



That You May Live (Deuteronomy 4:1-14)

Quinton Cools

January 1, 2023

Hello! If I haven't met you, *and even if I have*, my name is Quinton Cools. As you've heard, I am a pastor-in-training here at KingsWay, and it is my joy to study and preach God's Word. I pray that today it is your joy to study and receive the preached Word of God, which is food for your soul.

What is *amnesia*? According to a leading medical center, "*Amnesia refers to the loss of memories, including facts, information and experiences.*" (Mayo Clinic) If you or someone you love has experienced loss of brain function due to something like Alzheimer's disease or general dementia and the like, you know a peculiar sadness about living in this fallen world, broken by sin. Amnesia, specifically, can be caused by damage to areas of the brain that are vital for memory processing. Unlike a temporary episode of memory loss, called transient global amnesia, amnesia can be permanent. There is no specific treatment for amnesia. But, if properly identified, treatment can be directed at the underlying cause. Amnesia.

In a spiritual sense, you and I have a condition. **Paul David Tripp** helpfully describes us as *gospel amnesiacs*. We hear the good news but forget it. We are reminded of it but forget it again. We believe it, we sing about it, we teach it, and even still, we forget it. We must continually remember lest we forget the God who created us and saved us from our sin. This is our condition: spiritual amnesia.

Why else does the apostle Paul remind the Corinthian church of *the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*

And what is the word Paul preached? *3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.* **1 Corinthians 15:1-5**

In the words of musician Christy Nockels, we have a continual need to always remember to never forget. What is it that breaks us out of the spiritual memory fog? It is undoubtedly the Word of God, the Scriptures. By the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, God spoke through authors like Paul in the first century and Moses more than a thousand years before to do something profound: *reveal himself* through His Word. Some churches today have replaced robust expository preaching of the Bible with TED talk-style motivational speeches. Secular self-improvement books and podcasts have taken the place of personal morning devotions. May it not be so with us, friends. These are but attempts to treat amnesia without treating the underlying cause. There's no substitute for the one thing that can identify and effectively treat the underlying cause: today and every day, we need the Word of God to "teach, reprove, correct, and train us in righteousness that we may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

ROADMAP

After a month of messages devoted to the first advent of Jesus, we now return as a church to our study in Deuteronomy, Moses' retelling of the law. In this, the fifth book of the Torah, Moses aims to remind the people of God of the grace of God through his special covenant relationship with them. He reminds Israel of the past faithfulness of God. He reminds them of the trustworthy future fulfillment of his promises and continually exhorts the people to remember to follow the ways of YHWH, the covenant name of the Lord. Moses will go on to record instructions for how to live as those who have been set apart for the Lord as they finally reach the land of promise.

We know from chapter 3 that God has prohibited Moses from entering the land, and so this is not just a retelling of the law; it is Moses' last exhortation to the people as God's appointed leader. Before they cross over the Jordan, the people listen to the preaching of God's law. Deuteronomy is *that* sermon. And chapter 4 is where Moses really begins to get his preach on.

And I'm eager to get into this with you, church, because there is no more important topic for us to address at the outset of a new year than this one. Regardless of what happens in 2023, whether your year is marked by the happiest things or the hardest things, this message from Moses will guide your heart, refresh your affections, and anchor your soul this year.

Deuteronomy 4:1-14 teaches us a central message:

The Word of God reveals the path of life by revealing our gracious God.

My prayer is that your year begins with this: fresh amazement at God's glorious plan for your life: to know and be known by your gracious God.

My sermon today will be structured under two main points starting in verses 1-8 and then concluding with verses 9-14.

If you haven't already, please open your Bible to Deuteronomy chapter 4 and study this text with us this morning. This part of our meeting is not a time set aside for an inspirational speech. It's a time for us to be addressed by God through His Word. We have the privilege of looking at these translated words in our own language even as we hear them spoken aloud. So, let's be faithful to participate even as we listen this morning.

And, of course, if you did not bring a physical Bible, feel free to open a Bible app on your phone. Thank you for following along and studying this passage with me. I trust it will be food for your soul.

Transition: In fact, that's what this first point is all about.

1. The Word reveals the path of life. (vv. 1-8)

How does Moses refer to the Scriptures? Look at verse 1: "And now, O Israel, listen to the *statutes* and the *rules* that I am teaching you..." He calls these teachings *the laws* and *the just decrees*, or as the English Standard Version translates these two words: *the statutes* and *the rules*. How does that land with you? Are you less comfortable now that Moses has all but called *this* a rule book? Why are we comfortable calling the Bible a compilation of stories but not rules? It seems that there is something in our psyche that doesn't like rules, at least most of us, and at least as long as they are limiting something that we desire to do. We are okay with traffic lights limiting collisions at the intersection, but we don't care to adhere to the speed limit on the highway.

