

Are You Listening?

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to Psalm chapter 19. This is one of my favorite Psalms. Excited to get the opportunity to preach it and to walk through it with you all this morning.

So Psalm chapter 19, and if you're able, when you found it in your Bibles, let's stand together in honor of the reading of God's Word. Psalm 19, to the choir master, a 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.

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. 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 end 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.

[1 : 16] 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. 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. In keeping them there is great reward. 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. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. Oh Lord, my rock and my redeemer. This is God's holy word.

[2 : 18] Let's pray once more. Lord, that is my prayer, Father, that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart this morning would be acceptable in your sight. Father, would your word go forth from this place, from my mouth, into the hearts of your people, God.

And would you stir in them a love for you and your glory as proclaimed all over the earth. We love you and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

Amen. But if God spoke to you, would you listen? Of course, I'd like to think that the answer would be yes. That if the most glorious and important person in all the universe spoke, I would listen.

But experience might tell me that I always don't do what makes the most sense. Just a few weeks ago, Amanda and I sat down in the living room. The day was done. Amanda was sitting in the chair and I sat down on the couch.

And here at the end of the day, with all of our responsibilities finished for the day, she attempted to communicate. But to this day, I have no idea what she said.

[3 : 28] Why? Because the whole time she was speaking to me, I made the rude decision to sit down and scroll through my cell phone. And if you want any more marriage advice, you can find me after the service.

Happy to talk with you later. I knew she was saying something, but it was clear that I was not really paying much attention. And so after a few minutes, she rightly responded, Jonathan, you're not paying attention.

Conversation was over. Here she was, the love of my life. The most important person in the world to me, speaking to me. Communicating, attempting to communicate with me.

And I foolishly, wrongly, wasn't listening. The breakdown in communication was entirely on me. You know, one of the most common objections that you might hear to the existence of God is, Well, if God's there, if he's real, if he's in existence, if he's out there, why doesn't he just speak clearly and

plainly and make himself known?

If God is real, if the God that you believe in exists, why doesn't he just communicate and speak?

Well, here, in Psalm chapter 19, David answers that objection very clearly by showing us two ways God has spoken.

[4 : 47] In his works and in his word. The early church fathers would say that God has written two books that reveal his glory.

It's the book of God's creation and the book of God's word. In other words, God has spoken, he is speaking, he is trying to communicate, but are we listening?

Are we listening? So this morning, we'll see two ways God has spoken to reveal his glory. God's works reveal his glory and God's word reveals his glory.

Then we'll close by seeing David shows us in verses 12 through 14 the right response of one who is listening. In verses 12 through 14. So first, God's works declare God's glory.

Book number one is the book of creation. Look there with me to verse one. David says, the heavens declare the glory of God. And the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

[5 : 52] This is a callback. David's reflecting on God's work and creating all things in Genesis chapter one. Where we're told that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

In other words, he created all things. And David tells us that the heavens, the works that God has created, are speaking. They are declaring something.

They have a message to proclaim. What is it? The message that creation proclaims is that there is a God and he is glorious.

That's the message. There is a God and he is glorious. And David shows us that creation declares the glory of God.

David says, constantly, universally, and joyfully. This message is proclaimed constantly, universally, and joyfully.

[6 : 50] First, he says, creation declares God's glory constantly. Look there at verse two. Day to day pours out speech. Night to night reveals knowledge.

Day and night. All day long. All night long. Every hour of the day. It's constant. Not a single day has gone by since the creation of the world. All the way in Genesis chapter one.

All the way to today, August 11th, 2024. Where creation has not proclaimed the glory of God. It is constant. Every day of your life.

God has spoken to you through creation. You have not lived a single second of your life without creation bearing witness to the glory of God.

You may not have always listened to that proclamation. But creation proclaims God's glory constantly. Not only this. David says that creation declares God's glory universally.

[7 : 49] Look there at verse three. He says, there is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes through all the earth. And their words to the end of the world.

This is universal proclamation. It's not an audible message that we listen to. It's a visual message. This is a visual message being proclaimed.

Creation speaks not to our ears, but to our eyes. Which means that this message is not inhibited or restricted or limited by any barriers of language.

Any barriers of distance. Any barriers of culture. It's not limited like I am to speaking to a group of English speaking individuals only. Creation proclaims the message that there is a God and he is glorious to all the earth.

