

God, the Word, and man – Psalm 19

Good morning, I'm glad you have chosen to be here with us today. If you will, please turn in your Bible to Psalm 19. As I was planning for the summer and thinking about how we could spend our time together on Sunday mornings, God reminded me; this season is a great time to look at some of the basics of our faith. Over the next few weeks, we are going to search the Scriptures to see what is revealed to us about who we are as Christians. If you remember June 4th, I was not with you guys because of our Carpenter's for Christ trip, but that Sunday was celebrated as Trinity Sunday, and is one of the special Sundays of Spring we spent some time focusing on. Since I wasn't here, I thought it would be best to begin this new series by reminding you about God and what He has given us. I'm not going to teach on this, but you cannot begin considering who we are as Christians without first having a strong understanding of God. Simply put, God continually participates in our lives as Loving Father, Redemptive Savior, and Guiding Spirit. Something I've always considered special when describing God in His fulness is in the middle of the description, we find the Son, the only way of salvation. Who is this? Jesus, of course. And it's because of Jesus, that we have access to God as Heavenly Father, Graceful Redeemer, and as Patient Guide. It is only those who genuinely place their faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord of their life, who receive the benefit of God's unfailing mercy, grace, and love and will live with Him for eternity.

From here, we need to consider the revelations of God and the power associated with them. God's Word is so powerful that it could create something from nothing. God spoke everything into existence! And then, in the Garden of Eden, it was a violation of God's spoken command which led to the fall of humanity. Think about how His word has impacted man throughout all of history. When Ezra read His Word, a revival broke out. When tempted by Satan in the desert, Jesus relied on God's Word to send him packing! David penned entire Psalms celebrating the Word of God. For the Christian, it is the Word of God that produces faith and leads us toward salvation for, *"faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."* (Romans 10:17)

Let's read **Psalm 19** and then we'll discuss its significance as it pertains to God, His Word, and Man's response to it all.

You guys have heard me say this before, but MAN, meaning man and woman, is the greatest achievement in all of God's creation. Because of this, God is constantly working to reveal Himself to us. God used David in Psalm 19 to reveal Himself, and in doing so, He ensured that no person would ever stand before the God the Judge and ignorantly claim there is no God. Look at the first six verses. What is it that God reveals to us?

David, staring at the sky, both during the day and the night, saw the presence, power, and glory of God. He surmised, if we want to know there is without a doubt a grand designer, an intelligent author, a magnificent creator, all we need to do is look into the skies of the universe for a demonstration of His handiwork. David also points out; we don't need verbal announcement from God about who HE is. David said, the voice of God can be seen and

heard throughout the entire earth through the entirety of His creation. When's the last time you stared at the blue sky, or the clouds, or at the stars? Have a look sometime with the expectation to hear the voice of God. The Creator doesn't need a spoken language to share with us about His power and skill as Sovereign creator. The point of these first six verses is that the heavenly bodies provide objective proof that an intelligent, skilled, powerful, creative God exists.

From there, David shifts from God revealing Himself through creation to God revealing himself through His Word. David is letting us know that God magnificently reveals much about Himself through creation, but He reveals so much more to us through His Word. Let me get all nerdy for a moment because it is important that I do so. The structure of this poem in Hebrew teaches us how David believes God's Word is more revealing. In verses 1-6, God is referred to as *El* – the most basic word for God in the Hebrew language. When Genesis 1:1 is considered, you'll see the plural form, *Elohim*, which means "Mighty One." **In the beginning, God (Elohim, Mighty One), created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)** But here in verses 7-9, God is referred to as *Yahweh*, the more formal word for God, which denotes the "God of covenant love and faithfulness to His people."

David uses six synonyms for "The Word" along with seven effects it has on the person in tune to it.

1. The Law – God's Law is perfect. It has no blemish, it lacks nothing, it is whole and provides everything we need to know about who God is and who we are. It informs us about the devastating effects of our sins as well as the perfect sacrifice offered through Jesus Christ. It tells us about eternity and about the importance of an eternal fellowship with God. It is complete. It is perfect. It is all we need. David says it revives our soul. It is God's Word that brings our heart into restoration. It is God's perfect means by which He draws us back into right relationship with Himself.
2. The Testimony – God's Testimony is sure. The Word of God can be trusted. The world around us is filled with alternative suggestions for truth, but God's Word hasn't changed, it doesn't change, and in it there is no conflict or confusion. God is not going to change His morality to match that of man. Instead, His consistent Word will remain trustworthy and make the simple seeker for truth wiser every step of the way.
3. The Precepts – God's Precepts are right. These are His statutes, His commandments, for His people, and they are always correct. They are intended for leading us down the pathway of faithful living. I may not like the commands from God, but regardless of my personal feelings, His commands are right. David reminds us that when we trust His ways, then our hearts know the protection received, and as a result, the heart is filled with joy.
4. The Commandment – The Commandment of the Lord is pure. Because God is Holy, we can trust His word to also be Holy. A pure God will never communicate in an impure manner. God's Word will always draw us to the light and away from darkness.

Any word found to be in opposition to this truth should be considered tainted and false and should be removed from your life.

5. The Fear – The Fear of the Lord is clean. When we do not fear the results of sin, then we will go through life recklessly. The Word of God shed light on this recklessness and lays out the ultimate punishment for sin, death. Not just physical death, but spiritual death, which is eternal separation from God. We are to hold a “reverent belief” in the cleansing effect of God’s Word. After all, it’s cleansing power last forever.
6. The Rules – The Rules of the Lord are true. The Rules of the Lord are also righteous. Instead of rules, think here of God’s just rule, or His judgement. God Word lets us know what God thinks about things. What God says or thinks is the way it should be. God reveals truth to us in His Word. His declarations are to be considered right and without ambiguity. There are so many competing ideas concerning right from wrong. To live for Christ is to trust that God is the author of right and wrong. David reminds of that it is God who is truth, and it can be rightly trusted.

The final portion of Psalm 19 deals with Man’s response to the Creator and His Word. Look at verses 10-11. David understood the value of all the things he was singing about. Here he wanted us to see that God’s Word brings true wealth and true reward. In contrast, if ignored, it can also bring everlasting curse. Why not experience the sweetness of God and the wealth of His blessing.

What is the blessing of God and the sweetness to which David understands and wants us to experience. It’s the Grace of God through Jesus Christ. David is addressing the entirety of our sin nature in verses 12 and 13. He calls them hidden faults and presumptuous sins. The Word of God warns us about the sins we commit inadvertently and the sins we commit willfully. Neither are acceptable to God, but all are forgivable because of God’s grace through Jesus Christ. **Hebrews 4:12** informs us, *“the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* God's word enables us to avoid being fooled by our sin nature. When we read it, God opens the eyes of our understanding and enables us to see the truth about ourselves and then it draws us to the cross. To the Savior.

Look finally at David’s closing prayer. I think we can learn a great deal from this verse. King David’s intention was not to be perfect, but rather to stand before God as one who sought purity of heart and blamelessness. His desire was to avoid the things which displeased God. You know what? David wasn’t perfect, and neither are we. That’s why God sent Jesus to die in our place. What we can do however, is maintain a desire to seek after purity and live lives which are pleasing to God. Will you share in David’s prayer today? **Read Psalm 19:14.**