



I was feeling overwhelmed by current events- hurricanes, wildfires, political and social discord, and the news of a mass shooting. My soul was uneasy about the seeming apathy of society toward the murder of countless numbers of unborn babies every day and the general drifting away from biblical morals. I was burdened for friends and family who were facing a crisis in their lives. My heart was burdened by the shame of my own sin. Sinking into despair, I turned to the only source where I knew I could find rest for my soul and peace for my heart. I opened my Bible. From cover to cover, I would find the power of God's Word for my life.

Maybe you too are shaken by the events around you. Maybe you are uneasy and unsettled over burdens, responsibilities, and sin. In Psalm 119:25-32, the writer is uneasy and unsettled about many things. In a life of mountains and valleys, he's way down low in the valley. But he too understands the secret of finding rest and peace. He too understands the power of God's Word for his life. In 119:25, he's "laid low in the dust" or as The Living Bible paraphrase expresses it "I am completely discouraged - I lie in the dust." His first response to his problems is to **Pray**. And trusting God's promises, he asks God to get him up on his feet again. He knew he could call on the Lord to revive him. He didn't mince words or fake happiness. He told God he was struggling. He asked God to preserve his life, to save him, give him strength, new life, motivation and the will to go on. The writer made his request to God and then made a choice to trust and obey; ***To keep living according to God's Word.***

Often, in our suffering, we ask God to remove the pain, to remove the struggle. We pray "Take my mess Lord!!" But we should do as the writer does and ask God to teach us his Word and help us understand in the midst of our suffering. Then we should ask for strength to obey in all circumstances. It's a pretty simple strategy: tell God our struggle, be honest in our pain, ask for wisdom and strength, obey His Word and believe He will answer. The Psalmist made a choice of obedience and as a result, he has a new perspective. In 119:32, he says "you have broadened my understanding". He has a change in attitude, a new understanding, a fresh vision of God and his ways. He has moved from low in the valley to a deepened faith and a wider dependence on God. He is determined to pursue or run the course God has laid before him and asks God to show him how.

Each morning, I awaken at 5:15 AM to spend time alone in God's Word. The house is dark and quiet enabling me to pray and meditate undisturbed. It's not always easy to get out of my warm, comfy bed so early in the morning, but it's a discipline I've discovered, that by the end of my encounter with God in His Word, I am able to stand with a new perspective, fresh hope, and courage to embrace the day. I am well aware of the power of God's Word for my life. I am motivated to pursue God in obedience and trust. Those early mornings spent with God have taught me to lift up my concerns to God, gain His comfort, wisdom and guidance,



and then lay them down at his feet. When the burdens are removed, my heart and my steps are a lot lighter.

***<sup>25</sup> I am completely discouraged—I lie in the dust. Revive me by your Word.***

***<sup>26</sup> I told you my plans and you replied. Now give me your instructions.***

***<sup>27</sup> Make me understand what you want; for then I shall see your miracles.***

***<sup>28</sup> I weep with grief; my heart is heavy with sorrow; encourage and cheer me with your words.***

***<sup>29-30</sup> Keep me far from every wrong; help me, undeserving as I am, to obey your laws, for I have chosen to do right.***

***<sup>31</sup> I cling to your commands and follow them as closely as I can. Lord, don't let me make a mess of things.***

***<sup>32</sup> If you will only help me to want your will, then I will follow your laws even more closely.***

***Psalm 119:25-32 The Living Bible***

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## Lift It Up and Lay It Down

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