Proclamation is made in Allendah and in Asia and Russia and in South America. To the rich and to the poor. To children. To adults. We all get this message. In other words, everyone on earth has access to this book.

[8 : 56] It has been read aloud to every single person in every single place everywhere on the planet. That's astounding common knowledge, isn't it?

Everyone, everywhere. The most stubborn atheist that you can think of has lived every single day of his or her life witnessed to by creation.

It has spoken to them every single day. But have they listened? Calvin says, The glory of God is not written in small, obscure letters, but richly engraven in large and bright characters.

Which all men may read. And read with the greatest ease. Now this is what we call general revelation. You may not know that term. It means that it's general in the sense that all people have access to the revelation of God and creation.

All people who exist in creation have heard the proclamation of creation. Now there is a God and he is glorious. It is constant.

[10:03] It is universal. And lastly here, David says, Creation proclaims this message joyfully. I love this. Because David, he gives us these two images here of this joyful proclamation.

He says in verse 4, In them, the heavens, he has set a tent for the sun. These two poetic illustrations for the sun. He compares it to a bridegroom leaving his chamber.

And a strong man running its course with joy. Just think about those two images for a minute. He says the sun is like a bridegroom leaving his chamber.

What's he leaving to go do? He's going to go get his bride. This bridegroom is waking up on his wedding day. He's rising up out of bed to go marry his beloved.

It is a moment of excitement and joy and anticipation. I don't think I needed an alarm clock on my wedding day. You get up with joy. And again, this is universal proclamation.

[11:00] In the ancient world, everybody would know what that bridegroom was doing. This was a communal celebration. Everyone saw it. Everyone knew about it. Everyone celebrated it.

This was universal, joyful celebration as the bridegroom goes, rises, and leaves to get his bride. He says he's like a strong man running his course.

How? With joy. We've been watching the Olympics this week, the past couple of weeks. And I started to notice as I watched that many of these athletes, they smile.

They're happy people. And maybe just because they're fit and in the top 1% of the world in fitness. I don't know. But I think it's because they're doing what they've been built to do.

They've trained their whole life for this moment. It only comes once every four years. They've prepared. They're ready. And they go about their course with joy because this is what they're designed to do.

[11:56] David says in a similar way. The sun does what it's designed to do. It rises and it goes across all the earth. It runs its course all across the earth with joy. It's just because they're not just meant to teach us.

Church, it's meant to move us. Messages that are proclaimed with joy are meant to be received with joy. We're not just meant to know that there's a God and that he's glorious.

We're meant to know that truth and rejoice in that truth. We're meant to exalt in that truth that there is a God who made all things including us. That we belong to him.

That he's glorious and worthy of our honor and our worship. It's not just information. It's meant to transform us that we delight in him and honor him as he's due. The sad truth is, of course, despite the fact that all people have heard this message, many do not listen.

Many do not receive it with joy. So Paul tells us in Romans 1, the passage that we had read this morning, that they have heard it but they have suppressed it.

[13:14] Romans chapter 1. Paul writes that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. 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.

So they are without excuse, Paul says. It's remarkable. Common knowledge, isn't it? Everyone on the planet knows that there is a God.

Everyone on the planet knows that he possesses eternal power and he is divine in nature, that he is glorious. Everyone knows this.

How? God has spoken through the book of creation. Constantly, universally, joyfully. But sinful men suppress the truth of God, which tells us creation alone is not enough to save anyone.

[14:28] General revelation of God is not enough to save anyone. We need more specific revelation from God.

We need more direct communication from God. We need another book, which is where David turns here in verses 7 through 11. Second, God's words declare God's glory.

God's words declare God's glory. At first glance, it might seem like David is making a big jump from what he talks about in verses 1 through 6, creation, and now what he's talking about in verses 7 through 11, God's word.

But what he's doing is he's moving from God's general revelation to the whole world to what we call special revelation. From a broad proclamation of his glory to all the world, now to a specific, special,

direct revelation of him and his glory to a specific people.

You can know that there is a God by the first book, but you cannot know God without the second book. The second book is God's word. The whole world has access to the first book, but not everybody had access to the second book.

[15 : 43] God gave the law, his word, to his chosen people. He gave them to the Jews. To one specific people out of all the world, he did not paint his law across the sky.

