something only for specialists, preachers or exceptionally holy and consecrated people.

But reading and studying the word of God is for all believers. It is the number one requirement for developing maturity and power in the Christian life.

If you do not know the word of God in depth you will remain spiritually weak all your life.

Like a malnourished child, you will not reach the strength and health that God wants for your spiritual life.

I encourage you to make a commitment to become a student, and a true connoisseur, of the Scriptures.

Commit yourself, and dedicate the rest of your life to understanding and searching the Scriptures. It will give you incredible benefit.

Another important point of this verse 129 is that it is not enough to simply admire or study the word of God, but that **it must be *kept within us and obeyed***.

It is important to treasure the Word in our heart, memorize it, recite it. But it is also important to obey it.

Outline of Biblical Usage:

1. to guard, watch, watch over, keep
 1. (Qal)
 1. to watch, guard, keep
 2. to preserve, guard from dangers
 3. to keep, observe, guard with fidelity
 4. to guard, keep secret
 5. to be kept close, be blockaded
 6. watchman (participle)

The expression, “my soul has kept them” encompasses both interpretations: You have to keep the word in your heart, and you have to obey it too.

It is useless if we express admiration and enthusiasm for the Word, and then we do not obey it or put it into practice.

As we know, that is the most difficult part of the Christian life—putting into practice what the Word of God tells us. This is the work of a lifetime.

Finally, there is another great teaching contained in verse two of this psalm.

We are told that the entrance or exposition of the word of God **enlightens** us, and gives understanding to the simple.

The word that is translated “unfolding” (of your Word) in the original Hebrew is pethagh (pētah). It is a very complex word, with many meanings.

It refers to the entrance of something, the systematic development of something, providing an opening, or something entering through a portal. It has this idea of providing access.

It also refers to the detailed exposition of some idea or teaching. The systematic explanation of something.

What the psalmist means is that when the word of God is ***expounded or studied***, or ***explored systematically*** in any way, when it is given the opportunity to unfold, it has the effect of **enlightening or illuminating the understanding**.

That is why it is important not only to read the word superficially, but to also scrutinize it, study it,

disassemble it into its component parts and extract all its nutritional value.

Many people only read the Word in a devotional way, which is good. But more important is to study the Word carefully.

Sometimes it is better to spend time on a single verse than to rush through two or three chapters without dwelling on the specific meaning of what we are reading.

The systematic study of the word of God **enlightens, illuminates,** the mind. The Word of God is associated with light.

A verse I memorized as a child is, “Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path.” That is found in **Psalm 119, verse 105.**

The word of God, entering us, enlightens us from within. It educates us. It illuminates our understanding. It has an instructive effect.

The word of God is for the spirit, but it is **also for the intellect and the mind.**

A person who studies the word of God throughout their life will be someone incredibly well educated and cultured.

Much of Western culture is based on the Bible. The Bible has given rise to much art, literature, philosophy, government, music.

The person who studies the Word of God in a disciplined fashion comes in contact with an immense amount of culture; and that expands their mind, affects their conversation, enriches their vocabulary.

The study of the Bible **exercises the mind** across many intellectual disciplines.

This effect of filling us with light also extends to our appearance. As we develop intellectually as a result of reading and studying the Bible, **our countenance begins to reflect that.**

We acquire the look, the expression, of an educated person. This is mysterious and quite insightful. **See Ecclesiastes 8:1**

Ecclesiastes 8:1
Who is like the wise?
Who knows the explanation of things?

***A person's wisdom brightens their face
and changes its hard appearance.)***

Finally, the Bible is an inexhaustible source of practical wisdom, of common sense, of knowledge about how to act wisely in life.

That is why here we are told here that the Bible “*gives understanding to the simple.*”

The word "simple" refers in the original Hebrew to a foolish, naive person who is easy to deceive, a person who is simple and clumsy in their way of reasoning.

The person who dedicates himself to studying the Bible acquires wisdom about all aspects of life. They are not fooled by what fools normal people. They acquire discernment. They learn to live soberly. Gain perspective on life. Walk with a sure step.

He who is instructed by the Word of God loses that innocence that often leads people to make foolish decisions and destroy their lives.

As we can see, the Bible is a truly amazing document. It's “marvelous!”

There is a reason why the Bible has had such a great impact on humanity for thousands of years!

It is almost impossible to truly understand this marvelous book without concluding that only an infinite intellect like God's could have produced it.

Today is a good day to celebrate this wonderful Word of God, and to commit to studying it for the rest of our lives!