

The Victor's Heart Stands In Awe

Psalm 119:161

October 2, 2022

INTRO: What's your most frustrating misrepresentation of Christians & Christianity?

VIDEO: *This Is War!* (Paul Washer – 3:30)

PRAYER

CONTEXT: Psalm 119 is coming to a close...

BIG IDEA: *Victorious warriors have hearts that stand in awe of, AND... faithfully fight, according to God's Word, will, & ways!*

PREVIEW:

1. **Inform** Victors
2. **Inspect** Victors
3. **Inspire** Victors

TEXT:

Psalm 119:161

*Princes persecute me without cause,
But my heart stands in awe of Your words.*

161a = The PROBLEM... real, raw, spiritual warfare! High powered prowlers, poisoners, & persecutors WILL war against God's pure & peace-making people... personally!

1. INFORM

“Princes...”

“Princes persecute me...”

VIDEO: *“A Call To Anguish”* (David Wilkerson – 7:00)

“Princes persecute me without cause,”

VIDEO: *“And They Crucified Him”* (Art Katz – 6:00)

161b = With the problem defined & described in 161a, see here the beginning of the victor's Christ-like commitments & contrast.... Victors are **WHOLE-HEARTEDLY** courageous, **STANDING** firm (aka "stand up guys") with an awe-struck perspective when it comes to God and His words, will, & ways!

2. INSPECT

*Princes persecute me without cause,
"BUT..."*

VIDEO: "*Ancient War Cry*" (Eric Ludy – 6:00)

*Princes persecute me without cause,
"BUT... my heart"*

VIDEO: "*Seek My Face*" (Richard Owen Roberts – 3:30)

*Princes persecute me without cause,
"BUT... my heart STANDS..."*

VIDEO: "*Chocolate Soldiers*" (C.T. Studd – 4:40)

3. INSPIRE

*Princes persecute me without cause,
“BUT... my heart stands in AWE...”*

VIDEO: “Follow Christ!” (K.P. Yohannan – 5:00)

*Princes persecute me without cause,
“BUT... my heart stands in AWE of Your words.”*

VIDEO: “Lineage of Majesty” (Ludy – 6:45)

CLOSE:

*When we fear God,
we need not fear anyone else!*

- Warren Wiersbe

PRAYER

WORSHIP: “Battle Belongs”

STUDY NOTES:

Verse 161.—“*Princes have persecuted me.*” The evil is aggravated from the consideration that it is the very persons who ought to be as bucklers to defend us, who employ their strength in hurting us. Yea, **when the afflicted are stricken by those in high places, they in a manner think that the hand of God is against them.** There was also this peculiarity in the case of the prophet, that he had to encounter the grandees of the chosen people—men whom God had placed in such honourable stations, to the end they might be the pillars of the Church.—*John Calvin.*

Verse 161.—“*Without a cause.*” I settle it as an established point with me, that **the more diligently and faithfully I serve Christ, the greater reproach and the more injury I must expect.** *I have drunk deep of the cup of slander and reproach of late, but I am in no wise discouraged; no, nor by, what is much harder to bear, the unsuccessfulness of my endeavours to mend this bad world.*—*Philip Doddridge.*

Verse 161.—“*Without a cause.*” We know what persecutions the body of Christ, that is, the holy Church, suffered from the kings of the earth. Let us therefore here also recognize the words of the Church: “*Princes have persecuted me without a cause.*” For how had the Christians injured the kingdoms of the earth? Although their King promised them the kingdom of heaven, how, I ask, had they injured the kingdoms of earth? Did their King forbid his soldiers to pay and to render due service to the kings of the earth? Saith he not to the Jews who were striving to calumniate him, “*Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s*”? **Matt. 22:21. Did he not even in his own person pay tribute from the mouth of a fish?** Did not his forerunner; when the soldiers of this kingdom were seeking what they ought to do for their everlasting salvation, instead of replying, “Loose your belts, throw away your arms, desert your king, that ye may wage war for the Lord,” answer, “Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages”? **Luke 3:14.** Did not one of his soldiers, his most beloved companion, say to his fellow soldiers, the provincials, so to speak, of Christ, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers”? and a little lower he addeth, “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another.” **Rom. 13:1, 7, 8.** Does he not enjoin the Church to pray even for kings themselves? How, then, have the Christians offended against them? What due have they not rendered? In what have not Christians obeyed the monarchs of earth? The kings of the earth therefore have persecuted the Christians *without a cause.*—*Augustine.*

Verse 161.—“***But my heart standeth in awe of thy word.***” ***If there remains any qualm of fear on thy heart,***

fear from the wrath of bloody men threatening thee for thy profession of the truth, then to a heart inflamed with the love of truth, labour to add a heart filled with the fear of that wrath which God hath in store for all that apostatize from the truth. When you chance to burn your finger, you hold it to the fire, which being a greater fire draws out the other. Thus, when thy thoughts are scorched, and thy heart scared with the fire of man's wrath, hold them a while to hell fire, which God hath prepared for the fearful (Rev. 21:8), and all that run away from truth's colours (Heb. 10:39), and thou wilt lose the sense of the one for fear of the other.