So, listen: If we are going to receive what the Lord has for us in this long study in Deuteronomy, we need to wrestle with this fundamental fact: the Word of God is not a book of suggestions. What is the Bible about? The rule of a gracious God. The rebellion of those under his rule. The grace and mercy of God that turns rebels into his children.

John Piper says it right: *If you are a Christian, you are not your own. Christ has bought you at the price of his own death. You now belong doubly to God: He made you, and he bought you. That means your life is not your own.*

The Bible is not a book of suggestions. The Bible instead teaches us to reject our sinful self-rule and compels us to trust and obey our gracious God. Thus, when we study the law week-in and week-out this year at KingsWay, do not check out and assume, “oh, this is just Old Testament stuff. Let’s get to Jesus and the New Testament.” Don’t think, “God of the Old Testament = bad; God of the New Testament = good; God of hate, God of love.” The Word made flesh at Christmas was eternally preexistent. He’s the same God here in Deuteronomy, friend. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8) And this God of mercy and grace, the King to whom you doubly belong, has given us just decrees.

Moses says, “And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and *do them.*” The context of Moses’ sermon falls at one point in redemptive history, and our context is admittedly very different. Faithful preaching will be careful to tie a cord between these two to show how we should apply God’s Word today. Here’s the principle: to listen is to obey.

If my children are not paying attention to my wife’s instructions, she kindly (and I think quite humorously) will tell them to “turn their ears on.” It’s not that the sound waves of mom’s voice didn’t travel into their little ear canals. It’s that they ignorantly or even rebelliously failed to respond.

This is why Moses says *listen* and *do*. God means to affect us through His Word. So, the question we will come face to face with again and again and again as we study Deuteronomy is this: how will we respond? As we are confronted by the Bible’s assault on our self-rule, will we listen and will we do as God teaches?

Right about now would be the perfect time for me to address our motivation for such obedience. And like a good pastor, that's exactly what Moses puts before the people. It is here that we uncover the phrase that I've chosen as the title for this message and the primary theme of this sermon: *that you may live*. "Listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, *that you may live*." Why should you listen and do as the Lord directs and guides? *That you may live*.

You might be asking yourself, what does that mean? I'm alive, aren't I? There's a wonderful quote attributed to a fictional depiction of William Wallace that directly speaks to this. Here it is: "Every man dies. Not every man truly lives." Jesus says it plainly: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10b) And what is this life? Jesus says, "This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

- To live is to know and be known by your God.
 - To live is to experience your soul's resurrection from the dead.
 - To live is to have your heart's affections transformed by the love of God.
 - To live is to fear the Lord, to love the Lord, to trust and obey the Lord.
- Therefore Moses says, "Listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, *that you may live*, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you."

Do you notice what is inseparably connected to Israel's response? Obedience to God's Word leads Israel on the path of blessing as seen in the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. They will no longer be desert wanderers. God has prepared a place for them. They will finally be home. Christian, God is preparing a dwelling place for you too. Ask yourself this morning, are you listening to and obeying God's Word *that you may live*? Are you following the path of blessing, the path of life?

And now, let's peer into the depths of this Word that reveals the path of life: Look at verse 2: 2 You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.

When I worked at a grocery store in Oregon ten or twelve years ago, I had a coworker who refused to highlight or note anything in his Bible because he felt that would add to what was written. That might sound silly to some of us, but what's the conviction behind that sentiment? The Word is holy and should be revered above every other word we hear.

Consider the ways we add to the Word. It may come in the form of cliches such as:

- God never gives you more than you can handle.
 - (He does, so we depend on him.)
- God helps those who help themselves.
 - (Uhm, no. We submit to the rule of a gracious God; we do not proclaim our self-rule.)
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
 - (Almost always used out of context and misapplied! Rather, we learn contentment when we understand that God will provide through Christ all that we need.)

Consider the ways we take from the Word.

- God says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths."
 - There's no passage that says this word or that joke is off-limits. Besides, we are not under the law but under grace!
- God says, "Everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
 - I am just admiring the beauty of God's creation. This isn't the same as adultery; who uses that word anymore anyway?
- God says, "Do not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some."
 - Life is just really busy right now.

