

The Fruits of a Sanctified Heart

Psalm 119:57-64

57 The Lord is my portion; I promise to keep your words.

58 I entreat your favor with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise.

59 When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies;

60 I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.

61 Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

62 At midnight I rise to praise you, because of your righteous rules.

63 I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

64 The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!

This Psalm has been and will continue to be filled with God's promises through His eternal, unchanging Word. In the preceding eight verses, we are encouraged that God is the cause of our hope, rooted in His Word. We receive the direct comfort of God in affliction through His Word, a comfort that is brought to us by His Spirit, a constant and comforting companion in our journey of faith. Even amid persecution from the lawless, God keeps His servants from turning away from Himself. Meditation on the Word, which is eternal and unchanging, is an excellent source of comfort in light of God's faithfulness to His Word. There truly is a blessing in obedience, the blessing of communion in the presence of the Almighty. The fruit of sanctification is a new, obedient heart; the end is eternal life.

57 The Lord is my portion; I promise to keep your words.

While we can accumulate many things in this life, such as jobs, land, vehicles, and houses, the most crucial question is what portion endures forever. Our emphasis on a particular portion can reveal where our heart truly lies (**Luke 12:34**). Placing hope in the transient things of this world is unreliable because nothing physical in this world lasts forever. However, our hope in God as our portion is unwavering and enduring, strengthening our hearts as we journey through this world (Ps 73:26). God as our portion means that He is our ultimate source of satisfaction and fulfillment, and our relationship with Him **is what truly matters**. With God as our portion, we respond with a promise to "keep His word." This is the active part of sanctification, where we turn towards God. The passive act of sanctification is God giving us new hearts, and these new hearts give us grace-driven godly desires that align with His Lordship through His Word in our lives. In other words, God has caused us to turn from our sins, and we turn to God.

18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me (Acts 26:18).

With His Spirit working in and through us as a guarantee to an eternal unfading inheritance, how could we not serve Him faithfully in this life when we are worshipping Him for all eternity in the next life? This is our promise to Him.

58 I entreat your favor with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise.

A sanctified heart is a fully devoted heart that appeals to God's great mercy and grace. When God sets His seal upon a person, the seal includes the whole person: the heart, mind, soul, and strength (**Matt 22:37; Deut 6:5-6**). Grace and mercy are not empty but according to His promise. What promise is the most pressing that fallen humanity needs the most? Salvation, being brought back into communion with God.

5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that being justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:5).

Our promise to keep His Word is contingent upon His promise to bring us back to Himself. God's grace and mercy are available through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; the gracious work accomplished by Jesus guarantees the manifold blessings that come with salvation. God is gracious to us by the means of the cross.

59 When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies;

In this verse, sanctification is an active process where we consider our ways and turn again back to God (repentance) and His testimonies, which are tried, sure, and true. This is a quick repentance as well. God's witness always stands true because He is like men who lie (**Hebrews 6:18**). Jesus is our true witness, who, through His faithfulness in martyrdom, has made a path for us to turn to God (**John 14:1-3**). This is guaranteed by the Spirit of truth, who dwells in those God has put His seal upon (**John 14:15- 17; Ephesians 1:13- 14**).

14 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation (Rev 3:14).

We can take comfort in the knowledge that when we turn our feet towards God, He will guide us in truth by His Spirit on the celestial road to His eternal throne. We take comfort in the fact that it is by His mercy that we have been given the Spirit to guarantee that we will not be led astray into death. In His faithfulness, God can more than finish the work He has started in us (**Psalms 138:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:24**). Amen. We have Jesus, who has already cleared the path and prepared the way. Sanctification is something that God has already accomplished, yet it is also something that progresses in the believer. Heaven rejoices when the prodigal thinks about his ways and returns home to his father. The same prodigal who disregarded his father's estate and took his inheritance, yet he knew that it would be better to be a servant in his father's house than a man of the world.

60 I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.

Because we can trust God's testimonies, we should not hesitate to conform to His revealed truth in His inspired and inerrant Word. The Word is a guard to keep us from going astray, yet it is neglected when we don't consult it every day when we don't walk the path of righteousness. This obedience stems from the mercy the psalmist has already petitioned God for in v.57. God has already removed the heart of stone, which could not seek to walk in His ways, and has given the psalmist a new heart paved with the royal law of love to guide him to the heavenly place. The Spirit hastens our hearts with grace when we read the Word. Quick repentance is immediately followed by quick obedience, or it is never repentance. The initial work of repentance is done by God (turning our hearts away from sin), and that is why it is passive because it is a gift (Acts 2:37).. The active part of sanctification is where we turn our hearts toward God (Psalm 27:8). We know from the Word that because of the depravity of sin, the wicked human heart is not inclined to seek after God (**Psalm 14:1-3**). The turning prepared is the way, and God, in His grace, calls us in faith to obey. His Word is a hope that won't lead us astray.

