

## 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Trinity

### Introduction

Bibliology (Bib-lee-ol-o-gee) is the study and interpretation of the Bible, and all the doctrines contained inside. The Word of God is presented and revealed to us through the pages of the Bible, and it shows the ways God reveals Himself to us. Our understanding of God, how He commands us to live, our salvation, and the essence of man is contained within its pages. The Word of God gives us the authority and means to practice our religion and forms the basis for our beliefs, gives us our concept of God, and shows us the pathway toward our future salvation. While all scripture contains God's divine inspiration, Psalm 19 paints a poetic and beautiful picture of how God is revealed to us in the creation of the universe, in the perfect law of the Lord, and in our relationship with Him as our strength and our redeemer. As we explore God's glory in creation and the law in a Psalm of David, we will see how God reveals his intentions to us.

I wrote this sermon for an audience who has a heart open to hear the Word of God and begin to form an understanding of what God has revealed to humanity. His wondrous creations, His will and intent for our lives, and for His plan for our salvation, are all contained in the pages of scripture. Seeking the knowledge of God, if done in tandem with acts of giving love and humble service, will be a faithful and humble act of discipleship.<sup>1</sup> Let's explore this relationship between the revelation of the Word of God in Psalm 19 and how it inspires and moves us to share and grow in our discipleship with others.

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<sup>1</sup> Keith L. Johnson, *Theology as Discipleship* (InterVarsity Press Academic, 2015), 147.

## Body

### Psalm 19

Psalm 19 was written by David and is subtitled, “God’s Glory in Creation and the Law” (Ps. 19, Revised Standard Version). It contains beautifully written imagery that reveals God to us in three parts. It opens with the glory and majesty of creation, looks at what the scripture teaches us, and ends with a prayer that many preachers use before presenting a sermon or lesson.<sup>2</sup>

Psalm 19 begins with a line that references the creation of the universe found in Genesis. *“The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork”* (Ps. 19:1). The creation of the heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1) and the *“firmament in the midst of the waters”* (Gen. 1:6) speak to the omnipotence and power of God. In this Psalm, the work of God, and his handiwork, is revealed to us. David continues to expound on the incredible “speech” and “knowledge” that pours forth day and night from God. (Ps. 19:2-4). Using the linguistic device of metaphor, David describes God’s created sun as coming forth *“like a bridegroom leaving his chamber”* (Ps. 19:5) evoking a feeling of alacrity and purpose. He continues to describe the sun as created with strength and joy like a *“strong man who has run its course with joy”* (Ps. 19:5). Nothing is hidden from the rays of the sun just as it is revealed that nothing is hidden from the omnipresence and influence of God. God is distinct from His creation and like the opening verses of Genesis, we marvel at what He has created and its amazing beauty and magnificence. In all creation God’s character is revealed and indeed as Isaiah states, *“the whole earth is full of His Glory”* (Isa. 6:3). What a blessing for us to see how powerful and righteous our God is. He

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<sup>2</sup> James Limburg, “Commentary on Psalm 19 - Working Preacher from Luther” accessed September 28, 2023, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/first-sunday-in-lent/commentary-on-Psalm-19>.

created heaven and earth and all that dwells in it. Is there anything that is impossible for God when we realize how much He has created?

In the second section of the Psalm, Verses 7-10, David discusses the Law of the Lord, or how God commands us to live and the nature of His commandments. God's law is described as "*perfect*" and obeying the Word of God will surely "*revive the soul*" (Ps. 19:7). Living in accordance with the will of God will give us peace and purpose in our life. We are reassured that the "*testimony of the Lord is sure*" and it "*will make wise the simple*" (Ps. 19:7). David continues by acknowledging that the precepts, or areas of instruction or conduct, are right and correct and knowing this will cause the heart to rejoice. Along with this he also states that the commandments the Lord has given us are pure and "*enlightening to the eyes*" (Ps. 19:8). Here the Lord reveals his plan for us, His commandments for us, and that His instructions for us are to be believed, revered, and trusted as sound. It is revealed to us that God had created the world, and His will to create history, which is in harmony to His intentions with his created people. Creation in its vastness and the details of individual lives were included in this plan. We can be sure that everything would surely come to pass as God designed.<sup>3</sup> At the conclusion of this section, David once again uses metaphor to compare the righteousness and truth of God's ordinances to the sweetness of honey and that they are to be more desired than all our earthly riches, including gold (Ps. 19: 9-10). Nothing we have in our human understanding will compare to the glory of God and the knowledge that we are living in obedience to His law.

