

## Psalm 119:165 (James House) 205039

Dorothy Conference: 2022, Stumbling - Hiding Inside and Outside (119:165)

Open—James House

It's interesting sometimes you. Read a verse and you aren't sure how to take it. Sometimes you have to chew on it for a while before you get an answer, and sometimes Lord gives you an answer very quick, fairly quickly. And a little while ago I was reading through Psalm 119, and there was a verse there that I didn't quite know what to do with, so I'd like to. Share a thought in connection with what we've just heard about what it means to be offended, to stumble. And then we're going to look at some things I've enjoyed in Proverbs, one of which also relates to stumbling. So Psalm 119. And don't worry, I'm not going to take up the whole chapter. Psalm 119 and it's verse 165 that. I was particularly thinking about. Great peace have they, which love thy law. And you know, that's, that's an awesome promise. Just this morning somebody was telling me about how they craved to have the peace of God for the circumstances of their life. And here we have a promise if we love God's law, His word, what's written in it, what he's told us, what he's revealed of himself. Peace comes with that. But that wasn't the part I was thinking about. It's this last expression. Nothing shall offend them. Read it in Derby's translation. Nothing doth stumble them. And I thought, huh. We've got exhortations and clear scripture that we've read in. Romans 14. About how Paul wasn't going to end 1st Corinthians 8. About how Paul wasn't going to do anything that stumbled his brother. But here's a verse. It's from the other side. And. I really, really appreciate it because like I said, I'd been chewing on this and I didn't have an answer, and then about 25 minutes ago I got an answer. Understanding the difference between when I am clinging to something that's not in the word of God, between that kind of offense, me getting my nose out of joint because I don't like what you're doing versus a true stumbling. It was mentioned that stumbling in the New Testament, the word has the idea related to the English word scandal. It's also related to that little piece on a mouse trap where you put your finger to make it go off. It's the hair trigger that sets it off that causes the problem. But here, this isn't from the perspective of the apostle Paul was writing from. This is from the other side. And so from that perspective, this is real for all of us. It's real for me. Nothing shall offend them. Now. What's that talking about? It's them which love thy law. If I love this book, what's written in it, what it says? Not what I think it says, not what might have been added to it, not what I've heard all my life, but what this book says that gives peace, and it will keep me from stumbling and being offended. Now a little bit more on a fence, let's go over to Proverbs 24. So we've talked about somebody who. Would be stumbled, would be offended. And in his Word, God has given us a preventative something that will keep us from that. It's interesting, in Jude, our Lord is praised as the one who is able to keep us from stumbling. But now we're going to flip back over to the other side, and this maybe isn't the person causing offense. This maybe isn't the person being offended. This is the people watching, which, again, could include all of us. Proverbs 24 and down in verse. 17. Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, let not thy heart be glad when he stumbled. The first half of that verse, I'm going to call that your outside reaction. That's what you would choose to communicate with people you talk to. Your family might even be so far as to say that's the initial reaction that twitches across your face. It's the part you can't hide. It's the part everybody knows about. The second-half of the verse is what you feel and think inside. And it is interesting the precision of the wording that the Spirit of God uses. Rejoice not.

You know, rejoicing is something that's very. Just doesn't have to be. To my mind, rejoicing is something that is exuberant, is something that is obvious. When somebody is happy, you don't need to hide them. You don't need to. They don't try to hide it. Not every day, but there's some days I come home from work and I get a hero's welcome and I hear the feet pounding from upstairs and I hear Daddy, daddy, daddy, Daddy, Daddy, daddy, daddy. And I feel like the number one dad. As my kids come flying down the stairs, you know there's joy there and they don't hide it. Nobody's trying to hide it. It's obvious. So it says rejoice not when that enemy falleth. And maybe that's not so much of a problem. It is a temptation. And specifically, the problem is if I allow my thoughts, my perspectives, my life to be such that I begin to view my brothers and sisters in Christ as enemies, and then I rejoice. I'm glad when things, bad things happen to them. This verse is saying no, that can't be the case. You cannot. Consider them to be an enemy and there's to be no joy in anything bad happening to them. You say, well, yeah, I don't really struggle with that. But the second-half, the second-half hits me hard. The second-half says, let not thine heart be glad when he stumbled. This isn't even joy. This is like, if this is the meter of your heart, this is like, is there a little twitch up in your happiness that oh, yeah, it's not my enemy, but I don't love them that much. And something a little bit bad happened to him. It wasn't terrible, so. Does it warm the corners of my heart just a little bit? You know that judges. That cuts to the very center of every thought that I have of my innermost feelings and emotions, what I allow my heart to dwell on, what I choose to nurture in my own mind. And there's not room for either. Now. So that's following up on what we had in the first part of the open meeting. And I've been wondering if the Lord wanted me to share something in the open meeting. And then Dad spoke up yesterday and talked in the address about sharing the gospel. And before I talk about sharing the gospel, it's back up one step further. Sometimes I find it very helpful if I can create a mental image of what a Bible verse is saying. And to illustrate that. In Romans when it talks about reckoning yourself to be dead indeed unto sin, I have a mental image that I use when I'm being tempted of a pine box and inside is the old nature. And I know how to use a hammer. I know how to use nails. I know how to nail. Put a nail through pine. And there are days when, as part of my struggle with temptation, I have to imagine pinning down somebody who's alive and well and holding that wood in place as I # the nails in with a hammer. That's one example of having a mental image. Because if you can keep the flesh in the place of death, that's like that coffin, it represents death and keeping it there in the place because my flesh, they're the old nature is still within me. It hasn't gone anywhere. It's still there. And there's times when I allow bad patterns of thought, habit and practice. And he gets awfully healthy. So that's one mental image now. Yesterday we heard about sharing the gospel and. Hopefully this isn't too personal a reference, but when I was young my mom bought us lots of books and there was a few that were picture history books and particularly one image stands out in my mind and it was an article about the Assyrian Empire. So we're talking the group of people that carried the 10 tribes of Israel into captivity, guys like Sennacherib that came and. Besieged Jerusalem when Isaiah and Hezekiah were there. And there were men in a line. Their hands were tied together, Their feet were tied. Just enough so they can shuffle along. And every 20 feet there was a soldier either with a sword or a whip driving those men on. In the background was a burning city. And as a boy, I imagined it was a city of Samaria. And these people were the people of God being driven along. And that image is burned into my head. And it came back to

