

A Hymn to God's Glory

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Preacher: Matt Landeck

[0:00] Good morning, Shoreline. The sermon text for today is Psalm 19. At the conclusion of the reading, I will declare, This is the word of the Lord, and the Church, in joyful response to his revelation given to us, will together say, Thanks be to God.

The law of the Lord is perfect. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the earth. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the ends of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes.

[1:16] The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold, sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them is your servant warned, and in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults.

Keep back your servant also from the presumptuous sins. Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Psalm 19, a hymn to God's glory.

Well, here we are just a couple of days past July 4th, which marks the birth of the United States as a nation independent from British rule. The Declaration of Independence not only declared the colony separation, but also outlined their understanding of their natural rights as human beings.

[2:42] Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is what the preamble most famously declares. Today's text also contains a declaration from David.

In our first two sections of verses, we'll see David's creation. He'll consider creation's revelation and scripture's proclamation.

Then the culmination of the first two sections, his very own prayer of declaration. Like the American colonists, David looked deeply at his life and then declared the way that he wanted to live.

Not life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness necessarily, but a life that was acceptable and worthy in the eyes of Almighty God. My hope for us today is that we might see God's glory in creation and his holy word and then echo the heart and words of David's declaration as we walk through Psalm 19 together.

Might our lives, like this psalm, be a hymn to God's glory? Let's pray. Lord, would you open our eyes and soften our hearts this morning to your Holy Spirit and your holy scripture.

[4:00] To you be all glory. Amen. Let's look at the first of our three points today. Creation's revelation, God's glory.

Creation speaks of a glorious creator. The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Verse one reads, Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor are there words whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. Psalm 19 starts by revealing that the heavens are speaking a message.

I wonder if you've ever thought of that. The heavens and sky include all the vast space extended from the earth to the highest heavens. Not only containing the celestial bodies above, but also the air and light, rain, dews, etc.

They're speaking. Not with words and sentences or with a voice like I'm speaking to you now. Because verse two says there is no physical speech or voice.

[5:08] But much like how a piece of art or classical music can say something apart from words, so also the heavens speak. And they do so through what is displayed, what is revealed, and what they point towards.

They speak of a divine heavenly creator. God, all glorious and all powerful. No other created being or atmospheric force or explosion or accident could have hung the moon and stars just right to create the splendor of a starry night sky and reveal the knowledge of God's existence that it does, verse two says.

The sun, moon, and stars are exactly where they're supposed to be. As an intelligent designer, God is creative, capable of a celestial masterpiece which he composed on the backdrop of a black canvas containing galaxy upon galaxy.

He's intentional too. The earth rotates just so that we might have day to work with its accompanying sunshine and warmth, praise God, and night to rest with its cooler temperatures and darkness, conducive to sleep.

Isn't that amazing? God knew what he was doing. And he knows what he's doing. And the heavens speak, revealing this marvelous truth and knowledge about God in a day to day and night to night cycle in which we exist, all being upheld by his power, might, and will.

[6:51] Everything we've ever seen in creation was designed, created, and is upheld by God. How glorious. This ought to result in our adoration and gratitude for life.

The breadth and magnitude of God's handiwork ought to help us see our relative finiteness in a comparatively small footprint. Creation's revelation is of a glorious and powerful God.

Let's look at verses four to six. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens and its circuit to the end of them. And there is nothing hidden from its heat. The sun, the testament to God's glory.

Out of all of God's visible creation in nature, the sun is a most brilliant testament to God's glory as creator. How astounding is the sun?

[7:57] Its warmth, light, and life provides to humans, vegetation, and animals. Without it, life would cease to exist. And our God didn't just imagine it and create it, but he has also given it a home in the heavens and placed it right where it needs to be to do its job.

With its reach covering the whole expanse of our planet and beyond. In the sun, we see God's glory, power, intentionality, and creativity in an impressively hot and brightly radiant display.

Consider the sun. Don't look at it, but consider the sun. Verse 5 gives human characteristics to the sun, seeing it as a bridegroom and a strong man.

A bridegroom who comes forth after an evening alone, rising in the morning with vigor, joy, and merriment to meet his bride. A strong man, one who is ready to set off on a race with determination, endurance, and excitement for the day ahead.

So also is God's sun. The sun is a spectacular testament to God's glory. Maybe next time you reap the benefits of the sun like it's light or warmth or how it helps your garden or flowers to grow or everything in between, you'll pause and give praise to the glorious, powerful God who designed it and placed it there.

