

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
CXIX. The Vast Value Of God's Word
E. Edifying Reliability In A Harmfully Unreliable World
(Psalm 119:33-40 [He])

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

There exists a huge and harmful degree of unreliability in many institutions and human beings today:

(1) The current presidential administration is harmfully unreliable: The federal government has immigration laws on the books to protect its citizens, but former President Donald “Trump repeatedly warns that Biden-Harris open borders are turning New York into a ‘Third World nation,’ and America into a ‘Third World’ disaster.” (Betsy McCaughey, “Word games can’t conceal Third World impact of open borders,” Republican-American, October 9, 2024, p. 6A) Mr. Trump’s charge is a fair one, for “(f)elonies are up 35% in New York City since 2019, and an estimated 75% of arrests in midtown Manhattan for assault and other crimes are illegal migrants.” (Ibid.)

(2) Many Democratic leaders are harmfully unreliable: “(T)he 10th Amendment decrees that all powers not specifically granted to the federal government are reserved to ‘the states and the people.’” (Stephen Moore, “We can get along by letting states decide,” Ibid., October 5, 2024, p. 6A) However, “Democrats seek” to push a leftist agenda, and to that end, they want “to *federalize* nearly all policies, which forces all Americans in every state to live under the same sets of laws and policies. They want to nationalize union policies, environmental policies, energy policies, welfare policies, taxation and so on. They want to de facto toss out the ninth and 10th amendments altogether.” (Ibid.) As a result, our nation is “becoming more geographically segregated – not on the basis of race or ethnicity or income but on ideology. Red states are getting redder. Blue states are getting bluer. In recent years, an estimated two million Republicans have moved out of states like New York for states like Florida, Texas and the Carolinas.” (Ibid.)

(3) Harmful unreliability often marks local elected officials: “U. S. Sen. Chris Murphy’s campaign . . . commercial shows the senator on another campaign walk around the state. He says, ‘What I find on this walk is that the things people care about here in Connecticut really don’t change: the cost of living, how much money are they making, how much they are paying in taxes, are their neighborhoods safe?’” (Chris Powell, “Murphy commercial hints at the issues against him,” Ibid., October 3, 2024, p. 8A) Mr. Powell who wrote this story asked, “Would people keep expressing such concerns if they were satisfied? . . . Of course if people’s major concerns never change, eventually they might figure out that re-electing officials who never change anything won’t help.” (Ibid.)

(4) However, much of the public itself is harmfully unreliable: (a) Chris Powell’s story, “Pension system is politically impossible to fix” (Ibid., October 8, 2024, p. 6A), noted the high cost to taxpayers of injustices in the state employees’ pension system, but that these problems cannot be fixed because “Connecticut has many more politically active state and municipal government employees and retired employees than it has politically attentive and engaged citizens . . . If Connecticut is ever to have a better public life, it will need a better public.” (Ibid.) (b) David Harsanyi (“America’s bipartisan suicide pact on spending,” Ibid., October 14, 2024, p. 6A) stated a similar concern, writing, “The greatest moral hazard in American life is politics . . . The more the government spends, the less Americans expect to pay. The more dependency it creates, the less self-reliance it expects . . . It would be one thing if the state were lifting citizens from poverty, but it is creating a permanent underclass.”

Need: *So, we ask, “What would God have us do about the harmful unreliability that abounds in today’s world?”*

- I. **Psalm 119:33-40 [Section He] addressed the topic of reliability, with the marks of reliability being noted in Psalm 119:33-35 and the cause and solution to unreliability being described in Psalm 119:36-40.**
- II. **Thus, reliability is a product of a believer’s delighting in Scripture, for God enters into such a believer’s daily experience with richly rewarding blessings that produce reliability in that believer, v. 33-35:**
 - A. Reliability starts with a believer’s delighting in reading and applying Scripture in his life (v. 35b).
 - B. For one who delights in reading and applying Scripture, God ministers in three very edifying ways:
 1. First, God causes such a reader to understand His Word (v. 34a).
 2. Second, the Lord then uses His Word to point out the path that the reader should take in life (v. 33a).
 3. Third, God leads the reader to take specific steps in the path God has led him to take for blessing (v. 35a).
 - C. Thus, the believer who understands Scripture that is his delight, who is then led by God’s Word into the path in life that God wants him to take, and who then is taught by God’s Word the specific steps God wants him to take in that divinely chosen path finds heeding Scripture *reliably* an ongoing, joyful exercise, v. 33b, 34b, 35a.

