

What to Do When Your Heart Strays from God

Psalm 119:169-176

Introduction

Each of us Christians will have times when our hearts stray from God. So what can we do at those times when we find our hearts straying from God? God tells us in Psalm 119:169-176.

What does the author mean when he says he has strayed from God? (176)

Notice that he says both that he has gone astray from God, and that he is God's servant who has not forgotten God's commandments.

So straying from God does not mean willfully and stubbornly pursuing sin. But it means that while your heart is turning from God, you remember God's commandments, and so you grieve over this sin, and want to be freed from this sin.

What does he do when his heart strays from God? (169-176)

He turns to God and prays (169-176).

He asks God to hear him (69-170).

He asks God to give him understanding of the word (169).

He asks God to deliver him from sin's power(170).

He affirms to God that God will fulfill his promises (171-172).

He urges God to help him, based on the fact that his genuine faith (as demonstrated in his life) shows that he's connected to God's mercy (173-174).

He persists in asking God to revive him through the word (175).

He is honest with God about his straying, and asks God to seek him, based on the fact that his genuine faith shows that he's connected to God's mercy (176).



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

What are some ways your heart has recently strayed from God?

What do you usually do when you find your heart straying from God?

If what you usually do is not praying and battling like the psalmist does in these eight verses, Why not? What keeps you from this sort of prayer and battle?

How often, when you pray, do you ask God to hear you? What are some of the benefits of making this request before God?

Do you agree that when your heart strays from God, the problem is that you are not understanding the truth of God's word? Why or why not?

Think of a time when you recently strayed from God. Can you see how, in each instance, there was some Scripture you were not believing?

How often do you ask God to deliver you from sin's power? If it's not very often, is the problem that you think you can deliver yourself from sin's power? Have you ever, by your own willpower, been able to change your heart and deliver yourself from sin?

Does it make sense that when your heart strays from God, it's crucial to pray and ask for God's help, and meditate on God's word, until you feel the Holy Spirit enabling you to believe God's word? Why or why not?

Share ways your hearts are straying now. Share Scriptures which would help bring each other's hearts back. Pray for each other.