In our own self-deception, we functionally add to and take from the Word. We elevate our opinions and the voices of our preferred personalities from the screen or stage. And as we elevate these opinions, we reduce the law of God to a statement of faith. We reduce the Bible to a book of suggestions and easily explain away what threatens our self-rule. Deuteronomy 4:2 confronts us, however.

There is one voice you need to hear above every news anchor, social media influencer, teacher, friend, politician, or pastor. You need the Word. The Word reveals the path of life. A spouse cannot do that. A politician could promise that, but certainly cannot fulfill that. And the Word is exclusively authoritative above all other authorities.

What Should our relationship be with the authority of God's Word? We submit. We come under. As Christians, we gladly accept and affirm God's gracious rule through

His Word. In marriage and dating relationships, we submit to the Word. In our career changes and family planning, we submit to the Word. In our entertainment choices, we submit to the Word. We need to make it a habit to go to the book.

Remember what the Word does? It reveals the path of life. In Jesus' sermon on the mount, he teaches that we must "13 Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." (Matthew 7:13-14) No clearer is this seen in today's passage than in verses 3-4. Look there.

3 Your eyes have seen what the Lord did at Baal-peor, for the Lord your God destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor. 4 But you who held fast to the Lord your God are all alive today.

Baal Peor was a place associated with the idol of Moab that tempted Israel while in the wilderness. We find the narrative in **Numbers 25** which tells the tragedy of this generation's covenant failure: "1 While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. 2 These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3 So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel."

The story goes on to tell about a specific incident with a man named Zimri who did this very thing with a Midianite woman. According to one commentary, "it was an act of ritual intercourse that yoked this Israelite man to the pagan god; thus he broke covenant with the God of Israel." (Mendenhall, 1973:105-21) And **Numbers 25:9** tells us about the consequences: "those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand."

Do you think our response to the Word of God has any real-life consequences? You bet it does. It reveals a path of life, and it warns of the wide road of destruction that leads to death.

- Consider the word given to Adam in the Garden of Eden: "16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (**Genesis 2:16-17**) We know what happened.

- And consider the rebellion story of Baal Peor and the 24,000 who died.
- And consider your lives, brothers and sisters and the word you have been given.
- Hear this word from **Hebrews 3:12-19**: “12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. 15 As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” 16 For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.”

Verse 4 shows us the way of life. Look there: “4 But you who held fast to the Lord your God are all alive today.” Hold fast the Word that you may live.

Moses tells us that we have been given all that we need. Look at the next verse: “5 See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.”

Have you ever wondered what God’s will is for your life? To marry this person or that? To take that job or this one? Have you ever felt like you had a good plan, but things just didn’t work out? You hoped to marry this person, but in the end, they rejected you. You planned to stay with your company for many years, but one day, they let you go. You expect a healthy baby, and you experience the crushing news that there’s no longer a heartbeat. What does God’s Word say to you? “The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.” (Proverbs 16:1) Don’t miss this: God’s will is not thwarted when your plans fail, and He is not silent. God speaks.

Proverbs 3 is an excellent guide here: “5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and*

turn away from evil. & It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

Isn't that how God works? In his deep mercy and sometimes bitter providence, he exposes our heart's deepest affections. And if, in the shadowy valley, we turn to him, we will find the gentle and lowly shepherd who longs to satisfy our soul. Our plans fall short, and as Paul David Tripp describes it, God's form-fitted grace meets us right here, right now. Do you believe that for today? January first, 2023? Whatever you're going through, God's grace is prepared to meet you. God is waiting for you in 2023. He is not silent. Open your Bible and see the path of life that God reveals.

And this good path of life is not just for us, it's for the world around us, too. In verses 6-8, redemption goes global.

Look at verses 6-8:

6 Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

Do you want to be wise? **Proverbs 9:10** tells us, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight."

- Those who fear the Lord follow the Lord.
- Those who follow the Lord *listen* and *do* as he directs and guides.
- By following the path of life, one becomes wise.
- Or as Moses says, "Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples."

Israel had something that every other nation and tribe lacked. Do you know what that was? Pagan nations and tribes constructed carved images of wood and stone to represent their gods, gods of their own imagination and literally gods of their own making. What about Israel? Instead of imagining something, Israel received something. And what they received was not a carved image but words. They were given the law of God to direct and guide their steps.

And it's here in verses 6-8 that we hear the echoes of Genesis 12 when God makes his covenant with Abraham saying, "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." And we hear the echo continue through to Matthew 28 where Jesus commissions us to go into all the world to make disciples of Christ.