me the other day reading verse 11 of Proverbs 24. And I'm just going to read it, and I'm just going to skip and read it directly in Darby. Deliver them that are taken forth unto death. It's a direct command. It's something the Lord is telling us. Deliver them that are taken forth unto death. Withdraw not from them that stagger to slaughter.

I'm going to make an application and the application is this. I am often very scared to share the gospel. With those who are lost. They might be very nice people. But if they do not know our great Deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ, they are captives, slaves to sin, destined to death. And if I look on the outside and I allow fear to rule my heart. Then I'm. It decreases the chance of me speaking up and sharing the gospel when the Holy Spirit wants me to. But reading this verse recently, a mental image. Of a line of prisoners destined to death. With their new masters, their new slave owners driving them on their home, burning in the background, destruction and ruin. No hope, no joy. And that's what we were without hope, without God in this world. That's what the people around us are. If I can take that mental image into a conversation. It will help me. To have compassion, to be motivated by the love of Jesus Christ, to share the gospel. It'll help me to put my fear in the rearview mirror, to set it aside and to share it with somebody who is going out to death, who every day is taking one step closer to the lake of fire. And then I just want to share. Unrelated, but I've really enjoyed this in Proverbs chapter 8. Proverbs, chapter 8. It's in the. What Wisdom says is she tries desperately to bring people into her house that she's built to the feast that she's prepared. And down in verse. 26. In case you're wondering, I think is basically what number four in the little flock is talking about is the verses before this, but verse 26 says well as yet he that is God had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Now that last expression, the highest part of the dust of the world. The mental image I had for that one for the longest time was Mount Everest, but I want to read it in Darby's translation. Says. Well, as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust of the world. And there's a note that goes along with that. The beginning of the dust of the world really has the idea of the molecules. The tiny little building blocks that make up you and me and everything around us. The part things that you need microscopes and fancy tests to see and to detect. And what that gives you in this verse is a beautiful progression from. The Earth, you have the planet. It's huge. Absolutely huge. And it's filled with more people than I can even understand exist. And it's made-up of. A wonderful creation that God has made. His wisdom made it. He designed it, and He not only designed it. It's one thing to design something, it's another thing to keep it going. You know, I build people kitchens and somebody's got to keep them going because eventually the screws need to be tightened. Eventually the paint wears off, eventually the handles break. They don't keep themselves going, and the world around us doesn't keep itself going. That's a trap the devil wants us to believe is that the world just keeps going. It's part of the. Apostasy of the end times, where all things continue as they were. No, they don't, God. Puts in full and complete control. He's keeping everything going. He's the one keeping our planet spinning, the galaxies in their place, and the tiniest, most invisible parts of you and me working. But it's the same God that designed this world, that pitched it at justice, the right angle, that makes it so that the rain falls, so that the water system works, that gives us the right amount of sunshine. You know that God, our God, he can grasp the big things. And because He can grasp the big things, I can trust Him for the big things in my life. I can trust Him for the future of my soul, for things that I can't explain to you. Because there are a lot of things in this book that I can't explain. I accept them on the basis of faith because God has said it.

Now, what's the next thing if the Earth is the big things, the fields, that's the medium sized stuff. You know, you can mark out a field, put a fence post up, build a fence. If you're scientifically minded, like some people here, you can break it down and start to study it and learn about it. If you're construction minded, you can build something in it. But my point is that a field is something that you can sort of begin to wrap your head around. You might not get to the bottom of every detail of it, but you can understand it. You know, we like boundaries. We like. Parameters that we can work within. And our God, our Savior, our Lord can be trusted even for the things that we think we understand, for the things that we think are within the control of us but aren't. And then we've got this progression from the Earth down to a field, down to the molecules, from the big right down to the small, the details. Things that I don't know need to be looked after. God is looking after them. Things that I can't see, Things that I physically. Can't. Detect. Processes that are happening, God is looking after them. And because he can look after from the big things, the medium sized things, the small things, everything, I can put my trust in him and I can rest knowing that he is in full control.

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