[9:27] Sometimes, I think we fail to thank God for the blessings that have become too familiar to us. But when we stop and thank him for things like the sun, trees, grass, and air to breathe, or a place to live, clothes, and food, we become a little more thankful in our general disposition and honestly more pleasant in our outlook on life changes.

And we might see our attitudes soften and shift, which brings God glory that he deserves. Give it a try. It works for adults and kids too.

We'll end this first section of creation's revelation by looking at verse 4, which we skipped over intentionally. Verses 1 through 3 answer the questions, what speaks? How do they speak? And what are they saying?

But one final question remains, to whom does creation speak? Verse 4 says, the whole earth and the end of the world. Creation speaks to everyone.

All of humanity for all time has heard valid evidence for the divine creator, God. Paul supports this idea in Romans chapter 1 where he says that what can be known about God has been shown plainly because God has revealed it to mankind through creation.

[10:52] Quote, for his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made.

End quote. Paul goes on to say that man is without excuse in not turning to God in worship because God has so clearly revealed himself through what he has created.

the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge and revelation of God's glory as creator.

This is a splendid truth. Amen, yes? What ought one do with this truth found about God?

What's the next step? Creation's revelation about a creator ought to instinctively lead to a desire to know more about this creator on a deeper level since creation itself presents only a partial story.

[11:59] I found these words to be helpful. If people are to know God personally and live according to his will they need a more detailed knowledge than physical creation can provide.

They need God's written word the authoritative revelation of God's will for them. Creation stands as enough to condemn man.

The word stands as enough to save man. That holy word God's glorious word to man is scripture's proclamation. Here's our second point.

Scripture's proclamation God's glory. The holy word of God takes us from God's glory as seen in the world and moves us towards God's glory as seen in his word from the world to his word which is all the more powerful.

One theologian explains why one reason the word is a greater revelation than creation is that it tells us much more about God. It reveals him as the covenant God of love as reflected in the structure of this psalm.

[13:10] In verses 1-6 God is referred to using E-L L related to the more familiar term Elohim. The most generic word L is for God in the Hebrew language.

Yet in verses 7-9 God is referred to as Yahweh the Lord the covenant the God of covenant love and faithfulness to his people.

The scriptures proclaim a message that our glorious God provided for us what is necessary to lead a life that honors him as his covenant people. Not only does God lead man to himself initially through what theologians call general revelation revelation as seen in creation but he takes the next step towards relationship with us through specific revelation his word the holy scriptures.

Let's look at what David saw in God's word here in verses 7-9 the all-sufficiency of God's word. The law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple the precepts of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart the commandment of the Lord is pure enlightening the eyes the fear of the Lord is clean enduring forever and the rules of the Lord are true and righteous all together.

What we have in verses 7-9 is what's called Hebrew poetic parallelism. I had to figure this out I did not make this term up Hebrew poetic parallelism there are six terms for the written revelation six adjectives to describe it and six statements of what the Bible does.

[14:56] The six terms are the following law testimonies precepts commandments fear and rules and they collectively represent God's revealed word which encompasses instruction doctrine and directives from God to his people regarding how to lead our lives along with all that God has disclosed to educate and guide us in a world that is devoid of God and permeated by sin's influence.

Let's look at the first stanza verse 7 the law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul. The word law is the Hebrew word for Torah the first five books of the Old Testament.

David means not merely the law of Moses Torah but all of the doctrine of God and the whole of scripture. It is perfect in that it lacks nothing in its revelation and application.

It is complete and fully capable in its intent. What intent? Reviving the soul. Reviving means the soul's movement back to a point of departure or turning repentance back towards God on the level of one's actions and also heart posture.

From darkness to light from sin to holiness God's perfect law for Christians and non-Christians alike can perfectly redirect and reorient us towards what's really important as we battle our day-to-day struggle against sin and ungodliness.

[16:35] It is the only power that can transform reshape and renew the soul away from the selfish pursuit of our idols and towards the worthy pursuit of Almighty God.

Scripture's proclamation is God's glory not mine. Say God's glory not mine. It is not my glory but it is for my good.

The ability of God's word to perfectly revive the soul is surely God's good kind grace in your life.

Friend so cherish his word.

Let's apply this. If you feel like you're always going down the path of sin and you're feeling trapped take heart because the law of the Lord is perfect.

Say perfect. And that means that it's fully effective. It's fully effective in reviving your soul and turning it back towards the Lord.

[17:42] And that includes the soul of your spouse or child or family member or anyone who would search its pages and apply its truth.

no one is too far gone or too far away for God's perfect word to work.

And that means if you've already ruined your day with sinful actions and words it's only 12 o'clock. You've been there?

