

God's Love Revealed

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Preacher: BK Smith

[0 : 00] So, we are going to be covering Psalm 19, 7 to 11. We are doing this in a three-part series, and I've entitled this sermon, God's Love Revealed.

Last week, we learned that it was God's majesty was revealed, God Elohim, the great God, the creator God, who stands above all creation as creator.

And we're going to see an incredible switch here, but before I get here, I want to give you this quote. The great Russian novelist Fedor Dostoevsky said, if God doesn't exist, everything would be possible.

This is the starting point for the existentialist. If God does not exist, then everything would be possible.

Everything would be permitted. All would be good. It's kind of a question when you're in high school. I remember with a bunch of my buddies talking about if we could live without boundaries, who could we be?

[1 : 16] Being a young teenager, I took a rock star, right? Because, you know, when you watch a rock video, you see a lot of money, there's beautiful women, they've got fast cars, and they look like they are living the time of their life.

And when you're 14, 15, you think, man, that might happen in my life someday. And they seem to be able to live this world outside of regular society.

And we used to think to live like that would be great. However, if I knew my French philosophy, I would have found out that a man named John Paul Sartre had already answered that question. He claimed that we, as human beings without God, would be absolutely free, yet we would be forlorn, that we would be bereft, and we would be forsaken.

He believed that life without God would bring about sadness and loneliness because we would be isolated, deserted, and would have no hope.

[2 : 37] He stated, God does not exist and that we have to face all the consequences of God not existing. And that would be a precarious place to be.

The reason this philosopher was able to come to this conclusion, he said, it is very distressing because all possibility of finding value in heaven disappears with God.

And there can no longer be an ultimate good. And there, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think about, what would we be to grow into?

Indeed, if everything is permissible, if God does not exist, then man is forlorn because neither within him nor without him does man find anything to cling to.

To conclude, he wrote, if God does not exist, there is no purpose or value to our life. Humans are free to choose and make life whatever they choose.

[3 : 47] And then he concluded, man is condemned to be free. Absolute freedom is condemnation because there is no meaning or purpose behind anything humans do.

That man that I looked up to, that rock and roll star, was found later in his life in a hotel room with a noose around his neck. After a night of partying and debauchery, he killed himself.

The person that I looked upon, thinking that he had everything, even with all the freedom to express everything this life offered, still wasn't good enough.

Have you ever thought about what would happen to this world if God quit interfering? The Bible actually tells us exactly because there was a time when God did quit interfering.

After Adam was put out of the garden, there was a time in Genesis 6, verses 5 to 7, tells us what happened when God pulls himself from mankind.

[4 : 57] Verse 5 says, The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, that every intention and the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And the Lord was very sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I've created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of heaven, for I am sorry that I have made him.

This is the condition of man when God is not present. There are no rules, and that man only lives for himself.

Last week we saw that God made himself plain to those who see and experience his creation. We smell the beauty, we see beauty, we hear beauty, and all these things point to something far and greater than us.

In Psalm 119 through 6, we learned of God's glory, God's handiwork and power, for his creation, his power and his majesty and might. Romans tells us that the truth of God has been made plain to all man, but they failed to worship man.

[6 : 32] The reality is, as much as we believe that creation is a blessing, do you understand that creation is judgment against man?

Judgment points to a God greater than ourselves, and if we do not know how to figure out what this God wants, we are left confused, lost, frustrated.

It's interesting, in early Babylonian text, ancient text, of that whole time when Israel lived in other nations, they found prayers written out, total angst, to the God I do not know, but whom I fear, who I know I have sinned again, and not lived rightly.

What do I do? I'm lost. So he's praying to an unknown God, words that he understands in his heart, that he's sinned again, he knows there's no peace, and he'll follow any and many gods that come, just hoping that one of them, one of the things that he does would be righteous.

Psalm 19, 1, 6. To the choir master of Psalm of David, 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.

