

# BETHEL MATTERS

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### *Three Verses in Psalm 119 on How God Uses Affliction*

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses. It has for a theme the exalting of God's Word in the life of believers. Almost every single verse speaks of the Word of God in one of eight different ways: law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, word and ordinances. Vv. 1-2 pronounce blessing on those who receive the Bible's work in their lives.

Little more than one third of the way into the Psalm, the Psalmist brings up the issue of afflictions in three separate verses, vv. 67, 71, 75. Apparently, the Psalmist had been slandered by shameless enemies who wanted to smear his reputation, vv. 69-70. I remember hearing Pastor John MacArthur once say that people-pain can be the worst form of pain. Physical pain sometimes pales in comparison to the pain people can inflict upon us with false accusations and vindictiveness. As the Psalmist reflected upon this, he strung together three, almost consecutive lessons on God's purposes in afflictions of any type we may bear.

**God uses affliction to bring about correction.** Verse 67 says, *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.* The term for *astray* means to "*sin ignorantly.*" It suggests straying off the path by being deceived or led astray. Clearly the Psalmist was a man of God, but he knew that with a fallen nature he was vulnerable to self-deception that would lead to unintentional sin. Unintentional sin is still sin, but it goes undetected so that we can continue in it for a long time. God uses affliction to get our attention, block our path, or make us see ourselves as we really are. Then His corrective Word can do its work on us. I recall a time of self-denial when I rationalized sin in my life. A broken relationship brought me to my knees in repentance and confession. I have been careful about the particular error I fell into ever since.

**God uses affliction as a good teacher.** Verse 71 affirms, *It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.* The Psalmist moves the lesson one step further. Once affliction has corrected we can now learn the positive truth that we recognize is good. This reminds us of 2 Timothy 3:16, *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.* I have sat visiting in jail cells with people whose incarceration corrected their selfish ways. They saw the right way and vowed never to return to the wrong way. Affliction was hard, but ended up being a good teacher. Charles Spurgeon said the book of suffering was the best volume in his library. He learned more from it than any other.

**God uses affliction because He is faithful to His children.** Verse 75 teaches, *I know, O Lord, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.* *Faithfulness* carries the idea of *fidelity* or *loyalty*. It means that God can be counted on to do what is in the best interest of those He loves. Since affliction is painful we assume the God administering it is not good. We may become disillusioned. Haddon Robinson is often called the dean of homiletics professors. His father became ill and prayed for healing. When it didn't happen, in his simplistic faith he became disillusioned with God. But when advancing age put Mr. Robinson in a nursing home near his son, Haddon visited his dad for lunch every day until he died. Imagine how many people would love to spend one hour every day with Haddon Robinson. That would be worth almost any illness. Mr. Robinson had a faithful God who gave him a great treasure at the end of his life in the daily visits of his son. Only a loyal God would do that.

Your friend, learning thru affliction,  
Pastor Brian (-:-).

## From the Family Life Pastor:

### Thoughts:

Over the last several weeks I have been doing some pulpit supply (preaching) for some other churches. I am always honored to have an opportunity to share God's Word with God's people, but have to admit that it is very intimidating and challenging because God's Word speaks to this in a variety of ways.

In 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV) it says ***“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of Truth”***. The emphasis when preaching or teaching God's Word is to “handle it” correctly or rightly. We must always make sure that we don't add to it or subtract from it or avoid certain portions because they might be too controversial or difficult.

In Mark's gospel, we are told that there will be those who will come along and lead people astray. Mark 13:21-23 says: ***“And then if anyone says to you, ‘look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ Do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand”***. I am conscious that there are people out in pulpits today who are excellent “preachers”, but their message may be incorrect or intended to lead people astray. We must be on guard against such people.

I think of the Luke's warning in Luke 17:1-2 ***“Jesus said to His disciples: ‘Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin’.***” We often think of this verse regarding “little ones” to be talking about children, but it is talking about one who is a less mature Christian and who can be led astray from the truth of God's Word. We must always preach and teach understanding that we must ***“rightly divide”*** or ***“rightly handle”*** God's Word so that it helps people to grow closer to God, not further from Him.