16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city (Hebrews 11:16).

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61 Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law.

Injustice and persecution have caused many to spurn God, but not the psalmist. Despite the repeated attacks by the wicked thus far, he remembers God's Law. God is just and will rebuke the lawless one who has walked away from Him (v 21) but takes away scorn and contempt for those who walk in His testimonies (v 22). The enemy's plots are replaced with a delight in God (v 23). For those who taunt, we rest in God's steadfast love (v 41-42). Derision turns the psalmist to God, who gives him life (v 49-50). God does not forget us, nor the wicked who spurn His children. Therefore, we cannot forget His law. Here is an enduring promise from God's Law.

*14 But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me."*

*15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child,
that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?*

*Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.*

*16 Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me (Isaiah 49:14-16).*

Jesus, after his resurrection, still displayed the marks of the crucifixion on his hands and side (**John 20:27**) so that the marks of our iniquity will not be remembered anymore (**Psalm**

130:3-4). He was forsaken on the cross so we could be brought near (**Mark 15:34; Psalm 22:1**). The wicked surrounded Jesus, yet even in His last moments, He did not forget the Law. Because God did not forget us in our hopeless estate but instead was held in derision Himself. How could we forget Him when the wicked try to ensnare us still?

62 At midnight I rise to praise you, because of your righteous rules.

Even if we are awakened by anxiousness in the middle of the night, we rise in praise to God Most High. The psalmist remembers his promise to God to praise Him when he learns His righteous rules. Studying and learning the Word of God should bear the fruit of joy in a heart that has been redeemed by the Lord. How precious are the promises and righteous the decrees? They are to be desired more than gold, and in keeping them, there is great reward (**Psalm 19:7-11**). The Word shines like a light in the darkest of souls and situations to bring salvation (**2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 5:8**). Through the Word, we gain knowledge of the beauty and perfection of the Righteous One, Jesus Christ!

21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

God's faithfulness springs up from the ground as His righteousness looks down from the sky; they both meet at the cross in His perfect judgment (**Psalm 85:10-11**). With this one righteous judgment, many are counted righteous and saved from His judgment. Those who accept Jesus are saved, and those who reject Him are condemned. The response should always be praise, even at midnight, not only praise but a life that constantly dies to sin and lives to righteousness with other members of the household of the redeemed (**1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:7**).

63 I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

God has not only given us through sanctification the desire to live for Him in righteousness but also to fellowship with one another in the congregation of the redeemed. We are united on many common beliefs; we have the one and same Spirit, Lord, faith, baptism, and Father (**Ephesians 4:3-6**). By the same grace, we have respect and reverence for our Holy God, and we stand in awe of His amazing grace. The body of Christ is not meant to be a community of acquaintances, and one of our defining marks is fellowship in the unity of the Spirit, encouraging each other to grow in the fear of the Lord. We encourage each other through the Word.

23 The fear of the Lord leads to life,

and whoever has it rests satisfied;

he will not be visited by harm (Proverbs 19:23).

Fear, or reverence for God, and the desire to live for Him guarantees eternal life. In our obedience, we are called to be new creations conformed to the image of our Creator and Savior Jesus Christ (**Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:10-11**). God calls us (passive), and we turn to Him (active). In being brought back into communion with God, how could we not have unity and fellowship with each other (**1 Corinthians 1:9**)? Much is shared in this life; we seek to serve, honor, glorify, and worship God, and this won't change in eternity.

64 The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!

We have been given a portion in this life (the Holy Spirit), and by His grace, we have received undeserved mercy and much-needed favor. God has called us back to himself through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. We can trust in God's faithfulness to keep His own according to His explicit promises found in His word. We have been given a new heart and mind with the sword and the Spirit as our faithful guides. Our great witness and forerunner has prepared the way, so we seek His will in obedience every day. We walk the path of salvation immediately, knowing God will never lead us astray. Even though the enemies are manifold, at midnight, we rise with prayer and praise. God will lead us in righteousness, and this is our faith. We have a great Teacher who, in steadfast love, leads the way, so we pray, dear Lord, unite our hearts in fear and fellowship to Your holy Name.

*10 Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.*

*11 Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.*

*12 Yes, the Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.*

*13 Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way (Psalm 85:10-13)*

Questions

- 1) What is the primary goal of sanctification, and what is the believer's response to sanctification?
- 2) What promise opens the door for God to be gracious to His Church?
- 3) What is the confirmation of our inheritance in heaven?
- 4) How is sanctification passive and active?
- 5) What encourages us when we are persecuted?
- 6) What is the most remarkable example of God's righteous judgment?
- 7) What does God guarantee from fearing Him, and how do we encourage each other in the fear of the Lord?
- 8) What underlying motivation comes from the fear of the Lord?