I have. Or if you've been straying from God for years or decades. God's word will have the power in your life if you allow it to.

If you will allow the perfect law of the Lord to come and restore you. Will you allow that right now?

Will you allow that today? We've got to realize that the only way of restoration back to a path of righteousness is God's word.

[18:50] word. And I hope this next few sentences comes out right. We have to be careful because it's easy to look like and act like and sound like a Christian but whose life isn't centered on God's word.

And so the time that you spend with Christians or listening to Christian worship music or reading Christian books and Christian podcasts on the Christian living etc.

These have to be filled with God's word. The scriptures. They can't be void of the scripture. Build your life and nourish your life on the firm foundation of the word of Christ.

The holy scripture. Be careful. All other ground is shifting sand. On to the second half of verse 7.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. A testimony is the recalling of what is true by a witness. Everything that God has disclosed in his word he testifies to be true.

[20:02] In reference to historical truth, principles or laws, assertions about himself, humanity, the path of salvation, and the fallen world.

Regarding all these matters, he has testified in his word concerning the accuracy of the statements that are made.

And his testimony is sure, our verse says. The word sure denotes accuracy without uncertainty or vacillation. It is established and unmovable.

And this sure testimony of Yahweh makes wise the simple. And the simple here refers to the one who is gullible, swayed easily by good or bad influence, weak-willed, not responsible.

It's also the one who needs guidance, who is uneducated and untaught, thus open to conviction and vulnerable to impressions. In a world with an overwhelming amount of wrong answers and poor counsel at our fingertips, right here, the simple must be discerning.

wisdom. But how can they? The sure testimony of God and his word makes the simple wise by giving godly accurate insight.

[21:22] Wisdom helps one to navigate the difficult road of life. God's word helps us to decipher in wisdom what to let in and what to keep out of our life in all areas.

And just like practicing music or athletics, we will see growth and change. The more we're taught by God's word, the more we make this a habit, the less simple and the more wise we will become, thus being less vulnerable to our past tendencies and more focused on pursuing good influence and counsel, walking in righteousness.

Let's apply this. Church, we must realize that it's our duty to remind each other to test our decisions against the sure testimony of scripture.

It's our job as part of this church. Parents and those who regularly interact with children, i.e. anyone here in this room, because there's 60 of those kids around.

Parents and those who interact with kids, we need to teach this to kids. And I say anyone in this room because when someone is born into this church or comes into this church, every adult here has the responsibility to help disciple and bring up these kids, whether they're yours or not.

[22:48] And one way to get more comfortable with this is to be involved in the church, to dive into the church, to be a part of it, to go to someone's house and have a meal together, to ask them about how their kids are doing or how they can pray, how you can pray for their kids.

Like, this should be familiar to us. We're here, we're all here together to reach, as been said before, the most unreached people in this church is the children who sit here, many of which don't know the Lord, be it from a decision not being made or just simply age.

So let's encourage one another. Excuse me. We've got to teach these kids. Alexa and Siri can be a great help for helping us figure out certain things like if I can substitute baking powder for baking soda in my cookie dough.

That happened in my house a few weeks ago. But God's sure testimony is the true litmus test for life, revealing if our choices are actually wise or if we're imitating the decisions of the simple, falling victim to the world's counsel.

Shoreline, let's encourage one another to always rely on the sure testimony of God's word first and grow in godly wisdom. Let's move on to verse 8.

[24:16] The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing in the heart. The precepts of the Lord are the rules and laws which he appoints. They are right, meaning they are just. And they are good. Also, they are practical and helpful, able to give right direction, being that they are based off of God's sure testimony and are exactly what you and I need for life.

And this is such a reason to rejoice, isn't it? Look at the second half, rejoicing the heart. Much joy comes from knowing God's word and then experiencing how it can rightly direct your path towards righteousness.

righteousness. And how wonderful to look back over the course of days, weeks, and years of your life and say, yes, I can see how the law and rules of God's word have been faithful and leading me down the right path.

God's rules of God's love. We can rejoice. And this is something we talk to our daughters about all the time. When you follow the right path of God's rules, you will feel happy.

It feels right and that's no surprise. The Holy Spirit affirms our decisions, bringing joy. One of the fruit of the Spirit in our life is joy.

[25:29] Second half of verse 8, the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The Lord's commands are his demands and decrees. Similar to the precepts or rules in the first half, they are pure, perhaps better translated clear.

They're not only unstained, but also radiant and capable of passing on the radiant clarity with which they exist. Thus enlightening the eyes and the radiance of the Lord's word infiltrates man's mind through the eyes, through bringing clarity and understanding about life, about me and God and how we relate.