[8 : 08] 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. Remember last week, I talked about the heavens declare the glory of God.

This is the Elohim. This is God using his creator title. Now notice, as we switch over to verse 7, God calls himself something different.

In your Bibles, it might just say, instead of God, it might say Lord, and some of them will capitalize L-O-R-D, but this is Yahweh.

This is Lord God Adonai. This is the God who spoke to Abraham, who spoke to Noah, who spoke to David, and made covenants with them.

This is the personal God. And this is the part of the psalm where we read and see God's love revealed to us, because he begins to communicate with us, and how to have a right relationship with him.

[9 : 25] So please read along from 7 to 11. 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 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 keeping them there is great reward. One commentator calls these verses the most monumental statement on the sufficiency of scriptures ever made in concise terms.

Why are they important, and why are they so important to us today, you ask? This is words we're reading, which are over 3,000 years old.

[10 : 44] Well, today there are four myths that attack the church, and this passage attacks these myths quite sharply.

The first myth that we hear is that the word of God is not sufficient. The word of God is not sufficient. That we, if we are to follow after God, need something else.

We need something more. We need something. Why? Because we're too complex for a book.

That's what people believe. It's this myth that's out there.

So we need something beyond God's word. The second myth that attacks the church is the word of God is actually not sophisticated. In fact, I'm reading a passage to you that's over 3,000 years old.

How in the world can something written so long ago mean so much? Really, if we want to reach the world, we must find something more sophisticated because who's going to believe a book that's 3,000 years old?

[11 : 53] Some argue the third myth is that the word of God is not settled. The word of God is not settled. That means it's still emerging. The message is still changing.

We see this with a lot of sexual ethics today. A lot of things are moving. They're changing. How God did things there. Now we have this. It's called trajectory hermeneutics.

That God didn't actually give us everything. He just pointed us in the right direction and then we're supposed to figure out where it goes from there. That is a myth. A myth.

And the fourth myth is the word of God is not sure and the word of God is not reliable. Those who believe this myth believe that we really cannot trust ourselves not to understand it.

This is God. We're just stupid, silly human beings. How on earth could we ever understand this great, mighty God who would communicate with us?

[13 : 05] Well, he did. And he chose to use the means of his word written down to communicate to us. You see, within the word of God, we have God's written revelation to us.

In it, he explains what we are to believe, who we are, and what we are to do. God did not leave us to our own devices.

The fact of the matter is God wants us to know him. God wants us to know him.

So this morning, we are going to look at six definitions for the word of God. Six definitions of the word in God. And by doing so, we are going to learn six ways how the word of God is to affect us.

And when I say affect us, I mean bless us. So let's take a look at the first verse. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

[14 : 09] So the first truth we learn about the word of God is it converts the soul. It has the power to take a soul from one place and put it into something else.

So before I go into that understanding, it says the law of the Lord is perfect. And often we think we know what perfect means, right? We have an idea, an idealism of something that we think would be perfect, whether it's a perfect summer night, which would be always closed out with a little campfire, have s'mores.

Some of us have the dreams of a perfect snow on a certain day so we can have a perfect ski. But what it means is, it means it's whole.

Perfection means it's complete. It doesn't lack anything. There is no blemish to it. And because it's perfect, this aspect forms the basis of everything else we're going to read today.

So it's perfect, it's sure, it's right, it's pure, it's clean, and we're going to hear that it's true. The meaning of perfect is that Scripture lacks nothing for its completeness, nothing in order that it might be what it should be.

[15 : 30] It is complete as a revelation of divine truth. I believe this is a wonderful display of God's love towards us.

Not only does he reveal his love towards us in the glory of creation, but he loves us in giving us his word, by communicating with us, letting us know his will for us.

And we understand that his will is perfect. God is letting us know here that by being perfect, it is comprehensive in what we need to know about God.

And what it means is when I say my law is perfect, you don't need anything else. You don't need to, you don't need any more prophets. When God closed out the New Testament canon, he was saying, you do not need any more apostles, you don't need any more miracle workers, or you don't need to see a big hand drawing on the wall.

