

My delights ... my affliction. (Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] For the Lord's help, I will direct your attention to Psalm 119, verses 92 and 93. Psalm 119, verses 92 and 93.

Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction. I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me.

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This psalm is full of holy and gracious experience.

Much of it may well speak to us, if not all of it, of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in his soul exercises in his humanity.

[1 : 31] And this is why much of the scripture becomes so precious to the children of God when they feel that what is here described or there described has been felt by their Lord and Saviour in his pathway upon the earth.

How gloriously shall we discover then the application to these opening words, unless thy law had been my delight.

The law referred to at this stage, of course, would be that which goes before in the scriptures of truth.

The Hebrew word is the Torah, is Torah, and has particular reference to the books of the Pentateuch. The law which the Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in and came to fulfill was undoubtedly that which is contained in the Old Testament.

We should not fail to bear in mind, however, that there is the gospel in the Old Testament. There is the gospel even in the Pentateuch.

[3 : 16] And therefore, we may consider this word to that extent, unless thy law had been my delight. Sometimes we have pointed out that when God gave the law of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, almost simultaneously, he brought in the ceremonial law.

The moral law and what we read subsequently in the following chapters in Exodus 21, 22, and so on, where reference is made to the laws concerning this person, that vocation, this situation, are all glorious, insofar that they shadow forth the holiness of God, the justice of God, the perfection of God, and the mercy of God.

The mercy of God is shown in that he provided the ceremonial law so that if the poor man or woman was convicted under the one, there was salvation recommended and to be sought for under the other.

rightly speaking, we cannot delight in the law of condemnation.

It brings sadness, sorrow, distress, anguish of spirit, fears, and all those things which would seem to be just the opposite of one delighting in them.

[5 : 44] And yet, there is a sense in which, as the apostle says, I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

the inward man sees the perfections of God set forth even in the condemning aspect of the law which discovers to us the righteousness of God.

But then, we come to consider the beauty and the glory that is to be contained in the ceremonial law.

It was but a shadow and a time for things to come. If David or the writer of this psalm could say, unless thy law had been my delight, and had delighted in the shadow, how much more would his delight have been increased in the fullness and satisfaction of all things as was the case when the Lord Jesus Christ came to be the fullness of all things.

Unless thy law had been my delights, the faithfulness of God is demonstrated in the law of God, the law of condemnation, the law also of ceremony and rite.

[7 : 41] God was faithful, faithful to the words that were spoken in the garden of Eden. faithful that though Eve and Adam had sinned yet, there was a way of salvation opened up continually through the scriptures, there was, there is an acknowledgement of sin, there is also the pathway made out whereby such sin may be forgiven.

Hence we have the blessed words in Psalm 130, if thou lodgest mark in equity, O God, who shall stand, but there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

Now that is in the law of God. In consequence, thy law had been my delights. The psalmist here in this psalm speaks to us on various occasions about the attraction that the law had to his soul.

He refers to it as being his meditation all the day. What supports us in the time of our affliction?

What supports us in the time of our distress? In the time when we cry out, Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me surely it will be nothing less or more than what we have here unless thy law has been my delights.

[9 : 52] I should then have perished in mine affliction. Affliction spoken in the singular here insofar as it relates to the church of God may be said to have its description in the seventh chapter to the Romans.

The effect of sin in our members, the paralyzing effect that it has, the prospect of despair that it can bring, trying and yet never succeeding.

Our strength being weakened in the way, temptations abounding and our weaknesses discovered. And yet, the good man, Paul, he knew both the law that searched him out and also the law that delivered him and saved him from sinking.

He could look as he would explain, particularly in the epistle to the Hebrews, of the limitations imposed upon the sacrifices, the shedding of the blood of boars and of goats, their inadequacy, their limitations in type, and yet at the same time it only enlarged the glory of Christ who, having offered himself once, sat down at the right hand of God till all his enemies be made his footstool.

When the people of God are in affliction, and is there a time when they're not, we read in Zephaniah, I have left in the midst of Zion and afflicted and poor people, not sometimes afflicted, not sometimes poor, but without any qualification and afflicted and poor people, and they shall call upon the name of the Lord.

[12 : 40] The psalmist shows to us his feelings concerning mine affliction, not thine, not somebody else's, but mine affliction.

See, the word of God will ever point to us personally. we cannot feel another's affliction.

We cannot enter fully into it. If we know a little, we may seek to sympathize with them, and yet the heart knows its own bitterness, and who is he that can intermeddle with its joy?

we find in the verse before us, then, an affliction which was bitterness. We also find in the verse that which brought joy, enjoyment, and pleasure into the soul of the psalmist.

Furthermore, he says, I should have perished in mine affliction. There is no doubt about it. I should have perished in mine affliction.

- [14 : 07] Sin would have overcome me, and all that that means, in all its development, pride, envy, malice, the things which are spoken of in the scriptures, all these things would have brought me down to despair, and I should have perished in mine affliction, unless thy law had been my delight.

