

The First 8 Reasons for Reading the Bible

Psalm 119.1–8

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Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs on the Word of God

Prelude:

I. When you first saw my sermon title,

A. did you ask yourself,

1. “The *First* 8 Reasons for Reading the Bible?”
2. “How many more reasons will he list?” or
3. “Why only the first 8 reasons today?”

B. The reason I am *not* giving the rest of the reasons today

1. is because there are 168 more!
2. However, in the future I will give you more in segments of 8.

II. Where did I get these 8 reasons, and the other 168, totaling 176?

A. I got them from the 176 verses of Psalm 119.

B. If you divide 176 by 8, you come up with 22,

1. the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.
2. Lord willing, I will give you the second 8 reasons at the end of next year,
 - a) in 2016, the third 8 reasons, and so on,
 - b) making this the longest-lasting series of sermons I have ever done,
 - (1) culminating in 2035, and
 - (2) not only is that Lord willing, but
 - (a) you will have to have me until that time!
 - (b) By that time I will have been here 33 years!

C. Psalm 119 is an alphabetic psalm.

1. The beginning of the first eight verses starts off with the first Hebrew letter.
2. The second eight verses, each verse starts off with the second letter.

3. And so it goes until you get through the whole Hebrew alphabet.

a) The last verse of the Book of Psalms says,

**6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord!
(Psa 150.6)**

b) Paul wrote to our Corinthian brethren,

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God (1Co 10.31).

(1) Therefore, even let the alphabet praise the Lord.

(2) Let our writing and speaking, praise the Lord.

(3) It does because He created it.

Persuasion:

I. Psalm 119.1 – Undefined

**1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the law of the LORD!**

A. The blessedness of being undefiled:

1. The Lord accepts you.
2. The Lord shall not cast you away.
3. You are pure as a creation of God.

B. This blessing comes through walking in the Law of the LORD.

1. He created us
 - a) He created our natural environment, and
 - b) He created the spirit.
2. Therefore, He knows
 - a) what ruins our way in life, and

- b) what is the way to take in life.
- 3. All revealed in the word.

II. Psalm 119.2 – Blessed

2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

A. Blessedness comes from two things:

- 1. Keeping the Lord's testimonies.
- 2. Seeking the Lord with the whole heart.
- 3. Coaches wanted 110% in football – 1Co 9.25

B. How can you know what to keep

- 1. unless you read it in the word and meditate upon it?
- 2. This is what the Lord told Joshua as he prepared to lead Israel,

7 “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, *that* you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it *day and night*, *that* you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. *For then* you will make your way prosperous, and *then* you will have good success” (Jos 1.7–8).

III. Psalm 119.3 – No Iniquity

3 They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways.

A. Walking in the ways of the Lord keeps you from iniquity.

B. Watch yourself in the future and discover

- 1. that when you sin,
 - a) were you in God's word,
 - b) were you living in His word, and

2. that when you were not sinning,
 - a) were you in God's word,
 - b) were you living in His word?
- C. Do you so want to live that you are not sinning all the time?
 1. Do you hate sin?
 2. Does your sin anger you?
 - a) Start reading the Bible everyday.
 - b) Be sure to read all the Bible.
 - (1) See how it affects your life.
 - (2) See how it turns you from bad things to good things.

IV. Psalm 119.4 – The Lord's Desire

4 You have commanded us To keep Your precepts diligently.

- A. Who is the Lord to command us to do anything?
 1. The Lord created us.
 2. The Lord sustains us daily.
 3. The Lord shall get an account of our lives at the judgment.
 4. The Lord knows the only success way to live.
- B. Therefore, He commands us to keep His precepts diligently.
 1. Do not play around with your Christianity.

V. Psalm 119.5 – Direction

5 Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes!

- A. The psalmist longed for a life in which he followed the Lord's direction.
 1. Does that picture you?

2. Do you see how to fix it?
 - a) The psalmist prayed to the Lord about it.
 - b) Second, he set his heart on it.

B. However, how can you know what to keep,

1. if you do not read it for yourself?
2. You can listen to me or another preacher/teacher, but
 - a) when you discover truth on your own,
 - b) you remember it better, and
 - (1) it will thrill your soul.

VI. Psalm 119.6 – Unashamed

6 Then I would not be ashamed, When I look into all Your commandments.

A. Why do some people not read the Bible?

1. They are ashamed when they read or hear the Lord's commandments.
2. They know that they are not doing them.
 - a) Therefore, hearing the Scriptures makes them uncomfortable.
 - b) The psalmist knew this about himself.
 - (1) He knew that he did not keep all the Lord's commandments.
 - (2) However, he loved the Lord, and
 - (a) he wanted to have joy when he looked into the Lord's word.
 - (b) He did not like the feeling of shame.

