

¹²⁹ *Your teachings are wonderful; I obey them with all my heart.*

¹³⁰ *The explanation of your teachings gives light and brings wisdom to the ignorant."*

Today's readings for your perusal are: Psalm 119: 129-136,
Romans 8: 26-39 & Matthew 13: 31-33 & 44-52.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

As human beings, we need to open our hearts up to God and this is a truth the Psalmist knew all too well that is why he said:

¹²⁹ *Your teachings are wonderful; I obey them with all my heart.*

¹³⁰ *The explanation of your teachings gives light and brings wisdom to the ignorant [unlearned, lacking in knowledge].* The Psalmist is

telling us that God's Word brings light into a believer's soul and this is something that we all need. We do not always know or see what we need to do in life, and many times we do not recognize our own problems but in the Psalm we are reminded here that through God's Word we get guidance and help. As men and women of faith we need God's light or wisdom to understand ourselves and to see how we need to change as well as how we can cooperate with God to make things better for us and ultimately for everyone we then meet or deal with in our lives. Reading God's Word is like looking in a mirror. It enables us to see what needs to be cleaned up in our lives. ¹³¹ *In my desire for your commands I pant with open mouth.* ¹³² *Turn to me and have mercy on me as you do on all those who love you.*

Again, the Psalmist recognizes God's wisdom, he accepts and recognizes God's faithfulness to the "judgements" that He has rendered in His word, how can we doubt God's judgements, we need to recognize them and act accordingly. ¹³³ *As you have promised, keep me from falling; don't let me be overcome by evil.*

¹³⁴ *Save me from those who oppress me, so that I may obey your commands.* ¹³⁵ *Bless me with your presence and teach me your laws.* ¹³⁶ *My tears pour down like a river, because people do not*

obey your law. As Christians we despair and grieve over the amoral or immoral society in which we live. We look around us and wonder how things have become so bad, how and why people deliberately turn their back on God and his life-giving Word. As Christians what do we do? We turn to God's Word for

comfort and guidance during these dark times and let God's blessing shine down upon us. Yes, be saddened at the disregard for God's Word, but pray for the sinners that they will gain wisdom and have their eyes opened before it is too late, after all everything that is taken to God in prayer is noted and God will answer it in His timing, just believe, be wise and not gullible as the people of the world are who listen to and follow false teachings. That leaves us with a question: How do we gain wisdom? The Answer: We study God's Word. We read and we meditate on His Word and we gain wisdom from it. Learn from God's Word and gain life. In the Bible the Apostle Paul reminds us that God has given us a helper to understand God's Word, that is why he tells us in the letter to the Roman church: ²⁶ *In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express.* ²⁷ *And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.* ²⁸ *We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose.* Dear reader God did not create us for failure, we may fail at some things on our way to success, but if we trust Him, He will take even our errors and work them out for our good. The Bible teaches us that God can take our mistakes and turn them into miracles if we continue to trust confidently in Him. ²⁹ *Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the first among many believers.* ³⁰ *And so those whom God set apart, he called; and those he called, he put right with himself, and he shared his glory with them.* ³¹ *In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

The good news is that God approved of you before anybody else got a chance to disapprove. If God approves of you and accepts you as you are, why worry about what anyone else thinks? If God is for you as Paul reminds us, who can effectively be against you? The answer: No one! ³² *Certainly not God, who did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son—will he not also freely give us all things?* ³³ *Who*

will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! ³⁴ *Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right side of God, pleading with him for us!* ³⁵ *Who, then, can separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it, or hardship or persecution or hunger or poverty or danger or death....* ³⁷ *No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! ... nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future,* ³⁹ *neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.* God is for us, but as Christians we also know that Satan is against us. The question we must ask ourselves is: are we going to agree with God or with the devil? You know the answer: Stop opposing yourself and mentally beating yourself up just because Satan is against you! We mustn't do that, God is for us always and He will never let anything separate us from His love, so take comfort listen for wisdom's call and heed the Holy Spirit and all will be well. Yes, sadly we also know that Satan uses people against us to belittle us and to slag us off and make fun of us, ridiculing our faith and putting falsehoods about our faith and beliefs, remember Satan works not just in the spiritual realm he also works in the natural realm through people. He tries to make us uncomfortable, by causing us to doubt ourselves and doubt our faith and the Word of God, but really do we want to worry about what man thinks of us, or do we want to think about what God thinks of us. If we know God is for us, then it should not matter how we feel or what other people think of us. Most of us need to be to some extent delivered from the fear of people and public opinion and from caring too much about what others think. What is important God's Word [wisdom] or the world's teachings [social media, people's praise, and opinion]?