He put it on a tablet of stone. He delivered it to one specific people, that they might be his chosen people out of all the people of the world, that he might be their God.

This is particular, special revelation. The Jews were his covenant chosen people. And you see some of this difference even. It's subtle. You might miss it.

But you see some of this distinction in the words that are used for God's name. He says, the heavens declare the glory of God. And that word there is El, short for Elohim.

This is kind of a general name for God. This is his revelation to the Gentiles, to the world. But verse 7, the law of the Lord, Yahweh, covenant name of God, the covenant-keeping God of the Jews, the law of the Lord is perfect.

[16 : 44] And David is shifting from general revelation to special revelation. And again, apart from special revelation, apart from the word of God, you cannot know God.

The only way that David is able to look out at creation and rightly understand that this is God's glory being proclaimed is because he's looking and understanding it and reading it through the interpretive lens of the word of God.

And so here, in verses 7 through 11, look there with me. And notice he just gushes about the goodness of the law of God. He just overflows with praise for the word of God.

Look how David describes the law here. He says, verse 7, The law of the Lord is perfect. The testimony of the Lord is sure. The precepts of the Lord are right.

The commandment of the Lord is pure. The word of God, David understands, it is a treasure. It's a glorious gift. And the effect of someone who reads the law and keeps the law and delights in the law of the Lord, David says, The law revives the soul.

[17 : 58] Do you want to have your soul revived? David says, Meditate on the law of God. The law makes a simple person wise. Do you want to grow in wisdom? David says, Meditate on the law of God.

The law makes the heart rejoice. It enlightens the eyes. Do you want your heart to rejoice this morning? David says, Go and turn your attention to the word of the Lord. He says, The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.

The rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. All of this is painting a picture, isn't it? That the word of God, which David had in his day as the law of God, is good and beautiful and right and true.

David loves the law of God. Why? Because it is God's special revelation of himself. His holiness, His goodness, and His glory to His covenant people.

David says, This word, this law of God is greater, is more wonderful than all the things that men, that you and I tend to chase after in this life. I wonder if I offered you the law of God or \$10 million in your bank account tomorrow, which would you choose?

[19 : 14] He says, The law of God is more precious to him than gold, even much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey.

You know, there's an old rabbinical practice that I've stolen for my household, where the rabbis, they would read this verse, The law of the Lord is sweeter also than honey, and the drippings of the honeycomb.

And they would take some honey, and they'd have their disciples sit there, and they would get a little drip of honey, and have them stick out their tongues, and drizzle a little bit of honey on their tongues, and ask them, What's sweeter than honey?

And I do this with my boys, and they know now to say, The word of the Lord, the word of God is sweeter than honey. I don't think I've ever done this without them smiling and getting excited as I ask them that question, and the honey goes down, they smile, and they receive it with joy, and they know, I hope they know, that as sweet as that honey is, as good as it is to the taste, as much as they desire to have more of it, that the word of the Lord is even sweeter than honey, the drippings of the honeycomb.

David says, The law is good by them as your servant, worn and keeping them, there is great reward. I wonder, Do you love the word of the Lord like this?

[20 : 32] Do you crave it? More than you crave riches? And more than you desire a fat bank account, do you crave the word of the Lord? More than you desire your next meal, do you hunger and thirst for the word of God?

We need to realize that this book, that God has written, church, is a treasure. It's a privilege. It's a treasure that not everyone in the world has access to.

It's a joy and a gift and a treasure that we have seats all in this room with the word of God tucked up underneath. And many of us in our homes have the word of God on a bookshelf, or on a coffee table, or a dining room table.

Many of them are closed. They need to be open. David is referring to the book that he had in his day, the law of the Lord.

He says, this law is perfect. But of course, on this side of the cross, we understand that the law is perfect, but it's insufficient, isn't it? As good as the law is, there's a problem here.

[21 : 41] And the problem is that no one can keep it perfectly. The problem here isn't with the law. The law is perfect. The law is good. The law is right.

The law is sure. The law is to be desired. But we are not perfect. The problem with the law is that it cannot produce in us what it demands from us.

You should think about that. The law cannot produce in us what it demands from us. It shows us how far the gap is between us and God, but it never lays on its side and acts as a bridge for us to climb the gap.