B. He wanted to restore the thrill that comes from looking into the Scriptures.

1. If you do not know what I mean,
2. start reading the Bible daily, and
 - a) make sure that you read all of it,

b) then you will discover the meaning.

VII. Psalm 119.7 – Uprightness

**7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.**

A. What does it mean to be upright?

1. It means standing up without hanging our heads in shame.
2. We have no fear, but
 - a) face the world boldly.
 - b) That leads us to praise the Lord.
 - (1) When you praise the Lord,
 - (2) you discover
 - (a) the meaning to your life,
 - (b) joy,
 - (c) peace,
 - (d) contentment, and
 - (e) fulfillment.

B. We become upright when we learn the Lord's righteous judgments.

1. The Lord shows us the way to be.
2. The Lord does not merely forbid and command,
 - a) He teaches the way of life.
 - b) Remember the words of Jesus,

6a Jesus said...“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14.6a).

VIII. Psalm 119.8 – Not Forsaken

8 I will keep Your statutes;

Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

- A. The psalmist set his heart on keeping the Lord's statutes, because
 - 1. The psalmist knew this to be the key to the Lord's acceptance.
 - 2. We want the God of heaven to accept us, but
 - a) how can we expect Him to accept us,
 - b) if we have no intention of accepting Him?
 - (1) We show Him that we accept Him
 - (2) by our determination
 - (a) to keep His statutes, and
 - (b) by our reading His word to discover those statutes.
- B. He did not want the Lord to forsake him.
 - 1. How do you feel and what do you think
 - a) when someone you love or
 - b) when someone important in your life
 - (1) rejects you?
 - (2) The hurt and the hallow feeling in your gut can destroy you.
 - 2. The point of the cross of Jesus is
 - a) that He took on the sin of the world, but
 - b) that the Father, who is of such pure eyes
 - c) that He cannot look on evil,
 - (1) had to do something horrible the day man crucified Jesus,

33 Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Mark 15.33–34).

- (2) Jesus knew the empty feeling, the upset feeling in the gut,
 - (a) when experiencing rejection from
 - (b) someone you love and from someone important in your life.

C. However, you do not want to have that experience for an eternity.

1. Therefore, starting with the new year,
2. make a new beginning for your life and
 - a) start reading the Bible.
 - b) I recommend reading the whole Bible every year.
 - (1) You do not have to do it that way, but
 - (2) whatever you do,
 - (a) be sure that you through the whole Bible,
 - (b) whether in one year, two years, five years, twelve years.

Exhortation:

I. You can enhance your Bible reading experience tenfold

- A. by using a Bible that has everything stripped from it,
- B. except for the text itself and perhaps the chapter numbers.
 1. Back in October, I started using the *Reader's Bible* of the ESV.
 - a) One sister in the congregation has said of this Bible,

“Two things that stood out for me were: 1. I could see that it read like a letter, as if I had gotten it in the mail. Before it was hard to see that with all the breaks of the verses. 2. As I am reading further I’m seeing the difference of how Paul wrote and Peter wrote. Very different. Before I didn’t see that. Besides seeing the different styles of writing of each man I was able to see some of their personalities. Paul seemed so encouraging and Peter seemed more bold to me. I am learning so much with reading this Bible. I look forward to reading it in the mornings. I’m very happy with this Bible!! I think that everyone should at least try it. Biblehopper”

2. Another one is coming out: BiblioTheca.co (not .com). [Show view of it.]

II. Use my web site: EmailDevotionals.com.

A. You will receive emails at 2:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

1. The morning one is on the Old Testament, and
2. the afternoon one is on the New Testament.
 - a) Wake up in the morning and there is an email from me.
 - b) Get home from work and there is another email from me.

B. What are these emails like?

1. Most of the time on the front page of the bulletin,
2. I have two articles.
 - a) The top one is about the Old Testament and
 - b) the bottom one is about the New Testament.
 - (1) They are always of my email devotionals from two years ago.
 - (2) However, they do not have the Bible reading listed.

C. Here is what an email looks like...

III. Vivien Henshall can tell you what she does with the YouVersion Reading Plans.

IV. After today's services,

A. along with the Thought for the Week,

B. I will pass out the Bible reading tract that I use,

1. "Through the Bible in a Year"
2. by Good News Publishers.
 - a) It has no commentary or anything else,
 - b) just the Bible reading for the day to get you through the Bible in a year.

V. What is at stake with reading the Bible or not reading it?

A. Heaven and hell.

B. The best life now.

VI. The entire Bible points you to Jesus.