You don't have to look for signs in nature. You don't have to put out a fleece. You don't have to wait for a dream or a special experience to know God.

[16 : 42] What he tells us is that everything we need to know about God is found in this perfect word of God. And the result of this perfection, notice it states, it converts the soul.

Now it's interesting, there's some debate on this Hebrew word. Does it mean convert or does it mean revive? And I believe they both can equally use, their both senses have an equal value, they're equally valid, but I believe that converting has to be the stronger one because that is what happens to us.

By seeing creation and God's communion with us, understanding him, it brings our soul life. It is the message of salvation. We now know how to converse and communicate with God.

We know how to have harmony with God. Psalm 80 uses the word restoring here and it's taken from the idea to go from disorder and decay to life.

life. It moves us from sorrow and affliction from death unto life. What it allows us to see is that you and I were both morally and spiritually blind and now this Bible gives us eyes to understand this truth.

[18:16] yes, there are times when we fall away, we get tired, we lag, we drag, but some of us know that the word of God is the only word that has the ability to revive us and bring us back to life.

The word of God revives our soul, our inner person, the whole person, the real you. It causes the whole being to return to God in his power.

That is the first truth we know about God's word. The second truth we learn about the word of God is that it makes wise the simple. Take a look at verse 77.

That's verse 7, not verse 77. The testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple. What the word has to say and the word is sure.

What that means is it's unwavering, it's immovable, it's unmistakable, it's reliable, it's worthy to be trusted. It is God's word and it is only to be the foundation upon which we are to build our lives on.

[19:28] So the question is how trustworthy is God's word? You remember this guy named Peter, right? Peter walked with Jesus Christ, Peter saw the miracles, that Jesus did.

Peter got to walk on water. Peter also got to see the transfiguration on the mount. He got to see God revealing his glory to his son.

Okay? He was one of only three other men to see this. Probably one of the most momentous things that ever happened on this earth and he saw it. Years later as he's writing his letter, he's talking about his testimony.

It's found in 2 Peter chapter 1 verses 16 and 19 and this is what he says. For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty for when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory.

[20:39] This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. This is his talk about Mount of Transfiguration. He's hearing God audibly speak. Alright? 10 out of 10 one of the greatest experiences that he can have.

You see, we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have something, he says, actually more sure than that.

The prophetic word. The prophetic word to which you would do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

What he's saying is he doesn't rely on this experience which we had, which he heard God speak, he saw God's glory, I put my faith in God's word.

This is even more sure than any experience that I had. His authority is not from this experience, but it's from this word of God.

[21:48] How great is that, that this word can be trusted to form the firm foundation of human life. love. It provides guidance on the way God knows and blesses.

So it says, so what does the testimony that is sure result in? If the testimony is unwavering, immovable, unmistakable, reliable, and worthy, he says something here, it makes wise the simple.

Okay? And he's not using this to say those that are mentally challenged, but the references to people who are youth-like. They are inexperienced and are untutored in their life.

I don't know what it is with us humans sometimes, but we often want to be the source of our own formation, right? We want to find all the knowledge within us.

And then in reality, sometimes the options that we face leave us confused and in danger and making destructive, destructive choices. It's interesting, just Dave, in the last couple of weeks we've been talking, not the last couple of weeks actually, but the last couple of months, that often when people are coming in for counseling or dealing with certain issues in life, it's not because they're making these sinful, destructive choices, they're actually making foolish choices.

[23:13] These are people who believe they love God, they believe they're following God, but they are making certain choices in their life that's leading to destruction. And they're kind of perplexed, why am I here?

Why is this relationship a disaster? Why is my workplace in such disarray? I love God, I'm trying to do these things that he wants me to.

What it is, is they lack wisdom. They lack wisdom. They think because I'm now saved, any decision or thought that I have must be good, right?