The neighboring peoples of ancient Mesopotamia could see that Israel was different. If you're a Christian, people should notice that you're different. We have this treasure in jars of clay, Paul says, so that we might receive glory for our wisdom and understanding as the people of God? No! That God would get the glory. That the world would see that He is the one true God. Look at verse 7:

7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? 8 And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

This speaks of divine revelation, a self-disclosure, without which we would not know the path of life. We would not know God. Natural theology, that is, the study of the theology based on observed facts and experience cannot save. One cannot reach outside of our limited space and time and experience and comprehend the divine or understand the depth of our offense to God with our sin or know the depth of God's love for us by sending his Son to save us.

If we are to know God, he must reveal himself. And he has. And he is near us. He is YHWH, the Great I Am, and He is Emmanuel, God with us. He is ever present. He hears your prayers. He loves His people. He is eager to show us mercy and grace. And he reveals his good will for your life and for the world with the statutes and rules that he sets before the people.

Transition: And this is what Moses spends the rest of our passage unfolding, so let's look deeper into this second point. Point 1: The Word reveals the path of life.

2. The Word reveals our gracious God. (vv. 9-14)

Look at verse 9:

9 “Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children—

I told you Moses was going to get his preach on. You can almost hear the earnestness in his voice in these two imperatives: (1) take care and keep your soul diligently and (2) make these things known to your children. We have two primary responsibilities here. Let's take them one at a time.

Answer this for yourself: what would taking care to diligently keep your soul look like? :: pause :: Here's a hint: it has everything to do with our relationship to the Word of God. In your personal life and in your shared life with the local church, what is your relationship to the Word? As we read it, hear it, study it, pray it, sing it, and talk about it, the Word of God directs and guides us on the path of life. It helps us walk closely with God. Without it, you're driving a car with a gas gauge on empty, moving headlong in the wrong direction and into the eye of a storm.

I look at **1 Timothy 4:13** for guidance here. Paul instructs, “13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.” Why? Why do we gather with the people of God as a church centered on the Word of God? What does Moses say? “Lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest these things depart from your heart all the days of your life.”

- Lest you forget the faithfulness of your God.
- Lest your heart grow cold in its affection toward God and you walk away from God. We must be vigilant. We must be those who stay awake. Stay sober. Be watchful. Be hopeful and expectant. Watch your life and your doctrine. Center yourself on the Word. In your brightest days, it will be your compass and the wind in your sails, and in your darkest days, it will be a ballast amid the waves and an anchor amid the storm.

And this Word isn't just for you. It's for your family. Moses says we are to make these things known to your children and your children's children. Think about how many generations we are talking about here: Old man Moses (1) is telling the people (2) to teach their children (3) and their children's children (4). This is a multigenerational vision for discipleship. Maybe your parents failed to train you in a gospel-centered home full of grace-saturated conversations about the path of life.

But capture this dream: as you keep your soul diligently, you have the opportunity – even the responsibility – to disciple the next generation, starting with your own children if you have them.

- If this is building a new category for you, allow me to share what this might look like: Discipleship starts at home as you model what centering your life on the Word looks like. You read your Bible. You initiate conversations with your spouse and kids about what you're learning. You facilitate time of family devotions where being addressed by God and responding to God are regular habits of the household.
- If you've been doing this already, particularly as a single parent or without the support of your spouse, I commend you in the Lord. Is there any work more important than discipling your children, showing them the path of life? Keep pressing on, parents.
- If you've been blessed to be raised in a home where the life-giving Word of God was treasured and you were disciplined well, consider taking time later today to thank the parent or relative who modeled this for you and invested this treasure in your life.

I said this discipling of the next generation begins at home. It does. But it extends beyond that, down the KingsKids hallway where children are taught the Word of God week-in and week-out by faithful teachers and assistants who give up their time to disciple the next generation. It continues in the work our team of volunteers gets to be a part of at Frontline, where we come alongside the parents of middle and high school students to support their work of discipling their young people.

And even if you don't have any children at home and don't serve in a next generation ministry, you can fulfill the spirit of this teaching by something as simple as meeting with a young adult over coffee or inviting a young couple into your home as you seek to magnify Christ through His Word. We all carry a testimony of the transforming work of the gospel in our lives. Let's be faithful stewards to proclaim what the Lord has done through His Word.

That's what Moses does here in verses 10-12. He's been saying, "don't forget these things" and "teach these things." What are *these things*?

10 how on the day that you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.'