Paul uses the term mind of Christ in the New Testament. That is an enlightened mind, an informed mind that sees life with clarity. This is especially important when we consider the convoluted wicked mind of culture and many of those with whom we interact with.

each day and are influenced by each day. Let's apply this. Friends, pursue the word of God and be brought into proper understanding and clarity on life and living and reap the benefits of knowing God's will for you as seen and understood only through his word.

And then watch as your heart rejoices in these things. Verse 9, the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The fear of the Lord here isn't a synonym for God's law like the first four names in our list have been, but it describes the effect on the soul that God's law rightly has.

[27:09] The fear of the Lord is close to connected to the word of the Lord. Engaging in study and contemplation of God's word generates a sacred respect and admiration for his divine law, divine nature, and just principles.

The fear of the Lord is clean, both in its nature, being pure and undefiled, and in the effect that it has on man's soul. The fear of the Lord and sin cannot dwell in the same place.

And thus sin and evil that dwells in the deep corners of our hearts are evicted and overcome, and the fear of the Lord reigns in our hearts. And then when sin seeks to re-infiltrate our clean hearts, the fear of the Lord in us will empower us to reign in victory over temptation to sin, keeping the pollution out.

And this principle will last because God's word does not change. It is pure and clean, incapable of fading or wasting away, thus enduring forever.

Final portion of seven through nine, the last six, last of six statements on the law of the Lord reads, the rules of the Lord are right and righteous altogether. Simply put, that which the Lord has judged should be right and best, which is thus contained in his holy word, is without error, perfectly true, and also righteous.

[28:32] Being that it comes from God, no portion of God's word can be taken away and considered false. None lacks any amount of righteous that another has.

That was a lot, wasn't it? Those three verses, seven, eight, nine. There's so much packed into the short stanzas in these verses, but how wonderful.

Verses seven through nine show us that God's word is all sufficient in its effect in the life of a person to change and transform them fully, as God's law has been designed to do.

And after this recognition, David then goes on to illustrate the supreme value of God's word, the supreme value of God's word. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold, sweeter also than honey in the dripping of the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them your servant is warned, and keeping them there's great reward. How valuable is God's word? David says that it ought to be desired more than you would desire much fine gold.

[29:40] The supreme value of God's word is ranked as finer than heaps of the finest earthly possessions. You and I should long deeply for, we should set our passionate pursuits on the word of God, first and foremost, like one who is seeking invaluable treasure.

Because it is sweet. Not just sweet, it is sweeter than the sweetest of things. David uses freshly dripping honeycomb as an illustration.

Just as dripping honey is to be sought after as a pure, naturally sweet delight, so also God's word ought to be sought after, but as superior in its sweetness and delightfulness.

Verse 11 goes on to describe why God's word is supreme in its value and sweetness. Moreover, by them your servant is warned, in keeping them there's great reward. The use of warning can be seen as casting light on a subject, so as to show it clearly, to make the duty plain and the consequence plain.

The warnings of scripture help protect us against temptation, sin, error, foolishness, false teachers, and every other threat to our spiritual well-being. And to heed those warnings brings great reward.

[31:08] And it's not a material prize. The Hebrew word for reward speaks of a spiritual blessing, not temporal riches. This is the settled joy and rest that comes to those who live by God's word.

In Deuteronomy 28, as Israel is on the edge of the promised land, the covenant-making God declares warning of curses from disobedience and promises of blessing and rewards from obedience.

There are no minced words by Yahweh in his holy word. He speaks clearly. Ultimately, he longs to be our God and for us to be his people, a phrase that we hear many times in the Old Testament. And that is the greatest reward, for him to be our God and for us to be his people. Let's apply this. What value does God's word have in your life?

Do you see it as the sweet delight and great treasure that it is? If not, what current things are acting as your treasure and sweetest delight?

[32:20] Might have to dive in deep to think about that. For David, he could write these things because they were not only true in theory, but they were also true in reality for him.

He experienced him. He experienced them. The reviving of his soul, life-giving joy, clear understanding, wisdom and fear of the Lord. Maybe you've not experienced these things because you've not dedicated yourselves to the word and promises found in the Bible.

I urge you to do so. And then watch God's word become your greatest treasure and sweetest delight. Scripture's proclamation is a message of God's glory on display in his holy word.

And it's all sufficiency to grant man what he needs to live a holy life in a relationship with a covenant-making God and how it speaks of the opportunity of God's word provides us in its supreme value and worth as well as in it showing us its warning and rewards.

God's scripture is glorious. David, in seeing God's glory in creation and then again in God's word, is forced into a place of deep contemplation.

