

Psalm 119:33-72

Read Psalm 119:33-40: The psalmist is asking God to teach him. We need God to turn on the light to understand the living word. The word used here for teaching is H 3384. It derives its usage from running water. In other words, God needs to turn on his faucet of wisdom and let it flow, so that we can receive it and apprehend it.

How does God teach us? That is where the Holy Spirit comes in.

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. (John 14:25-26)

Jesus saves us and delivers us; but the Holy Spirit encourages, empowers, fills us, and teaches us. I can remember being raised in the Lutheran church growing up. It was filled with much more loving and moral people than myself; but I was bored to tears. The praise and worship portion of the service seemed to me more like a funeral dirge. I had a friend who went to another church invited me to his High School group bible study. I did not see the point; since we had that in-house where I attended...but I reluctantly agreed to try it. I was blown away at how much more interesting the bible became when you rolled up your sleeves and really started digging and examining each nugget of truth. I commenced to read the bible every day. I can recall reading through Isaiah, not catching the relevance, beyond the historical record. I was literally sweating and grasping the little wooden desk in my bedroom. everything in my flesh was pulling me away from that commitment. It was very unpleasant; and yet I knew I needed it. I can recall praying for wisdom and a teachable spirit; because I felt like a spiritual slave. This psalmist asks for a teachable spirit and godly intentions. There is a correlation between our intention and our teachability. I clearly recall that the word became opened to me; and I *began to see the code* and translations more clearly. Suddenly, I could see the truth and the truths behind the self-apparent truths. I was able to begin a bible study with my family; and I had a lot to share. The Holy Spirit had to open my heart and my mind.

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do

they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. (Matthew 13:10-16)

Read Psalm 118:41-48: God has a treasure chest full of some very cool gifts that can really change our lives. We need to have a God-given transcendent attitude to see past what is standing in front of us. This psalmist is willing to put his life on the line and speak truth to the king's face.

We do not have to live a tortured and meaningless life. God has an abundant life-package that can really improve the quality of life for us. We are trying to get by on our 1980 computer; and God has a new one waiting for us. One tool that the psalmist and I really need is peace which passes all understanding. We are stubborn; and we repeat our mistakes.

I have to deal with continual fears and doubts and perceived threats. The returning thoughts of failure and doom can interrupt my otherwise enjoyable day. That is probably a combination of my DNA and my circumstances. God has a healthier perspective for me to walk in.

Another tool that the psalmist and I need is to have public boldness. The psalmist does not want God to let him stop proclaiming God's goodness. I know that I have *shrunk back from the microphone* when I could have glorified God. I have also experienced the boldness that comes from *the Spirit of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah*. Jesus is a good lion who does not need to be protected. God does not need an attorney to protect him; or anyone to defend his character. All we have to do is let the lion out of its cage and let him do his thing.

Read Psalm 118:49-56: We are like backpackers living off of God's provisions in an inhospitable and strange land. We have our moments of boldness and we have our moments of doubts and fears. Our bibles are like our good nutrition to keep us going in the face of spiritual obstructionists and enemies of God. God's promises to the psalmist keeps him going in the face of opposition. It keeps him going when

life rolls over him. Like a backpacker in the wilderness, I can be sitting under a tree, enjoying some scriptural trail mix and looking at the beauty of God's creation. Then something happens to rudely interrupt that moment. I may have to climb a mountain that was not in my itinerary. It may take me way out of my schedule. I can become frustrated when I feel like I am a slave to my circumstances. Sorting out my agenda verses God's agenda can be confusing. Things come along in my day to force me to do things that I would rather not.

Life can be a series of ways to test our deepest-held beliefs; by drawing them out in unpleasant circumstances.

But he honors those who fear the LORD; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; (Psalm 15:4)

There is an antidote that says fatigue makes cowards of all of us. I have to keep good spiritual nutrition; because I really do not know what the day will bring.