Ignosce imperator, saith the holy man, tu carcerem, Deus gehennam minatur; "Pardon me, O Emperor, if I obey not thy command; thou threatenest a prison, but God a hell." Observable is that of David: "Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word." He had no cause to fear them that had no cause to persecute him. One threatening out of the word, that sets the point of God's wrath to his heart, scares him more than the worst that the greatest on earth can do to him. Man's wrath, when hottest, is but a temperate climate to the wrath of the living God. They who have felt both have testified as much. Man's wrath cannot hinder the access of God's love to the creature, which hath made the saints sing in the fire, in spite of

their enemies' teeth. But the creature under God's wrath is like one shut up in a close oven, no crevice is open to let any of the heat out, or any refreshing in to him.—*William Gurnall.*

Verse 161.—*“My heart standeth in awe of thy word.”* There is an awe of the word, not that maketh us shy of it, but tender of violating it, or doing anything contrary to it. This is not the fruit of slavish fear, but of holy love; it is not afraid of the word, but delighteth in it, as it discovereth the mind of God to us; as in the next verse it is written, “I rejoice at thy word.”

This awe is called by a proper name, reverence, or godly fear; when we consider whose word it is, namely, the word of the Lord, who is our God, and hath a right to command what he pleaseth; to whose will and word we have already yielded obedience, and devoted ourselves to walk worthy of him in all well-pleasing; who can find us out in all our failings, as knowing our very thoughts afar off (Ps. 139:2), and having all our ways before him, and being one of whom we read, — *“He is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins”* (Josh. 24:19), that is to say, if we impenitently continue in them. Considering these things we receive the word with that trembling of heart which God so much respects.—*Thomas Manton.*

Verse 161.—*“In awe of thy word.”* I would advise you all, that come to the reading or hearing of this book, which is the word of God, the most precious jewel, and most holy relic that remaineth upon earth, that ye bring with you the fear of God, and that ye do it with all due reverence, and use your knowledge thereof, not to vain glory of frivolous disputation, but to the honour of God, increase of virtue, and edification both of yourselves and others.—*Thomas Cranmer, 1489–1555.*

Verse 161.—*“Awe of thy word.”* *They that tremble at the convictions of the word may triumph in the consolations of it.*—*Matthew Henry.*

Barnes Notes on the Old Testament:

161. *Princes have persecuted me without a cause.* This commences a new division of the psalm, indicated by the Hebrew letter *Schin*—corresponding to our *s*, or *sh*. On the meaning of the expression here, see Notes on vers. 23, 78.

But my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

I still reverence thy word. I am not deterred from keeping thy law by any threats or intimidations. This is in accordance with the uniform statements in the psalm, that nothing deterred him from manifesting his adherence to the law of God.

Holmon O.T. Commentary: *Steven Lawson*

119:161. The psalmist cries out for deliverance because he has kept God's Word. Mighty rulers persecute him **without** just **cause**. Nevertheless, the psalmist's **heart trembles** at God's Word.

Warren Wiersbe Commentary:

During our time of study in Psalm 119, we have noticed that the writer practiced a... life of faith, and this quality is seen especially in this stanza.

Respect and rejoicing (vv. 161–162). The princes began their campaign against him by speaking against him (v. 23), but now they were persecuting him in a direct way. **But the psalmist was not afraid of his persecutors; he stood in awe of God's Word.** Once again we learn that when we fear God, we need not fear anyone else. He respected the Word and rejoiced in the Word at the same time, for **the joy of the Lord and the greatness of the Lord are friends, not enemies.** The princes wanted to rob him, but he found great wealth in the Word of God (see vv. 14, 72). **The promises of God in the Bible are better than money in the bank, because they will never lose their value, and nobody can take them from us.**

The Treasury of David – by Spurgeon

161. *“Princes have persecuted me without a cause.”* Such persons ought to have known better; they should have had sympathy with one of their own rank. A man expects a fair trial at the hand of his peers: it is ignoble to be prejudiced. Moreover, if honour be banished from all other breasts it should remain in the bosom of kings, and honour forbids the persecution of the innocent. *Princes are appointed to protect the innocent and avenge the oppressed, and it is a shame when they themselves become the assailants of the righteous.* It was a sad case when the man of God found himself attacked by the judges of the earth, for eminent position added weight and venom to their enmity. It was well that the sufferer could truthfully assert that this persecution was without cause. He had not broken their laws, he had not injured them, he had not even desired to see them injured, he had not been an advocate of rebellion or anarchy, he had neither openly nor secretly opposed their power, and therefore, while this made their oppression the more inexcusable, it took away a part of its sting, and helped the brave-hearted servant of God to bear up. *“But my heart standeth in awe of thy word.”* He might have been overcome by awe of the princes had it not been that a greater fear drove out the less, and he was swayed by awe of God’s word. How little do crowns and sceptres become in the judgment of that man who perceives a more majestic royalty in the commands of his God. *We are not likely to be disheartened by persecution, or driven by it into sin, if the word of God continually has supreme power over our minds.*