[33:35] How could he not? Seeing God's glory in these ways brings one to a place of humility and how it brings into perspective the ways we are living in the ways God longs for us to live as seen in his word.

But outside of looking into God's word we will fail to properly see how we're living. If it's for God's glory or for our own. Here's our final point today.

David's declaration. God's glory. David's declaration is a prayerful commitment away from sin and towards righteousness.

Righteous living. Thus, living a life for God's glory. Let's look at verses 12 and 13. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins.

Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression. prayer for cleansing and purity. After the law the Lord granted him clarity and wisdom and considering the glory and beauty of God's law David is cut to the heart humbly realizing how far short of God's law perfect standard he stands.

[34:58] Surely no one can fully understand the length and depth of spiritual decay that sin brings upon the soul. Who can discern the totality and implication of his errors?

Who can know each time that they step off the straight and narrow path which God prescribes for his people? No one. The raw reality of his sin brings David to his knees as his soul fights for change.

He petitions God for help first with his hidden faults sin which is committed via unintentional or subconscious deviation from the right path which God's precepts prescribe.

These are sins that go unnoticed by both ourselves and those around us perhaps out of naivety or ignorance. He then asks for help with blatant presumptuous sins those which are deliberately defiant and intentionally engaged in the soul's rebellion against God's clear rules.

He says keep me back guard me from these sins. Why? Because they can so easily grab a foothold in my life and gain dominion over me.

[36:11] There's a progression all but demanding my submission to cyclical sin struggles. I must engage in this sin. It's like my soul is being pulled towards it.

I wonder have you seen this to be true in your life? I know I have. David did too and he knew something needed to happen.

He requests that God guard him and also God guards him and also declare him innocent and cleanse him from these sins. Then I shall be innocent and blameless of great transgression is how the end of the verse reads.

The word for transgression asserts the idea of relational rebellion. Right? Covenant God. Relational rebellion. David sees his vulnerability to sin and the effect it has on his relationship with God. How can David say as he looks at the piles of sin in his life and as he sees his life's failure to uphold the rules and commands of God's law oh God you can make me innocent and blameless.

[37:16] Is that wishful thinking? No. It's reality. Because the creator God El is also the covenant making God Yahweh who is rich in mercy and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Because David trusted in God's ability to forgive his sins both the most hidden and the most presumptuous and to restore time after time his relationship to the covenant people he loves. the law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul. And he believed this promise because he knew God's word to be real and capable.

And you and I ought to believe in this covenant God love and forgiveness all the more because what David saw in part you and I have seen fully.

the Old Testament sacrificial system that David relied on for temporary forgiveness of sins the spotless lamb who was sacrificed to bring upon David God's declaration of innocence and blamelessness was a placeholder.

[38:32] God has once and for all brought the opportunity for permanent spiritual cleansing through Jesus Christ.

The visible manifestation of God's glory given to us the word made flesh God's glory was on full display as his one and only son laid down his life taking upon himself the penalty for sin one time for all humanity on his body on the cross and he died on the cross and he was buried and he rose three days later never to face death again.

He died and buried and rose never to face death and he did that for us that we might not face spiritual death apart from God but would find spiritual life being declared innocent and blameless for all time when we trust in Christ's atonement by grace through faith.

Do you believe this? Do you believe this? Do you know Christ in this way? In this psalm we've walked with David through seeing God's glory on full display through creation's revelation of a divine creator scripture's proclamation of the covenant God's glorious law and finally God's ability to cleanse and purify David from his sins leaving him innocent and blameless before a holy God.

David now concludes this hymn of God's glory with a prayer of declaration. Verse 14 let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight O Lord my rock and my redeemer.

[40:28] This is a prayer of declaration that David's life would glorify God. That which is acceptable to God he has made available to us seen clearly through the word which he has written and his son which he has given.

God longs for our lives to bring him glory and we like David ought to as well and we can bring him glory and if God is our redeemer and rock also translated strength we will bring him glory.

Would David's declaration be our declaration day by day? I'll end with a very helpful phrase which I borrowed that will help us to remember how to apply this song and if you can remember these six words you may never forget how to apply Psalm 19 in your life.

Look up look down look in. If you forget everything else remember these words look up to the heavens and see the splendor of creation as established by God and watch as it drives you to long to know him more and then look down into the Bible and see and know the glories of scripture it's all sufficiency and supreme value that it ought to have in your life then look in consider your sin and examine your heart turn to Christ crying out for the purity and forgiveness that he gives and pray this prayer of declaration let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight oh Lord I rock and my redeemer may your life be a hymn to God's glory let's pray for you