

Lesson 5: Psalm 119:33-40 – He

Prayer for Understanding and Guidance

<i>ESV</i>	<i>NKJV</i>	<i>NASB</i>	<i>NIV</i>	<i>NLT</i>
33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes; and I will keep it to the end.	33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end.	33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall observe it to the end.	33 Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.	33 Teach me your decrees, O Lord; I will keep them to the end.
33 Teach me, O Lord, the pathway of Your statutes, and I will obey (keep, walk in) it to the end.				
<p>Commentary:</p> <p>Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes. Show me the route on the map and I will follow it to the destination; point out the direction, the pathway in which I am to go.</p> <p>“The attitude of the speaker reveals that he senses that there are hidden depths to God’s revelation that cannot be searched out by man without divine help.” (<i>Leupold, Exposition, p. 830</i>)</p> <p>The way. The path of righteousness; the path of obedience. Scripture presents two possible pathways through life: 1) The path of righteousness / wisdom; and 2) The path of wickedness / foolishness.</p> <p>I will keep it to the end. The psalmist’s determination, commitment, to obey God’s Word and walk in His ways.</p> <p>A commitment to a lifetime of obedience to God’s Word. He could not conceive of finding anything else in life that would take the place of God or His Word.</p> <p>1 Kings 8:57-58 – “The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers. May he not leave us or forsake us, that we may incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his rules, which he commanded our fathers.”</p>				
<p>Application:</p> <p>“Dear Lord, please give me the determination to obey Your whole Word with my whole heart for my whole life. Please forgive me for the innumerable times that I have grieved and quenched Your Holy Spirit by my sins. Thank You for not giving up on me and dealing with me as my sins deserve.”</p> <p>“I pray that, by Your grace and mercy, I will be faithful unto You and obedient unto Your Word to the very end of my life.”</p>				
34 Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and	34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I	34 Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law And keep it with all my heart.	34 Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.	34 Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions; I will put them into

observe it with my whole heart.	shall observe it with my whole heart.			practice with all my heart.
34 Give me understanding, that I may keep Your law and obey it (put it into practice) with my whole heart.				
<p>Commentary:</p> <p>Give me understanding. Discernment, direction, instruction, perception, wisdom. <i>(Strong's Concordance)</i> Understanding of God, His Word, myself, the world. God gives this understanding through His Word. The psalmist's acknowledgement of his dependence on the Lord for the ability to understand God's Word and to successfully apply its teachings to his life. He recognized that spiritual understanding and discernment are more than just ordinary human understanding. It is not just a matter of applying your mind to something. This requires the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 16:17 – And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." And observe it with my whole heart. His determination to obey God's Word wholeheartedly. Whole heart. The center of man's being, including the mind (intellect), heart (emotions and affections) and will (volition). Wholehearted obedience and devotion. Wholehearted (adj) = completely and sincerely devoted, determined, or marked by complete earnest commitment: free from all reserve or hesitation. <i>(Webster's Dictionary)</i> Philippians 2:12-13 – "...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good pleasure." Romans 12:11 – "Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord."</p>				
<p>Application:</p> <p>Do I have a devoted heart or a divided heart? Am I a single-minded man or a double-minded man (Jas. 1:8)? "Lord, I gladly and humbly acknowledge my complete dependence on You for a clear and accurate understanding of Your Word. Dear Holy Spirit, please teach me, guide me, give me understanding and help me to obey and apply Your Word to my life and ministry. Please give me a heart that is committed to wholehearted devotion and obedience of Your Word. Please forgive my lack of devotion and commitment."</p>				
35 Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.	35 Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.	35 Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.	35 Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.	35 Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found.
35 Lead me (make me walk, direct me) in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it (for that is where my true happiness is found).				

Commentary:

Lead me in the path of your commandments. The psalmist’s recognition that he did not have the wherewithal to walk in obedience to God’s commandments without His help. His total dependence on the Lord.

For I delight in it. His delight in obeying, living according to, God’s Word.

“...such keeping of the Lord’s law is not burdensome but a true delight.” (*Leupold, Exposition, p. 831*)

Application:

“Dear Lord, I echo this prayer: Make me, cause me to walk in the path of Your commandments. My sinful nature has no desire to do so, and I am often overcome and controlled by the desires of my sinful nature rather than the desires of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I need and want You to make me, to cause me, to walk in the path of Your commandments. Please help me to truly delight in obeying and living according to Your Word.”

36 Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!	36 Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness.	36 Incline my heart to Your testimonies And not to dishonest gain.	36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.	36 Give me an eagerness for your laws rather than a love for money!
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36 Turn my heart toward Your testimonies (give me an eagerness for Your Word), and not toward selfish and dishonest gain (the love of money and material things).

Commentary:

Incline my heart to your testimonies. “...‘incline my heart,’ that means, let me bend all my thoughts in that one direction.” (*Leupold, Exposition, p. 831*)

“Cause my heart to be inclined to them, or to be disposed to keep them. This, too, is a recognition of dependence, and a prayer for guidance.” (*Barnes’ Notes*)

Colossians 3:1-3 – “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”

“...the singer knows that God must supply the deepest motivation...” (*ESV Study Bible, p. 1095*).

And not to selfish gain. The psalmist recognized his need for God's help in turning away from evil things to righteous things.

