

Resh: Psalm 119:153-160

Launch:

Have your class come up with a series of hypothetically painful situations. Make sure to emphasize that these situations must be appropriate, but let them have fun with it. Situations can include anything from getting a thousand paper cuts in a row to touching a burning stove with both hands.

Have your class decide together what is the most painful idea.

After this, ask them individually what it would take for them to endure the pain. Would they do it for a million dollars or perfect health for 100 years? What would make this level of pain and suffering worth it?

In this passage, the Psalmist is facing much suffering for his faith. He cries out to God for revival as he faces affliction. However, the Psalmist loves God and His Word so much that any amount of suffering is worth it. We see in this passage that God revives from suffering and he revives for service.

Highlight: Which verse spoke to you this week?

Explain:

Each of the next eight verses in Psalm 119 begins with the Hebrew letter Resh. The theme present throughout these eight stanzas of this great poem is a theme of revival. Three times throughout this passage, the Psalmist cries out to God give him life. He uses the Hebrew word, Chayah, to request this revival from God. He asks for life, but he asks for life not according to what he wanted, but according to God's Word. This shows the great reverence the Psalmist has for God and His Word. He has been facing suffering, oppression, and affliction from unbelievers. This demonstrates the biblical truth that believers will suffer from their faith. He is pleading with God to be revived in order that he might serve God with his life. In verse 155, he contrasts himself with unbelievers, saying that he desires to serve God while the unbeliever does not. In verse 157, he shifts from acknowledging his suffering to giving assurance that he will continue to serve God no matter what. He says, "I will not swerve from your testimonies." The two points of this passage are very clear. God brings revival from suffering, and He brings revival for service.

If you understand nothing else from this passage, understand this. God brings revival from suffering, but it is explicitly for the purpose of service.

Apply:

1. What does the word revival mean to you? How have you used this word?
2. What is the real gist of the revival the Psalmist is asking for in this passage?
3. What are the three places the Psalmist asks for revival? What similarities and differences between these three petitions?
4. What are some ways you as a 6-12th grader might find yourself suffering for your faith?
5. How can you go forward in your life and serve God even in the midst of suffering?