Here we rewind 40 years. The people have been freed from their slavery in Egypt. They have crossed the Red Sea. The Egyptian military has been swallowed up, and they are gathered at the foot of the mountain called Horeb or Sinai. And what does God say? Consider what this reveals about our God: "the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to me.'" Do you hear how personal that is? Gather them to me. Like a mother bird with wings over her chicks, God gathers us close. And why does God gather the people?

- That I may let them hear my words.
- That they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth.
- That they may teach their children so.

That is grace. That is the grace of divine revelation of self-disclosure. And it's a gathering work that God still does today, Sunday after Sunday, as the people of God are gathered around His Word, submitted to his gracious rule. God gathers us so that by His Word we learn the path of life, we respond to His Word in trust and obedience, and we train our children in the way of the Lord.

Consider the glory of this historical moment:

11 And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. 12 Then the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice.

Moses describes the life we live in a broken world, if we've lived long enough to see it: a life wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. For my family, here's what this looks like: In 2020, we lost our sweet baby Phoebe at 29 weeks and 2 days along in Kelsey's pregnancy. A year later, almost to the day, we lost another baby who didn't even make it that many weeks. We named her Piper. Right now, our precious cousin and her family are facing the possibility that cancer could take her any day.

“Have you been there?” Do you carry the weight from something like that? If you’ve lived long enough, you’ve been there. You might be in it right now. And in the midst of life wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom, we stand at the foot of the mountain of God. And the mountain burns with fire. Burning with fire to the heart of heaven and then we hear a boom as of thunder as the voice of God is heard. God is not silent in your darkness. He speaks.

As God spoke then, so God speaks now through His Word. His voice is still heard. *You heard the sound of words, Moses says, but saw no form; there was only a voice.* Yes, God may be invisible, but He has revealed himself to be knowable, personal, and gracious and merciful and kind to those who would come and stand at the foot of the mountain. That’s what we do day by day when we pick up our Bible and week to week as we sing, and pray, and participate in receiving the preached Word of God. God still speaks.

This is most clearly seen when the Word took on flesh and dwelt among us.

You see, in verse 13, God declares his oath-bound promise to his people:

13 And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.

And what do we know about the human condition? All the stories of the Bible and human history tell us one thing: no human has been faithful to this covenant. We have hated and so murdered. We have lusted and so committed adultery. No one is righteous. You are not righteous. But just as hope is born at the coming of a new year, so hope was born in Bethlehem. *“When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”* (**Galatians 4:4-5**)

The Son of God followed the law perfectly as he walked the earth. Christ was perfectly righteous. And his righteousness was for us. We who are in Christ have been made right with God because Jesus has clothed the nakedness of our sin with his covenant-keeping righteousness. Indeed, Christ is himself “to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” **1 Corinthians 1:30**

The grace of God has been lavished on you, my friends. His Word reveals a gracious God who is willing to die on your behalf *that you may live*. We have been given His Word. We have been given His Word made flesh.

CONCLUSION

But don't forget that we are forgetful. We all have a condition, *spiritual amnesia*, and there's simply no substitute for the one thing that can identify and effectively treat the underlying cause of our condition: today and every day, we need the perfect, infallible, and all-sufficient Word of God. You need your Bible this year. I need my Bible. Let's pick it up, and read it, and study it, and pray it, and sing it, and talk about it with more joy this year than we ever have before.

- When you're wrestling with a decision this year, remember the Word is sufficient.
- When you're feeling drained this year, maybe you're working overtime, perhaps multiple jobs, perhaps you're raising children, remember the Word is sufficient.
- When you're at odds with your boss or a friend hurts you or you lose a loved one, remember that the Word is wholly sufficient.
- What should you do? Gather at the foot of the mountain.

Moses concludes the last verse of this passage in the same way that he began in the first verse:

Look at verse 14:

14 And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.

To listen is to do. If it's really true that God's Word reveals the path of life, then we must *listen* and *do*. Remember, Christ came that we would have life and have it abundantly. Let's remember, lest we forget.

The Word of God reveals the path of life by revealing our gracious God.

There's no greater question for 2023 than this: what is your posture toward the Word of God? How will you respond to the Word of life?

Scripture Reading

As the band comes back, I will conclude this sermon by reading a few verses from Psalm 119, a meditation on the Word of God:

97 Oh how I love your law!

It is my meditation all the day.

98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your testimonies are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.

101 I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.

102 I do not turn aside from your rules,
for you have taught me.

103 How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104 Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.

Psalm 119:97-105