How precious then must the scriptures of truth be to the saints of God, but that is not sufficient, and that is not adequate.

we may indeed read the scriptures of truth, we may indeed receive the scriptures of truth, but we need more than a mental application to enter into what the psalmist here refers to, thy law had been my delights.

Pleasure, delight, is an emotion. spiritually considered, this can only be our experience when the spirit of God softly comes upon our spirits and touches it, touches at our spirits.

Then, how different all things appear. Then, we are saved from perishing in our affliction. Then, we are saved from going down into the pit.

- [15 : 54] How understandably, we may look at the words in Psalm 28, Be not silent unto me, O God, lest if thou be silent unto me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

When we think of those that go down into the pit, we may think of those that by reason of their ungodliness and profanity may sink into hell at last and never hear the voice of God.

Equally, we may also think of those who have put on a profession of religion, who acknowledge the truth even, and yet, not hearing the voice of God, their hearts are not changed.

They are enveloped in their sin, because they are still under the law, sin has dominion over them. So, we may well see the fervent cry of the psalmist when he says, I should then have perished in mine affection, unless thy law had been my delight.

hearts. It may be that from the first psalm, we can get some precious truth in respect to this.

- [17 : 24] Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate that night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Now, we come to a remarkable contrast.

The ungodly are not so. A simple statement with a world of meaning. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveeth away.

We may therefore bring forth a clear proof as to where we stand in relation to the truth of God by linking this first psalm with the verse that we have read this morning.

- [18 : 53] Unless thy law had been my delights, I should have then have perished in mine affliction. why did not the psalmist perish in his affliction?

It is because he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. So therefore God plants his people in those places where the waters of truth of the love of God of the mercy of God will flow and his branch will sometimes her branch sometimes will feel the uprising the movement of life within.

And when we feel the movement of life within then it is that we can say thy law had been my delights.

We need to place a proper importance upon this word unless the good man here he puts his salvation so to think on thy law had been my delights.

It was this. It was his meditation in it. Not from a legal standpoint. Not in the letter of the word. but by the power of the spirit resting upon him that he was saved from perishing in his affliction.

[20 : 48] The work of the spirit of God is not dependent upon natural things. Neither is it impeded by natural elements.

the work of the spirit of God can be continued in the night time as well as in the day.

When the psalmist says I meditate in thy law that did not necessarily mean that it would be confined to the hours of light.

Some of you I'm sure would know what it is to meditate upon your bed and meditate in the law of God and feel that law to be a delight.

The law which is God's faithful demonstration of God's faithfulness. The law which speaks to us of God's power. The law which speaks to us of God's kindness and of his mercy.

[21 : 57] Unless thy law be my delight how do we look at the scriptures of truth? When the power of the spirit comes upon us there's only one way in which we can and will look at the scriptures of truth and that is they will be the joy of our heart.

Thy word was found and I thy words were found and I did eat them and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

In the day of affliction mine affliction how personal is the work of God in the soul mine affliction I should then have perished in mine affliction unless thy law had been my delights.

Mine affliction as it refers to the solemn experience of simple simpleness in our nature simpleness proceeding from the carnal mind that carnal mind which is enmity against God and cannot receive the things of the spirit of God neither can he know them because they are spiritually deserved.

what a power there is in our own beings to bring us to destruction to bring us to perish now the word of God sends forth to the gospel sends forth the gospel to them that are ready to perish hence we have it in the 27th of Isaiah and it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria and the outcasts in the land of Egypt and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem sin takes various courses in its operations and

[24 : 37] Satan is not slow to work in our members in order that we might be brought to the borders of the pit my mind just goes to one of Gansmah's hymns the carnal mind takes different ways and different objects she surveys she's pleased with things that suit her taste but hates the God of truth and grace no beauty in the Lord she views nor is she charmed with gospel news she sets at naught with vain contempt the man the Lord Jehovah sent and this is the extremity of our case the carnality of the mind the enmity that arises there from we will not have this man to reign over us we may not say anything we dare not say anything to others what we sometimes felt within the wickedness and the enmity of the carnal mind against

God but what an affliction it is and unless thy law had been my delight unless that law had brought into my soul by the uprising the spirit the power of life look unto me or the ends of the earth and be saved for I am God and there is none else precious are some of those passages in the book of Deuteronomy the 33rd chapter we may think upon which concludes with this there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun who rideth upon the heaven in thy help and in his excellency on the sky the eternal God is thy refuge this is in the Pentateuch this is in the Torah this is in the law which is here referred to does it bring delight into our soul when being pressed out of measure we are ready to perish there is none like unto the

God of Jeshurun the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee and shall say destroy them it is not possible for us in our own strength to thrust out the enemy but God is able to thrust out the enemy Israel then shall dwell in safety alone the fountain of Jacob that is upon a land of corn and wine also his heaven shall drop down due happy are thou O Israel who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord the shield of thy help and who is the sword of thy excellency and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee and thou shalt ride upon their high places the

Lord which brought delight into the soul of the psalmist bringing delight into his soul it delivered him from the fear of despair and the fear that he would perish in his affliction do we feel sometimes that this will be so with us that we shall perish in our affliction well the psalmist will be our companion unless thy law had been my delight unless thy law was revealing the holiness and justice of God on the one hand reveals the mercy and faithfulness of God on the other shows to us what God is you see it is one thing for us to observe