U.S. Army General George Patton wrote to his troops during World War 2, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all. Men in condition do not tire." Vince Lombardi agreed and motivated his players by saying it this way, "You've got to keep yourself in prime physical condition, because fatigue makes cowards of us all." It was one of Winston Churchill's favorite quotes as well. Why is fatigue such a problem? Why do the trials in our lives suddenly grow into giants when we're weary? Why does exhaustion cause us to make mountains out of mole hills? It's simple, really. Our bodies are *connected* to our mind and emotions. When our bodies become tired, our minds become drained. We can't think clearly, and maintaining an optimistic attitude is nearly impossible. Subsequently, our circumstances seem to be worse than they really are. So how do we conquer fatigue? We rest! "*Be still, and know that I am God*" (Psalm 46:10). We believe that God is in control of everything. Consequently, we can lay our weary heads on our pillows at night and *rest*. Though we may sleep, God never does (Psalm 121:4). Therefore, *we* can sleep! Get plenty of sleep every night, ideally 7-8 hours. It's during this time that God restores your body and mind. When you wake up in the morning feeling rested and refreshed, you're conditioning your body and mind to fight the good fight. And you're able to do so feeling invigorated. Ready to go. Excited to tackle your day! Remember to rest.

Read Psalm 118:57-64: We are motivated from the *fire behind us and the glory in front of us*. As weak humans, we need to have our hearts opened to want to please God and help other men. We also are stubborn and creatures of habit who need circumstantial motivation to get us up and moving.

Our bible study group is like a group of guys going to different *colleges of life* together. We are like brothers from other mothers. We all experience life's ups and downs. We taste the encouraging fellowship of the Holy Spirit; and we taste doubt and fear and anger. Both of these extremes propel us forward. Sometimes our ups and downs seem to be collectively tied together. Sometimes our bible study portion of scripture is about the things that we are experiencing.

Each of us has said that we are *all in*. We are trusting God, wherever this journey of life takes us. This psalmist is all in. He does not want to miss an opportunity with God. "I will keep taking steps towards you LORD".

We have seen how procrastination towards God takes away our life force. It is interesting how procrastination precedes hardship. Likewise with self-confidence. Even the most obedient face the same hardships. We all get wrapped up and get in over our heads in various dilemmas. I will praise God in my darkest hour; because I have put my trust in him. Being a believer does not mean that we are not afraid and doubtful. We just hand all that unpleasant reality to God for processing and renewal.

There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." (Daniel 3:2-18)

There are others who are with us facing these same threats.

Read Psalm 118: 65-72: The psalmist is taking inventory of his blessings. Doing this is important. We can easily only focus on what we do not have. I have to stop and be thankful for my exceptional wife, my beautiful children, my good health, my nice house and good job. I need to remember that I do attend a very good church, and I live in a good neighborhood. I am very blessed.

We are tempted to become pessimists by this fallen world. Believers are called to separate the precious from the vile. We need to keep a more accurate accounting of what is good and what is evil. Once we are motivated to use intellectual honesty we begin to see the error of our ways. We do not see that as clearly before God opens our eyes.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes (Proverbs 21:2)

Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him (Proverbs 26:12)

That makes me a tribal leader with a ton of accountability. My obedience will bless my whole tribe. My foolishness can be seen in all kinds of ways in their lives. We are not responsible for the sins of others; but we do not sin in a vacuum. Our good and bad decisions have a huge ripple effect.

We pray to receive blessings. One day we become aware that we have a large accumulation of blessings; that we need to protect and lead. One foolish indiscretion can have a massive impact on my tribe for years to come.

As family leaders, we do not stop getting tested. We are being watched by our kin and our acquaintances. Our faith walk is their example. There are certain things that we can only learn through adversity. If we want a strong tribe; then we must walk through a few fires to give them context.

The psalmist is desiring to honor God; and he is being persecuted for his faith. This is the same pattern in many psalms and throughout scripture.