On another subject, I have had numerous conversations with numbers of people who have been given “advise” by Christians that is not biblically based nor is it biblically correct. When we are giving advice, we must make sure that what we are telling them is what God's Word says, that it truly does say that.

This is another example for the verse that says about leading the person astray. For example, some people say things like you need to trust “more”, or you

need to pray “more”, or you need to read the Bible “more”, all of which are great, but those things alone will not bring someone closer, in most cases it will do the opposite, they will pull further away from God feeling that God is demanding too much of them and therefore they cannot accomplish it so they give up.

The thing that I get out of these verses is that we need to teach correctly so that people will grow in their understanding and how to apply God's Word.

We need to come alongside and mentor, disciple and encourage people in their Christian walk. That is done by giving time, energy and love to people – and directing them to find answers in God's Word, by helping them to find it.

We also need to live out and model God's Word before people. It is easy to tell, to teach, to “do” all the “right” things, but it is much more difficult to “model” what a Christian looks like. We need to be models of Christianity to others so that they are drawn closer to Christ.

### LASTLY:

There will be an article in Bethel Matters, and you will see more and more information coming out on this Summer's Mix-Ups. Summer Mix-Ups are a time when we take our ABSs and mix them up so that you are with different groups – we will have Junior Highers up through the oldest people in the body all coming together to study God's Word together. It is good for the Older to teach the Younger, but remember that sometimes we can learn from the younger as well!

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Hank

### Prayer Chain & Official Notices

[bethelemail@gmail.com](mailto:bethelemail@gmail.com)

If you have a prayer request or information that you want shared, please send that to the email address above. If you are not receiving email prayer requests or notices, please contact Ann or Ellen in the church office at 228-7589.

**Items for the June Issue  
of Bethel Matters  
are due in the office  
by, Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Items for the Happenings  
are due in the office  
by Wednesday noon.**

Have you visited our Bethel Website?  
Check it Out at:  
[www.bethelmarquette.com](http://www.bethelmarquette.com)  
Audio Sermons are posted weekly  
along with items of interest,  
Bethel Matters, Calendar,  
and Happenings.

## Youth Events & Activities

**Junior High Youth Group**  
6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

**Senior High Youth Group**  
9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Sundays 5:30 - 7:00 PM

### Questions:

Chris Mauser, Director of Youth Ministries  
1-330-550-0141  
[christopher.mauser@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.mauser@gmail.com)



### Happy May Birthday/Anniversary to:

1. Kelly Herriman, Jerry Napier
7. Jay Oberg
8. Terry & Shelley Gould (A 41 yrs), Brian & Sarah Goupil (A)
9. Sarah Goupil
10. Dave Buhl
12. Jim & Jane Noew (A), Alice Nelson
18. Abby Nelson, Lisa VanderSchaaf, Austin Wixtrom
19. Drew Quinn
21. Dan Short, Lukas Nelson
22. Andy Larsen
23. Josh Vissering, Dave Dahlstrom
25. Rick Newman
26. Alina Nelson
28. Sarah Johnson, Isaac Johnson
29. Jeanne Pelto
31. Olive Peters (97 yrs), Lowell & Lynn Hintsala (A 37)

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## Congratulations To:

**Matthew & Laura Songer** on the April 5<sup>th</sup> birth of their granddaughter, Liliana Morwen Songer, born to their son, Jason and Lori. She weighed in at 8 lbs, 12.4 ozs and was 21.5 inches long.

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## Adoption Shower

for Jess & Ysa McGurn  
Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>,  
6:30 PM

at Sandy Thomsen's  
405 E. Crescent, MQT

If you want to contribute towards a  
group gift, contact Sandy by May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Ysa is 5 years old.