III. However, if one delights in the lusts of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of this life of the world (1 John 2:15-16), he lacks God’s blessing and becomes harmfully unreliable in his daily life, Psalm 119:36b, 37a.

IV. Accordingly, God’s SOLUTION to harmful unreliability in a believer involves the Lord’s strenuously “bending” his heart to delight in His Word versus indulging in the deceitfulness of the world, v. 36-40:

- A. God initially positively encourages a spiritually unreliable believer to focus on Scripture by fulfilling its promises if that believer even occasionally applies Scripture, what urges him to delight in Scripture, v. 38.
- B. However, if the unreliable believer fails to apply Scripture, God can permit him to face reproach by godless foes to force the believer to seek refuge and solace in Scripture, Psalm 119:39!
- C. In time, the spiritually unreliable believer then learns to long for Scripture all the time so that he consistently enjoys God’s blessing instead of facing repeat trials, resulting in the believer’s becoming reliable, v. 40.

***Lesson:* There is a painful way and an edifying way for a believer to become reliable: (1) the painful way is to find that indulging in the lusts of the eyes, the flesh and the pride of this life, or worldliness, is not only unfulfilling, but that it lacks God’s blessing to where God will drive him by trials to see the value of consistently using His Word. (2) The edifying way to be reliable is to start delighting in Scripture reading and application, to which action God will lead one to understand His Word, to use it to point out the path he should take and to guide him in the specific steps he should take in that path for blessing. (3) The edifying way is much to be preferred to the painful way!**

***Application:* (1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we apply Psalm 119:33-40 as needed to be reliable.**

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and/or provide additional guidance . . .)

If we delight in Scripture, God provides edifying guidance on the issues of concern noted in our introduction:

(1) On the current presidential administration’s unreliability regarding national immigration, (a) Romans 8:22-23 teaches that all creation and we ourselves as believers groan within ourselves with the Adamic curse on nature and its effects in a godless world, that we should set our hope on the blessed life to come in eternity. (b) Meanwhile, Acts 17:26-27 ESV reveals that God sovereignly arranges for “allotted periods and the boundaries of” the “dwelling place” of “every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,” that the massive violations of the current immigrations laws on the books do not hinder God’s overall plan for the groups of mankind that dwell either in or outside of our nation’s borders. (c) Thus, our focus should be on discipling all people groups wherever God in His permissive sovereign will has decreed where and when they should dwell, Acts 17:30; Matthew 28:19-20.

(2) On the effort of many Democratic leaders to try to federalize all policies opposite the 10th amendment, we should simply follow the Lord’s leading in our lives as to where to live, when to live there, why so, and what we are to do and why instead of thoughtlessly reacting to unjust political circumstances! Psalm 119:33-35 (described above) will guide us on this for God’s blessing, for He has a detailed agenda for every one of us that results in blessing.

(3) On the unreliability of elected officials to solve issues like the high cost of living, high taxes, adequate income and safe neighborhoods, (a) God wants us to function independently of entities in the secular world, including the government, for our material needs, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12. (b) Since state government grants us the right and power to vote, regardless what we think of the credibility of today’s electoral process, we are responsible to God to vote in the Biblical interests of society and to live a good testimony before the world, 1 Peter 2:12-15. (c) Ultimately, who actually comes to power is God’s concern (Romans 13:1), so we must leave all election results with the Lord!

(4) On the unreliability of many people in the general public to offset wrongs by a super majority of one party in the state (or possibly the nation), (a) we need to heed 1 Peter 2:12-15 as a matter of testimony before the world and vote when we have opportunity to do so best to affect a Biblical outcome for society. (b) Meanwhile, we must seek to care for our own financial, health, spiritual, physical, etc. needs as independently of secular authorities as we can to preserve our testimony and to avoid being in any need. (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:23 with Luke 10:34)

(5) On the way progressives in government positions seek to create a dependent, impoverished class through high taxation, deficit spending, etc. that entices people irresponsibly not to address their own livelihood needs, (a) we should work for a living (2 Thessalonians 3:10), (b) provide for the needs of our own households (1 Timothy 5:8) and (c) practice frugality (as in John 6:12), (d) budget (as in Luke 14:28-30), (e) minimize debt (Proverbs 22:7), (f) be vigilant with our income streams even in times of wealth or retirement (Proverbs 27:23-27) and (g) invest sensibly (Eccl. 11:1-6) to avoid impoverishment and to be a good testimony in an increasingly irresponsible world.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we apply Psalm 119:33-40 as needed to be reliable for God’s blessing.