In the closing section of Psalm 19, David gives us a personal revelation he has with the Lord. David has a healthy fear of the Lord and is concerned that by himself he will fall short of

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<sup>3</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 321.

obeying the commandments and laws revealed to him. David knows that “*by keeping them there is great reward*” (Ps. 19:11) but he is cognizant of his human failings. David recognizes that “*discerning his errors*” is difficult and he asks God to help him and “*clear me of my hidden faults*” (Ps. 19:12). He prays to God to keep “*presumptuous sins*” from him and to not let the evil of the world, and the sin in his heart, have control or dominion over him (Ps. 19:13). He longs to be innocent and blameless for disobeying God and being any part of these transgressions (Ps. 19:13). God has revealed to us through the scripture how we need to act in accordance with His will. His will is that attribute where He approves and determines to bring about every action necessary for the existence of all creation.<sup>4</sup> We must submit to that will and to what God has revealed to us. We can be assured that it is perfect, sure, right, enlightening, and true.

David concludes the Psalm with a prayer that is often said at the pulpit or before sharing the Word of God with others. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock, and my redeemer (Ps. 19:14). David knew that as a human being with the proclivity to sin we may not always have things correct in our understanding. Here he prays to God that every word he speaks, and every thought and meditation in his heart, will be pleasing and acceptable to God. He reveals his belief, and it should be our belief as well, that God is our strength, our resolve, and our redeemer. No matter what happens to us in our lives, God is in control, and we must stay in faith. As Job suffered and saw his life unfold, his faith in God never wavered. “*For I know that my redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth*” (Job 19:25). Once again, we see in scripture how God has revealed himself to us. Both David and Job show us that we can trust God, that God’s creation

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<sup>4</sup> Wayne A Grudem, *Systematic Theology: A Guide to Biblical Doctrine*. (Zondervan Academic, 2009). 211.

reveals his mighty power and influence and that our faith, and personal revelation in Him, is sufficient in all we need.

### **Action and Discipleship**

God's Word is written in the Bible for all who wish to understand. In the Bible, God's word is revealed through decree, personal address, and through the lips of the various prophets and instances where God put His words in written form.<sup>5</sup> Moses came down from the mountain with the two tablets that God had written the Ten Commandments on to share with all of humanity. *"The tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables"* (Exod. 32:16). All scripture is the inspired Word of God and from it we can glean the intentions and will of God. The scripture reveals that God created us in His image, and that He loves us and wants us to be free from sin. When we believe, we understand what God has revealed to us, when we love the Lord our God with *"all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind"* (Matt. 22:37), and when we love our neighbor as ourselves, we will begin to understand how to be a disciple of God. Our life of discipleship begins when we have faith in God, and it continues as we partner with Christ by working together with Him, and with each other, to fulfill God's eternal plan.<sup>6</sup> Sharing the inspired truths revealed in scripture creates new disciples and followers of God. God will continue to reveal Himself, through scripture and personal revelation, to those with eyes to hear and a heart open to receive God. As disciples of Christ and preachers of His Holy Word, we can continue to affirm the presence of God through our actions, our treatment of others and through our faith. Remember the words of Jesus in

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<sup>5</sup> Wayne A Grudem, *Systematic Theology: A Guide to Biblical Doctrine*. (Zondervan Academic, 2009) 49.

<sup>6</sup> Keith L. Johnson, *Theology as Discipleship* (InterVarsity Press Academic, 2015), 133

John's Gospel when he said to his disciples, *"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free* (John 8:31-32).

To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.