What's interesting is this word simple carries with it the idea that there's people who are unable to close the door to their mind.

What that means is they are unable to discern when different people tell them different things, what is good information and what is bad information. You know what expounded this problem, we see this, was the internet.

[24 : 23] Do you guys remember when the internet first came out? You can put anything you want on the internet and people believe it. The reason why there's more conspiracy ideas, the flat earthers, some of those things, if I've insulted you because you only believe in a flat earth, good, but they'll deny science and they'll deny all these things that are proven true and especially about God.

They say there's a reason, there's a why there's a rise in deconversion, that is Christians who once believed, who now claim to not believe, is because of what atheists have been able to use the internet and put forth these arguments and people who weren't solid and God's word, bite into that. And they seem, these are seductive arguments that are put out there. And sometimes you just need to close your mind to it. And what the writer David is communicating here is that the simple are those that can't close their mind.

They just keep listening and listening and listening. they think a lot of facts equals wisdom. One of my greatest experiences in my life was being in this room with two pastors.

One man has pastored for over 40 years and the other one has pastored for over 25 years. They both had these worldwide ministries. Okay.

[26 : 03] And you know, you kind of ask, you know, do they put their pants one leg on a time or what do these guys do? But I was giving one guy a tour. I get in and the amount of wisdom that was being talked about in this room was beyond my capacity to understand.

And I remember crying. I was literally in tears just for the sweet joy of hearing biblical wisdom being dispensed because the one who had been ministering for 40 years was ministering to the guy who had been doing it for 25 years.

And this guy had a wide world ministry. Like this is no, this is tens and tens and tens and tens of thousands of people he's influenced. And it was amazing just to hear that.

they were both men that have applied and they were skilled at the art of godly living and one was struggling with it. And to hear the one dispense this words, I remember thinking of my life, if I could even live a year of my life at that level of his wisdom, I will consider my life a success.

You see, the wise person submits to scripture and they know how to apply it to their circumstances. even when they do not understand. I mentioned to you Matt and Becky.

[27 : 27] Becky's actually, her testimony through this whole ordeal with her husband is immense. It's incredible. It's just this complete reliance on God. There's no fear. Just we're going to trust God even though we don't know what's going on here.

Even though I might be losing my husband, I'm just going to trust in God. You see, the word of God can take a very simple person and turn them into a skilled person in all his ways when they understand that God's word is unwavering, unmovable, unmistakable, reliable, and absolutely worthy to be trusted.

So that's the second truth. The third truth we learn about God is found in verse 8.

The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. And I want you to know this connection that the writer is doing.

There's actually a word order here that we see. The first is conversion, right? Then we have, we're given this wisdom. So it's almost there's salvation, then there's teaching for life, and then there's further teaching that results in joyful heart.

[28 : 47] There's a specific order of this. And as my friend, I have a pastor friend who was doing this marriage conference, and the whole first part, he's just banging away on the gospel, banging away on the gospel.

And then he's going after them on certain aspects of God's truth. And he simply says, hey, if you can't get spiritually healthy, you're not going to be spiritually happy.

Until you actually get down, bow the knee to everything that God has to say, your marriage is going to be a mess. You might be able to make it look good, but unless you're spiritually strong, you will not be happy.

So the first thing is you need to be saved. You need to be converted. Or if you're saved and you're living in rebellion, repent and confess and get right with God.

Then start living biblically. How many of you guys have been to a marriage conference? A couple of you guys, right? Might have a few more here, I think.

[29 : 48] But what the point is, when you go to those marriage conferences, often they're tricks and techniques to learn better communication, find your wife's heart language, you know, your wife might motivate, all these different things which tend to bring peace for a time in the home.

But after a while, they fade away. And it's why it's because to get healthy, it means you have to start biblically. You need to get wise.

The reality is many people deal with depression, uncertainty, anxiety, fear, and doubt. These are Christians I'm talking about. Some of you are distressed and despondent because you lack direction and purpose.