God's Word gives us wisdom, that is why in the parables of Jesus he is telling us that true faith is giving up everything that is important in the world view to gain the Kingdom of God, through salvation and believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. That is why he referred to the precious Kingdom of God as a mustard seed, for faith starts of small but grows to be a

bastion of strength, suggesting that the kingdom of heaven will expand to world dominion and that people from all nations will find rest in it.³¹ *Jesus told them another parable: "The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man takes a mustard seed and sows it in his field. ³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it grows up, it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that birds come and make their nests in its branches."*

God gives us wisdom through His Word, and as leaven permeates a batch of dough, so the kingdom of heaven spreads through a person's life, it can also mean the growth of the kingdom by the inner working of the Holy Spirit using God's Word to be spread through us. ³³ *Jesus told them still another parable: "The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A woman takes some yeast and mixes it with a bushel of flour until the whole batch of dough rises."*

Wisdom once again lets us see the same truth here in these parables: ⁴⁴ *"The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man happens to find a treasure hidden in a field. He covers it up again, and is so happy that he goes and sells everything he has, and then goes back and buys that field."*⁴⁵ *"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man is looking for fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and when he finds one that is unusually fine, he goes and sells everything he has, and buys that pearl."* The parables tell us that the Kingdom of God is of such great value that one should be willing to give up all he has in order to gain it. In other words, stop listening to the false teachings abounding in the world today, give up all its false and worthless treasures such as people pleasing and gain true life. Remember Jesus taught us that you cannot buy your way into God's kingdom because it is only through faith and acceptance of Jesus Christ and God's Word do you gain the kingdom.

⁴⁷ *"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like this. Some fishermen throw their net out in the lake and catch all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When the net is full, they pull it to shore and sit down to divide the fish: the good ones go into the buckets, the worthless ones are thrown away. ⁴⁹ It will be like this at the end of the age: the angels will go out and gather up the evil people from among the good ⁵⁰ and will throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and gnash their*

teeth. Finally, the parable of the net teaches us that there will be a final separation of the righteous believers and the wicked non-believers or scoffers of truth. But we must not try to make such a separation now as some have done in some branches of the Christian church, to the detriment of the whole church body, because only the Lord will judge and there will be no mistake when that happens. So, do we gain wisdom from God and teach others, or do we seek to please people or do we give up everything the world sees as valuable to gain God's kingdom? Or do you say as Paul and many brothers and sisters since have said: *"My one desire is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection."* (Philippians 3:18)

PRAYER

Heavenly Father my one and only desire is to know Jesus as my Lord and Saviour and that your will be done here on earth. All I ask Father is that you strengthen me, guide my words and my actions so that in Jesus name I can be a blessing to those whom I meet in life. Keep me strong Lord and help me always to do your work.

Give me discernment so that I can tell what is real and true and what is false, for I know that I am surrounded by falsehoods, for they abound on the radio, TV, and social media, help me Father I pray to remain strong in faith so that I can hear these false teachings and recognise them for what they are and come to you in prayerful intercession so that your Word be heard and people have their eyes, ears and hearts opened up to your Truth so that they can in turn be saved.

Forgive me Lord for my own sins and weaknesses, cleanse me and renew me in and through your love, grace and mercy and let the cleansing fire of your Holy Spirit wash me clean so that I can stand strong and shine brightly in this dark and hostile world. Help me Lord to spread the gospel message of love and bring your love to those who need it.

In Jesus Holy Name I pray. Amen.