**Bridal  
Shower**  
for  
Allyson Kytta

Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:30 PM

at Sandy Thomsen's

405 E. Crescent, MQT

If you want to contribute towards a  
group gift, contact Sandy by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

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## Bible Studies

### For Men

Tuesdays, 6:30 AM, Coachlight Restaurant

Questions: contact Pastor Hank 228-7589

### For Ladies

Studies will begin again in the fall.

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## Summer Mix-Ups:

This summer we will again be having our Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) mix-ups. For those who are not familiar, we will randomly mix up all of the current ABFs into mixed groups. These classes will include people from Junior High up through our oldest members.

We have ten (10) men who are going to lead or be subs in leading the mixed up classes. We are going to be studying a book **“Growing Strong In God’s**

**Family.** Each family will receive a copy of the book and will be asked to work on it during the week as a family, and then come prepared to discuss the lessons on Sunday.

This can be and is a lot of fun, and will be even more fun and good for spiritual growth if everyone works to be prepared.

The mix-ups will begin on May 21<sup>st</sup> and you will receive your books that Sunday. We will end the mix-ups on August 13<sup>th</sup>.

We hope you will all participate. Class assignments will be posted on the wall in the hallway between the Wheat Room (Primetimers) and the Nursery.

Any questions, contact Pastor Hank at 228-7589.

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## AWANA Year End Update

Our cubbies and sparkies won the **Penny Wars** by bringing in the most pennies/bills verses silver coin bombs by the T and T clubbers. The total raised was \$143.11. The real winner is the AWANA Club we help support in the Philippines.

### Year End Book Awards

Congratulations to the following clubbers:

**Cubbies:** Owen Edge and Micah Nelson for finishing their second Cubbie book.

**Sparks:** Joshua Frederick, Aurora Gregg, Aubrey Kakich, Jackson McGurn, and Emma Sherrill for finishing their third Sparks book.

### **T and T:**

Excellence Award - Tristan Kroll, Caden Steede, and Chase Thomsen

Third Book Award - Haley Frederick

Timothy Trophy - Aiden Edge, Isaac Johnson, Ethan Maki, Philip Nelson, and Brianna Steede

A huge **THANK YOU** to our leaders, helpers, secretaries, and all of our volunteers.



### Vacation Bible School 2017

Monday - Saturday

June 19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>

Exploring the coolest Book on the planet.

#### VBS Needs

Prayer Support

Volunteer Workers

Clean Gallon Size Milk Jugs

White or Blue Tablecloths (97 cents at Walmart)

Bags of white cotton balls

Quilt Batting

Scrapbook Paper

Colorful 3/8 inch wide ribbon

Glue dots

Washable markers

Continue making snowflakes

Please bring all craft donations to Becky's office  
across from the nursery

Questions: call Bethany at 458-9310

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Just a reminder of the **Bethel Women's Retreat** May  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> at UP Bible Camp.



*From the Mailbox:*



*Dear Bethel,*

*Thank you so much for the beautiful plant sent for Janet's memorial service in Montana. We appreciate your prayers and support.*

*Allan Borrett and family*

*Dear Bethel Baptist,*

*I had so much fun visiting your church and having the opportunity to meet many of you. I am so excited to get to partner with you in reaching the International Students in Dusseldorf, Germany. I know God has amazing plans in this partnership. I can't wait to see what He does. Thank you so much for your gift of support and your prayers. I'm excited to have you a part of the team!*

*In Him,*

*Brianna Lietka*



**FOSTER CARE KIDS  
COMPASSION  
CASES**

what comes from the heart  
goes straight to the heart

#### **Let's help build Compassion Cases!**

Compassion Cases goal for Marquette County is to eliminate the need for trash bags and instead send our local foster kids a message of love, support, and hope. Join Marquette Area Mothers of Preschoolers and Foster Closet of Minigan in collecting 150 duffel bags, suitcases, and diaper bags along with a comfort item and a book during the month of May. Check out the poster in the foyer for specific items for the bags.

Drop off Location: Bethel Baptist Church  
Contact Person: Brooke Loewen 906-201-1083  
Email: [CompassionCases906@gmail.com](mailto:CompassionCases906@gmail.com)