

## Lent Devotional April 9, 2019

### SCRIPTURE

#### Psalm 119:73-80

- <sup>73</sup> Your hands have made and fashioned me;  
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.
- <sup>74</sup> Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,  
because I have hoped in your word.
- <sup>75</sup> I know, O LORD, that your judgments are right,  
and that in faithfulness you have humbled me.
- <sup>76</sup> Let your steadfast love become my comfort  
according to your promise to your servant.
- <sup>77</sup> Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;  
for your law is my delight.
- <sup>78</sup> Let the arrogant be put to shame,  
because they have subverted me with guile;  
as for me, I will meditate on your precepts.
- <sup>79</sup> Let those who fear you turn to me,  
so that they may know your decrees.
- <sup>80</sup> May my heart be blameless in your statutes,  
so that I may not be put to shame.

### DEVOTIONAL

#### Corey D. Rugh, M.Div. '18 / Graduate Student, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Va.

When reading these verses from Psalm 119 one easily sees the intimate language between “me,” the fragile human, and “you,” the Lord, the one to be feared (v. 74), the one who judges (v. 75), the one who is faithful (v. 75), and the one who loves (v. 76). The psalm welcomes us into sharing a tender moment with the Lord. But this psalm is not *merely* a prayer flowing from a deep relationship with the Lord, though it certainly is that; it is also the psalmist’s expression for the desire to know and follow the Lord “commandments,” “word” (v. 73), “law” (v. 77), “precepts” (v. 78), “decrees” (v. 79), and “statutes” (v. 80).

Does this combination seem foreign to us? How many of us would naturally use “mercy” and “law” in the same sentence (v. 77)? Are we comfortable meditating on the Lord precepts as well as delighting in the law? Do we feel the threat of shame if our hearts are not found blameless in the statutes of our Lord (v. 80)? Do we hope that others who “fear” the Lord will “see” us and “turn” to us because we have hoped in His word and know His decrees?

As followers of Christ, we know that, many years after the writing of this psalm, a King, a Savior, was born in the small town of Bethlehem. He walked the earth proclaiming the kingdom of God, healing the sick, clashing with other Jewish leaders, and teaching the crowds who came to hear Him. He possessed abundant mercy, and all those to whom he showed mercy were given life (see v. 77). He corrected the misuse of the law by other Jewish leaders, such as the Pharisees, and showed his vast knowledge of and love for the Lord’s commandments, precepts, decrees, and statutes. He taught a rich man that the two greatest commandments are to love God with all that we are and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He promised that all who “see” and “turn” to Him will know the Lord and His ways. Thus, not only can we imagine Jesus praying these verses from Psalm 119, but we can also imagine that it is He to whom we have been praying this psalm all along.

**PRAYER**

Loving Father, we thank you for welcoming us into sharing a tender moment with you through the words of your servant. We pray that your steadfast love becomes our comfort and that we may take delight in your law and precepts. We thank you for our faithful King and Savior, Jesus Christ, who through his life, death, and resurrection has made it possible for our hearts to be found blameless in your statutes. We are grateful that our faith in Jesus is enough for you. May the Holy Spirit give us the fruits of love so that we may serve those around us. We pray all these things in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.