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. (1 John 3:10-14)

Read Psalm 118:73-80: It is one thing to be honest and true. It is something else to contemplate the ramifications of what is true. The psalmist is a truth seeker. As he meditates on the word, he begins to put together correlations of blessings with truth. He clearly sees that he was hand made by God in his mother's womb.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:3-6)

You formed my inward parts; You overed me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! (Psalm 139:13-17)

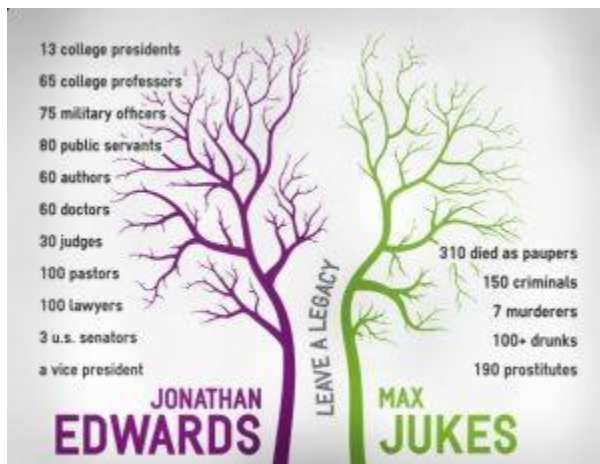
The psalmist's eyes are open to how his blessings affect his friends and family. To be blessed is to become a blessing. Below is a multi-generational study of one Christian man to a non-Christian man.

MULTIGENERATIONAL LEGACIES – THE STORY OF JONATHAN EDWARDS

July 1, 2017 by [Larry Ballard](#)

Jonathan Edwards, was a Puritan Preacher in the 1700s. He was one of the most respected preachers in his day. He attended Yale at the age of thirteen and later went on to become the president of Princeton college. He married his wife Sara in 1727 and they were blessed with eleven children. Every night when Mr. Edwards was home, he would spend an hour conversing with his family and then praying a blessing over each child. Jonathan and his wife Sarah passed on a great, godly legacy to their eleven children.

An American educator, A.E. Winship decided to trace the descendants of Jonathan Edwards almost 150 years after his death. His findings are remarkable, especially when compared to another man from the same time period known as Max Jukes.



Jonathan Edwards' legacy includes: 1 U.S. Vice-President, 1 Dean of a law school, 1 dean of a medical school, 3 U.S. Senators, 3 governors, 3 mayors, 13 college presidents, 30 judges, 60 doctors, 65 professors, 75 Military officers, 80 public office holders, 100 lawyers, 100 clergymen, and 285 college graduates.

How may this be explained? Edwards was a godly man, but he was also hard working, intelligent and moral. Furthermore, Winship states, "Much of the capacity and talent, intensity and character of the more than 1,400 of Edwards' family is due to Mrs. Edwards."

Max Jukes' legacy came to people's attention when the family trees of 42 different men in the New York prison system were traced back to him. He lived in New York at about the same period as Edwards. The Jukes family originally was studied by sociologist Richard L. Dugdale in 1877.



Jukes' descendants included: 7 murderers, 60 thieves, 190 prostitutes, 150 other convicts, 310 paupers, and 440 who were physically wrecked by addiction to alcohol. Of the 1,200 descendants that were studied, 300 died prematurely.

These contrasting legacies provide an example of what some call the five-generation rule. "How a parent raises their child — the love they give, the values they teach, the emotional environment they offer, the education they provide — influences not only their children but the four generations to follow, either for good or evil." What a challenging thought! If someone studied your descendants four generations later, what would you want them to discover? Do you want an Edwards' legacy or a Jukes' legacy? The life you live will determine the legacy you leave!

Believers are to become keepers of archives of truth; because our world is hiding truth. To love truth will produce a hatred of lies. We are flooded with false narratives, imaginary political correctness values, re-written history, false blame and personal attacks.