And I'm telling you right here, right now, many of you will continue to live in that cycle and you will forever until you obey God's counsel.

Okay? Get it? There's a difference from knowing God's counsel than actually obeying God's counsel. And sometimes the difference between those two things is as wide as the Grand Canyon.

[30 : 54] You can know all this stuff. But if you're not actually doing this stuff, it's not the same. It's interesting, just in a discussion with some person, they're admitting they're far from God, but they're following their freedoms and their feelings and they're seeking wisdom and dealing with this one, the relationship.

And I ask them, well, who's giving you this wisdom? Well, it's my non-Christian parents. What in God's name are you trusting people who do not know God, do not know God's glory or his word for advice?

And if you're distant from God, why would you be trusting your feelings? Because you're far from God, God's whispering. The reality is most of us will turn to self-indulgent pursuits like self-esteem and self-fulfillment when it comes to making decisions rather than what the word of God has to say. The worst conversations I've ever had with any person in my life are those who are either contemplating an affair or who are Christians wanting an unbiblical relationship, which means a Christian with a non-Christian.

I deserve to be happy. I deserve good. I deserve to be loved. It's a focus on I, I, I, rather than what does God call you to?

[32 : 26] Yes, life is tough, but today is not eternal. And those lies that we listen to, those aren't God's lies being whispered to you.

There's someone else who's whispering to you. You see, notice it says the word is right. It means it's straight, it's level, it's just, it's upright, and it's free of obstacles.

When people get off what is right of the word, they sometimes wonder, why am I so far away from God? The reality is you want to get right with God, and it begins with confession.

It begins, A, that I'm admitting that I'm a sinner, or admitting that I've fallen away from your grace, God, and I need to obey you. And then, when you do those things, you will start to experience the joy in your life.

But to pursue things that you know are biblically wrong for whatever reason you argue with your head will never satisfy you before the Savior. These aren't my words.

[33 : 36] This is not my wisdom I'm dispensing here. This is what God's word says so clearly. The result, it rejoices your heart.

The heaviness is gone. The anxiety is gone. The anxiety is gone. It is an experience of joy that one who submits to God, that gets to experience.

The fourth truth we learn about the word of God is that it lightens the eyes. Notice it says the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

That word pure means that it's not opaque. It means it's absolutely clear. It's like if we were looking into a glass of water or, have you guys ever been to Lake Superior?

Lake Superior is kind of a funny lake. It is a clear lake. It is a cold lake. But you can see 50, 60 feet down when you're out on a raft. It's just, it's wonderful because there's no, there's no mud, there's

no murkiness in some of the areas.

[34 : 43] Where I used to live in this place called Decatur and there was a Lake Decatur, you could never see the bottom. Like ever, no matter how calm, it was just a dirty, filthy lake.

So when he's talking about pure, that's what he's talking about. It's free of any impediment. And because it's free, it enlightens the eyes.

Now notice it says the commandment of the Lord. That means God authoritative word is what?

Binding. It's not optional. You don't get to weigh whether you're going to do it or not.

How many people have heard the phrase when discussing some biblical truth? Well, that's the way you interpret it. That's it? Come on. Some of you guys have heard this, right?

That's just the way you interpret it. The Bible actually only has one interpretation. It has many applications, but it has one interpretation. And I know this poor man who's come under the fixation of other people.

[35 : 49] They've shown him some quote-unquote errors in the Bible. Now he thinks every verse is uncertain about. So for me to make an even a declaration of John 3.16, he can't handle it.

Well, maybe there's an error there. And he's exactly where Satan wants him to be. Satan wants him to think that the Bible is unclear.

Well, David is saying the commandment, the word of God is pure. It's clear. It enlightens the eyes. It's not like we have to do that double squint. You know, when you have to double read something, when you read something, you don't, wow, it's so landish. Put my glasses on, right? We don't need to.