God as being the judge what's a different feeling we shall have when we observe God by faith as it enters into our soul as our eternal refuge can we dwell upon that word just for a moment not just a refuge not just a temporary place but an eternal refuge the eternal God is thy refuge therefore since it is the eternal God eternal must have reference to the refuge as well the psalmist refers to that refuge also again in the 91st psalm where we read he that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty

[30 : 22] I will say of the Lord he is my refuge and my fortress my God in him will I trust hence I should then have perished in mine affliction unless thy law had been my delight unless in reading the scriptures that the psalmist knew there was a revelation of God in his mercy a revelation of God in his tenderness a revelation of God in his affection and condescension now as we look at our own individual experiences containing mine affliction can we also bear our witness that our salvation laid in this thy law had been my delight it brought renewed life into my spirit it made me willing in the day of

God's power it released me from the power of sin it set me in a good place it brought me to the feet of Jesus making me willing to learn of him it caused me to hear set your affection on things above there is one affliction or shall I say affliction mentioned in the singular term here and in the Colossians affection is referred to again in a singular sense set your affection on things above if our affection is because of the things of the earth then God sets on the other side affection on things above are we capable of doing this ourselves indeed we are not the apostle therefore says if ye then be risen with

Christ set your affection on things above and not on things on the earth we have to do with the things of the earth but says the scripture where your treasure is there will your heart be also now here we refer to something again which belongs to us as individuals where is our heart how many mistakes people can make by judging by appearances we can say this because sometimes we have judged by appearances foolishly and come to a wrong conclusion about others but we have also had to bear the affliction of others coming to a conclusion by appearances concerning ourselves which have been quite wrong they presumed that our affection was there on the earth our affection was in heaven they did not and they could not see the affliction that was upon us and in our souls which would well be described

I should then have perished in my affliction with all the aspects of affliction which keeps us down earth bound I should have perished but there is a risen Christ if ye then be risen with Christ the people of God will have this witness in their souls they are risen with Christ they rise and break through all and their affections yea their affection is full and complete and they can well say under these circumstances let others stretch their arms like seas and grasp in all the shore give me the visit of thy face and

I desire no more this will bring into our soul the law of God in all its delights if the spirit of God should open to us the books of Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy to just mention these five principal books that the Hebrew word here would refer to yet what preciousness there is see that thou do all things according to the pattern that was shown me in the mount our eyes are often dim a veil is over our heart the beauty that is to be discovered in the meticulous rearing of the tabernacle in the wilderness the reason for this being that every aspect of it has a reference to

[36 : 26] Christ we don't see it but we believe it's there and if the spirit of God should come then we shall not perish in our reflection because all that was at the command of God and in the law of God in those early Old Testament days speaks to us about salvation speaks to us about the glory of Christ speaks to us about the riches of his work speaks to us about the effectiveness of his atonement speaks to us about the wonder of his righteousness speaks to us about the richness of his God head speaks to us about the glory of his humanity set before us in such things as the covering of the tabernacle the badger skins and so on they may have attracted little attention attention to humanity of

Christ to a multitude attracts little attention they say oh he's just a man but to be brought into the glory of the tabernacle to see there the riches of the Godhead veiled in the humanity of Christ will surely produce in our soul what we have here thy law had been my delights it will save us from perishing in our affliction oh that we might be favoured to be led by the spirit of God into that aspect of the tabernacle now in the tabernacle there was also the holy place and what glories are set before us there when we consider the ark of the covenant the ark of the covenant and above it the mercy seat

I should then have perished in mine affliction been overcome by mine affliction sunk down to everlasting despair by mine affliction unless thy law be my delight it is our privilege and favour to see the law fulfilled the types and shadows of the ceremonial law now finished with but that should not prevent our looking at them as the spirit of God may instruct us that we may see the beauty which God set forth to spiritual Israelites as they beheld their Messiah in all his beauty in his excellency in his purity in his riches as well as in his richness all typified what is it that saves our souls from perishing in our affliction it is when

God by his spirit causes his law to be our delight so that we rejoice we rejoice in the law of God rejoice in that which discovers to us the wonders of Christ Jesus our Savior the pivoting word unless unless here we find salvation delivering us from going down into the pit unless can we say this morning in respect to the salvation which we look for and hope for if we do that it all revolves upon this one word unless I should then have perished in mine affliction unless I should have been overcome by mine affliction

I should have sunk down by mine affliction all that is felt within as well as that which comes to us without unless thy law had been my delights unless I beheld that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believe it unless I had seen in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law that sweet love of God which went forth to be slain and was to be an acceptable sacrifice and in that sacrifice was to take away all that sin which was and is mine affliction now you see the day will come when we shall lay our head upon our pillows and mine affliction will be mine no longer but my delights will now expand into the glorious fullness and wonder of an eternal experience our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more eternal weight of glory while we look not at the things which are seen by an affliction but at the things