The psalmist’s dependence on God for a proper attitude toward His Word and money (the material things that money can buy).

“These verses [36-37] warn us that our hearts and minds (‘eyes’) must be focused on the truth of God and not material wealth and the vanities of the world (vv. 51,157). Outlook determines outcome. Abraham looked for the heavenly city and ended well; Lot looked at Sodom and ended badly (Gen 13; Heb 11:8-16). What the heart loves and desires, the eyes will see (101:2-6; Num 15:37-41; Jer 22:17). To have one eye on the world and the other on the Word is to be double-minded (cross-eyed), and God does not bless double-minded people (James 1:5-8).” (*Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary*)

Application:

So often my heart is inclined toward other things. What is the occupation of my heart, my mind? Toward what am I inclined? What do I eagerly pursue?

“Lord, I echo this sentiment. Incline my heart to You, to Your Word, to Your ways. My heart is prone to wander and is often inclined toward the things of this world and the indulgence of the lusts of my sinful nature. Please, incline my heart, mind and will to You. Please give me a wholehearted devotion to and delight in You, Your Word and Your ways (vss. 34-35).”

37 Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.	37 Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.	37 Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity, And revive me in Your ways.	37 Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.	37 Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word.
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37 Turn my eyes away from looking at worthless things, And revive me (give me renewed life) as I walk in obedience to Your ways.

Commentary:

Turn my eyes away from looking at worthless things. “And turn my heart away from desiring them.” Satan got Eve to look at the forbidden fruit and contemplate its beauty until desire overcame her will.

Worthless things. “... ‘vanity’...all that is hollow, worthless, and trivial. The cheapest objectives for life may be selected by men and captivate a man’s eye or fancy.” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 831)

People become enslaved to the pursuit of vanity. “Trivial Pursuit” is not just the name of a game; it is the epitaph of many people’s lives.

Revive me in Thy ways (NASB). We need a daily “revival” from the Lord so that we hunger and thirst after Him and His ways.

Application:

“Lord, You know that I have often set my eyes on ‘worthless things.’ Please turn my eyes and my heart away from looking at worthless things. Help me to set my heart on (to desire) things that are pleasing to You. And revive me spiritually as I walk in obedience to Your ways.”

38 Confirm to your servant your promise, that you may be feared.	38 Establish Your word to Your servant, Who is devoted to fearing You.	38 Establish Your word to Your servant, As that which produces reverence for You.	38 Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared.	38 Reassure me of your promise, made to those who fear you.
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38 Reassure me, Your servant, of the reliability and trustworthiness of Your promises, so that I will fear You (hold You in reverential awe and respect) as I ought.

Commentary:

God’s faithfulness and dependability should produce the fear of the Lord within me.

Fulfill your promise to your servant. (NIV) "In this verse the term 'promise' is really 'word.' ...make a promised word come true." (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 831)

That you may be feared. "...the recognition that he is the true God." (NIV Study Bible, p. 916)

As that which produces reverence for Thee. (NASB) A continual diet of God's Word produces a proper attitude / mindset toward God. "...a wholesome reverence." (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 831)

Application: "Lord, I pray that You will cause me to fear You as I ought."

39 Turn away the reproach that I dread, for your rules are good.	39 Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments are good.	39 Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your ordinances are good.	39 Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good.	39 Help me abandon my shameful ways; for your regulations are good.
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39 Help me to turn away from my sinful and shameful ways, for Your Word is good.

Commentary:

Turn away the reproach that I dread. The antidote for shame is obedience to the Word.

Take away the disgrace I dread. (NIV) "It could be the reproach that comes from God when His good ordinances are not kept ...the guilty conscience of the sinner ...Or it could be the reproach that comes from unsympathetic men, which we 'dread' or fear to encounter because of our timidity of faith ...it would seem to be this second kind of reproach that is thought of." (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 831)

Application: "Please help me to turn away from my sinful and shameful ways to the ways of Your Word."

40 Behold, I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life!	40 Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.	40 Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me through Your righteousness.	40 How I long for your precepts! Preserve my life in your righteousness.	40 I long to obey your commandments! Renew my life with your goodness.
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40 O, how I long for Your Word! In Your goodness and righteousness, revive me (give me renewed life)!

Commentary: The psalmist's love and deep desire for the Word of God. His total dependence upon it for his spiritual life.

Application: "Revive me spiritually, Lord on a daily basis."

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33 Teach me, O Lord, the pathway of Your statutes, and I will obey (keep, walk in) it to the end.
34 Give me understanding, that I may keep Your law and obey it (put it into practice) with my whole heart.

35 Lead me (make me walk, direct me) in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it (for that is where my true happiness is found).

36 Turn my heart toward Your testimonies (give me an eagerness for Your Word), and not toward selfish and dishonest gain (the love of money and material things).

37 Turn my eyes away from looking at worthless things, And revive me (give me renewed life) as I walk in obedience to Your ways.

38 Reassure me, Your servant, of the reliability and trustworthiness of Your promises, so that I will fear You (hold You in reverential awe and respect) as I ought.

39 Help me to turn away from my sinful and shameful ways, for Your Word is good.

40 O, how I long for Your Word! In Your goodness and righteousness, revive me (give me renewed life)!