

## True Peace is found in Living in Accordance with God's Law Psalm 119

From John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*,  
trans. Rev. James Anderson (Edinburgh, Scotland: Calvin Translation Society, 1846),  
Vol. V, 41-42, emphasis added; updated to modern American English.

**Psalm 119:165** "Great peace have those who love Your law, and there will be no stumbling block for them."

If we take the word *peace* for a prosperous or happy condition of life—a sense in which the Hebrews often employ it—the word rendered *stumbling-block*, to correspond with it, will be used for *adversity*; as if it had been said, that those who love God's law shall continually prosper and retain their position, although the whole world should fall into ruins.

But a different interpretation will be equally appropriate, namely, that **they have great peace, because, being persuaded that both their persons and their life are acceptable to God, they calmly repose themselves on a good conscience.**

**This tranquil state of conscience, this serenity of mind, is justly reckoned the chief point of a happy life**, that is to say it is so, when it proceeds from God's being reconciled to us, and from His fatherly favor shining in our hearts.

The Prophet justly teaches that **we attain this peace from the love of the law**; for whoever would make it to depend upon anything else, will be from time to time trembling at every little blast.

If this sense is adopted, the word *stumbling-block*, in the second clause, **will signify all the troubles and disquietudes of mind with which all who lean not upon God's word are miserably distressed and** tormented, and with which they are driven about either by their own depraved passions, or by the caprice of other men.

But in whatever way understand these two words, *peace* and *stumbling-block*, the design of the Prophet will remain the same, which is to show, that **those who are not devoted to God are miserable**; for although they may applaud themselves for a time, yet they will meet with many stumbling-blocks to drive them suddenly out of their course.

From the term *love*, we gather that **this peace** is not acquired by a slavish observance of the law, but **proceeds from faith**; for the law has no sweetness to attract us to it, unless it exhibit to us God in the character of a father, and tranquilize our minds by the assurance of eternal salvation.

So far from enjoying peace, all worldly men and despisers of God are justly punished by their own depravity and obdurate rebellion; for each of them is his own executioner, and the more fiercely they rage against the word of God, the sorer are they tormented, until they bring upon themselves utter destruction. The godly, it is true, are also tormented or distressed, but this inward consolation wipes away all their sorrow, or, raising them up, enables them to surmount all stumbling-blocks, or so relieves them, that they faint not.