

Dear Emmaus family,

September 25, 2021

*Let the words of my mouth  
and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in your sight,  
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.  
(Psalm 19:14)*

My dad used to begin his sermons with this verse. I'm sure I didn't understand it when I was really young. But I know that, in time, the words became a treasure to me. I must have heard this verse thousands of times. They still bring comfort to me.

The psalms provide a key to understanding the heart and mind of the ancient Hebrew people – God's chosen people. One of the enduring strengths of the psalms is that they offer comfort in times of need, in times of discord, in times of desperation, in times of celebration, in times of... You get the point.

*7The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.  
8The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the eyes.  
9The fear of the LORD is clean and endures forever;  
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.  
10More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold,  
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.  
11By them also is your servant enlightened,  
and in keeping them there is great reward.  
12Who can detect one's own offenses?  
Cleanse me from my secret faults.  
13Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;  
let them not get dominion over me;  
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.  
14Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in your sight,  
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.*

Psalm 19:7-14 gives us the psalmist's view on the commandments of the Lord. The writer sees the teaching of the Lord as perfect, and just, and clear. The psalmist

tells us that the statutes of the Lord are to be more desired than much fine gold, that they are sweeter than honey.

Have you ever thought of God's commandments in this way? Some people just think of God's commandments as being a way for God to take all the fun out of life. Seriously, I've heard that before.

After the psalm writer finishes gushing over the greatness and sweetness of God's law, he gets to the point of committing himself to following God's law with all his heart. Of course, realizing that he cannot do this on his own, he asks God for help in the matter.

Finally, when we come to verse 14, the words take on special meaning. The writer intends this to be a statement of his faith in God and his commitment to follow God's law with all his heart.

Now, I may not think of the commandments of the Lord as sweeter than honey or more valuable than much fine gold. However, if we were to meditate on God's law, we would likely find our own superlatives to use to describe this gift that God has given to us.

I understand the preacher's use of this verse to mean that, in the words of the sermon, the preacher wants the words and the thoughts that go into the preaching to be acceptable to God. Committing ourselves to loving God's Word and living God's Word, we would want the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart be acceptable to God.

With just one more week to go for the \$10,000 Hurricane Ida relief challenge, we have received about \$2,200. Let's try to get all donations in by October 3. You may put your donation in the offering plate at the door of the church or by mailing it in to the church office.

This week, at all three services, we will be receiving a group of sixteen new friends into membership. We rejoice in God's blessings as we see our congregation grow in love and service through these new members.

**This week at Emmaus:**

**Sat., Sept. 25**

5 p.m. – Sanctuary Worship – with reception of New Members

6:30 p.m. – Portico Worship – with reception of New Members

**Sun., Sept. 26**

10 a.m. – Sanctuary Worship – with reception of New Members

11 a.m. – Adult Study

1 p.m. – Boy Scout event

**Mon., Sept. 27**

Noon – AA meeting

7 p.m. – Cub Scouts

**Tue., Sept. 28**

10 a.m. to noon – Food Pantry distribution

Noon – AA meeting

6:30 p.m. – Boy Scouts

**Wed., Sept. 29**

Noon – AA meeting

**Thur., Sept. 30**

Noon – AA meeting

**Fri., Oct. 1**

Noon – AA meeting

As you go about your week – living out your own schedule – completing the tasks of your life – may you devote your life to living out God's Word and law. And let the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart be acceptable to God our strength and our redeemer.

Grace upon grace,  
~Pastor Mark