The fact of the matter is the word of God is not mystifying. It's not confusing or puzzling. It is actually meant to be understood. It brings understanding when there is ignorance.

[36 : 50] It brings order where there is confusion. It brings light where there is spiritual and moral darkness. Have you guys ever heard of the book, The Bible Code? It was a book that got hot a couple of years ago and it was like God had all these codes in the Bible and you could predict things in the future.

Those books are complete insult to God. You know why? Because it's communicating that God's word is confusing. And that he's saying his will, you actually have to search for it. I'm not going to tell you what it is.

How bright are you to figure that out? Or really, it turns out how outlandishly crazy you are by adding up the Jewish digits and thinking they tell you something. That's not God.

God doesn't try to hide the truth from us. The mystery of the Bible as if it's hidden from us. What kind of God would do that?

Certainly not a loving God playing cosmic games with us. Reality is the word of God is not misleading. It will not lead you astray.

[37 : 54] It is complete and it is trustworthy. And as a result, it enlightens your eyes. It gives you eyes to see clearly, like having a bright light or something on that you're inspecting.

And yes, it reveals our sins of who we are before God. But it also gives us the answers on how to make ourselves right before God.

So the last two truths I've combined here. The fifth and sixth truth we learned about the word of God is that it is clean and endures forever.

And they are true, teaches righteous living. Take a look at verse nine. The fear of the Lord is clean and enduring forever. The rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

When we fear God, know what it does? It cleans out the love of our sin in our life. You know what? When you get to that point of fearing God, you have to start staking stock your life and you need to do a house cleaning.

[39 : 02] And the reality is you will never be satisfied until one author I read in the subject, till every street, lane, alley, every house and every corner of the town is clean.

Filth brings decay. You willingly allow sin in your life.

It will bring decay and it will corrode aspects of your life. You might not see it at first, right? That's the way it is with corrosion. It starts slow, but sooner or later that wheel is going to fall off that truck. But we see here that the fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever. It is not comforting as we live in this world where things change, governments, polls, leaders, but it tells us that the throne of God remains the same and unshaken forever and ever.

The rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. I sometimes wonder if we really believe this.

[40 : 14] That there's no guesswork for us. That we don't have to question God. Remember that man I cited who wrote that prayer to an unknown God, wondering if he failed him in some way.

How horrible that would be. They had no idea what God ruled at the time. There was no moral superiority in where they thought they were.

It was twisted. Some sacrificed their children, felt they had to kill other people. Reality is that is not the God of the Bible.

God speaks to reliability, permanence, continuity, faithfulness, and fidelity. There is nothing wishy-washy about our God.

So what does this tell us? What does this tell us? Take a look at verse 10. If we accept this truth that God tells us here, there needs to be an active response in our lives.

[41 : 26] Verse 10. The word of God is 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. In keeping them there is great reward. That's a promise. You ever thought about writing that on the fridge?

Like the Bible is not this mystical book to know, hey, I read 10 verses today. That means I'm going to be blessed and my life's going to be okay. It's not what it's talking about.

If you know that the riches of wisdom are contained in here, why? Because God spoke to us in this word. I need to make a point of knowingness.

How many are too busy? Right? I believe this whole world exists just to keep us busy and away from God's word. You see, this is the most precious resource that we could ever have.

[42 : 33] The reality is if we did not have this word of God, we would be like the people before Noah's time.

We would be wrecked and we would have no hope. No matter how good you think you are, all it takes is someone who doesn't obey your law to come in and mess you up.

You see, the Bible is our mentor, our monitor. It's the keeper of our conscience. It's the revealer of our hearts. It's the revealer of our minds.

It's the revealer of our thoughts. It knows us. And the reality is this is how much God loves us.

He loves us so much that he gave us a word that we can know him, commune with him, and pray with him. If you are here, the Bible is more of a monument or a paperweight or something that looks good on your desk next to your bed.

[43 : 45] And my question is, how is that non-biblical life working out for you? Let me pray.