

“Dependency & Devotion” (Ps. 119:33-40)

1. A Single Mind (33-34)
 - a. As his M.O., the psalmist declared his dependency on the living Word for all of his needs.
 - b. The Word must “teach” him for the “statutes” are true and good.
 - c. Thus (33b) they shall be “kept to the end.” This may have a double meaning in that they will be kept till judgment’s vindication (e.g. Phil. 1:6; Ro. 10:11; 9:33) and/or unto the shorter termed consequences of reward not unlike the principles of Proverbs.
 - d. V. 34. Illumination is gained in meditation on the Law. It is the living Word which transforms and thus we are dependent upon its truth and power while we must participate in the learning.
2. A Single Heart (35-36)
 - a. Setting his feet on a single path is necessary even though his heart longs for wholeness.
 - b. Though our hearts long to be righteous, our feet may take us to other paths. Thus he plead “Make me walk in the path of your commandments.”
 - c. Our “delight” is the truth and we ought to align our feet with our hearts. He has given us new hearts inclined for righteousness but we must still plead to be kept on paths of righteousness and away from temptation which so easily ensnares us.
 - d. V. 36: therein lies the spiritual war: the heart inclined to truth and the flesh to covetousness.
 - e. The redeemed heart knows more than all others that it must continue to be sanctified. Our psalmist David pleaded in another place (Ps. 51:10).
 - f. Covetousness (*Betsa*): Unjust profit, dishonest gain including by force/violence/deception/bribe. →
 - g. It is the testimonies of God’s Word which produce prosperity – not the ill-gotten gain which promises immediate prosperity.
3. A single Eye (37-38)
 - a. He reiterates his dependence for protection from temptation – the provision for which is not removal but renewal “quicken” of the mind. Revival is the remedy for temptation. The best defense is a great offense.
 - b. We direct our eyes and thus it makes no sense to pray “lead me not into temptation.” While putting yourself right in its way. “I sure hope I don’t get drunk tonight,” while entering a bar with your best buddies.
 - c. V. 38. Here is the best offense: Being established in the Word. Developing a devotion and respect for God.
 - d. How is one established and devoted to God? The one who continues to acknowledge truth builds her faith. The psalmist doesn’t just want a faith but one built on a solid foundation.
 - e. The knowledge of truth is embraced and faith is applying that knowledge which displays a respect for God. Faith in falsehood neither respects God nor leads to life.
 - f. Ravi Zacharias: “Helping the thinker to believe and the believer to think”
 - g. The best way to be established and respect God is to know His Word and express it.
4. A Single Testimony (39-40)
 - a. Note that all requests for singleness i.e. focus presuppose our proneness to wander.
 - b. My reproach? Options:
 - i. Self-accusing sin
 - ii. Enemies accusations
 1. Of God’s decrees
 2. Of our obedience
 3. Of our disobedience to them

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- c. The context can include either so I’ll share my experience. I “dread” my own reproach i.e. my failure to display a resolve of holiness. I worry not at the accusations of others because I am my own hardest critic. Nor do I sweat the accusations against God and Scripture for only fools wield such accusation.
- d. Now it’s plausible that David was requesting removal of enemies’ reproach because such may be legitimate and thus lead them from the God He loved. We ought to be concerned if our actions cause others to charge against our God. We cannot afford lives of hypocrisy which hold up God’s Word and yet twist its meaning to suit out fallen nature’s desires!
- e. V. 40 “Long for Your precepts” The remedy and the request: Longing for God’s precepts would be the opposite of a divided heart and mind. It requires agreement with even the hard truths and thus requests the revival to fulfill such. Mk. 9:24; Ro. 7:18. Ro. 7:24-25 exclaims the remedy. We who have been redeemed by Christ are aware of our need to grow in Christ.

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Though the psalmist is not ambivalent, he acknowledged the duality of his nature. He knew the need for a single mind toward truth, a single path for his feet, a single heart that was loyal to truth, and a single eye which would not lead him astray from his ‘first love’ (cf. Rev. 2:4). Likewise, believers know all too well the spiritual struggle of our hearts wanting to please God and our fallen nature wanting to please self. It is so important to feed our eyes, minds, hearts, and spirit with the Word of God so that our feet walk in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Our life is the Word of God and thus it must inform all of our actions; and our actions must display proper priorities, values, attitude, and motives. Oh how we love God and His testimonies, but oh how we fall short; hence our prayer of dependence and continued quickening.

Further Study: “*To the end* is one sense of a word which also means ‘consequence’ or ‘reward’, as in Psalm 19:11 (12, Heb.). Hence neb here has ‘I shall find my reward’; and in verse 112 ‘they are a reward that never fails’. Either sense is possible, and as each has its counterparts elsewhere in the psalm (e.g. 44 for constancy, 72 for enrichment) it remains an open question.”¹

Heb. Hebrew.

NEB The New English Bible, 1970.

¹ Kidner, D. (1975). [*Psalms 73–150: An Introduction and Commentary*](#) (Vol. 16, p. 460). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.