It shows us how far we have to climb to reach our way up to the Lord. His holiness is so high and so great. Our sinfulness is so low, but it never stands upright to act as a ladder for us to climb our way to the Lord.

It cannot produce in us what it demands from us. What does it demand? The law of God demands perfection. God demands righteousness. The righteousness of God.

[22 : 45] It can teach us what righteousness is, but it cannot make us righteous. That's the problem. I've often quoted this line from John Bunyan. I've quoted it before. I'll quote it again. Run, John, run, the law demands, but gives us neither feet nor hands.

Far better news the gospel brings, which bids me fly and gives me wings. The gospel provides what God demands of us.

The gospel provides the very righteousness of God that's required in order for sinners to be made right with God. The gospel is the good news that now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it.

The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe, Paul says in Romans chapter 3. The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

If we really want to get the message of creation, what is pointing us to? If we really want to understand the message of the law, what is driving us to? We need to hear the proclamation of God's glory in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[24 : 07] Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the clearest, the greatest, the most spectacular revelation of the glory of God.

Hebrews chapter 1 tells us, long ago at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. Creation reveals the divine power and the eternal nature of God. But the divine power and eternal nature of God are revealed most clearly in Jesus Christ. All things were made through Him and for Him, Paul says in Colossians chapter 1.

And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent.

[25 : 18] For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

This is the gospel, church. It's the good news that sinners like you and me can receive the very righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ and be reconciled to Him.

This is the gospel message. And apart from this gospel, apart from the good news of Jesus Christ, we have no hope. I want you to understand, creation and the message it proclaims, God is good and God is glorious, that is enough to damn us, but not enough to save us.

The law of God, as good and as perfect and as right as it is, is insufficient to save us. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ, received by grace through faith, can save sinners, reconcile us to a holy God.

So church, we must proclaim it. This is why missions exist. This is why we send missionaries out to the corners, to the ends of the earth, to proclaim the good news with joy, because apart from hearing the message of the gospel and receiving it by faith in Christ, by the grace of God, there is no hope.

[26 : 46] This is why we share the gospel with our family, with our friends, with our neighbors, because they have heard the message of creation. They must hear the message of the gospel in order to be saved.

Paul quotes this passage, Psalm 19, in Romans chapter 10. And he says, everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. We believe this.

But then he asks, well, how then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?

So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have. For, quoting Psalm 19 verse 4, their voice has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the earth.

[27 : 59] They have heard enough to condemn them, but not enough to save them. The gospel message must be proclaimed, church.

Creation will not proclaim it. The law of God will not proclaim it. You and I must proclaim it constantly, universally, and joyfully.

That there is a God. He is glorious and you may know Him through faith in Jesus Christ. That's the message. So how do we respond to the message?

This is where we'll close. David shows us here in verses 12 through 14, he shows us the right response of those who are listening. Look with me to verse 12. David heard the message of God's glory and God's works and in God's words.

And so what does he do? He responds by calling out for mercy and grace. That the Lord might transform His works and His words.

[29 : 06] Do you see that? David says, God, your works declare your glory. Your works are glorious. They are good and right and true. And so God, I want you to transform my works.

He says in verse 12, 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. He prays for His works that He might be holy as God is holy. He prays for forgiveness for where His works have fallen short of the glory of the Lord.

And then verse 14, He shifts and He prays for His words. God, I see that Your law is glorious. God, I see that Your law is good. Your word is perfect and right and true.

Your words declare Your glory. Therefore, God, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight. Oh Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

[30 : 08] This is the right response of those who are listening. Oh Lord, You are glorious and I am a sinner. I need You to cover my sins and I need You to make me holy.

I need You to transform my life. I need You to make me acceptable in Your sight. That's His prayer. It may be that you're hearing this and you don't really know that you've quite ever gotten this message before.

Your response to the work and the word of the Lord this morning is faith and repentance and the proclamation of the gospel. It's faith in Jesus Christ.

It's to cast yourself on the mercy of God and say, Lord, I am a sinner. Would You make me acceptable in Your sight through faith in Your Son, Jesus? Cast yourself like David on the mercy of

God.

Turn from your sin and put your faith in Christ and rejoice in the good news of the gospel that in Him by faith in His name we can truly be declared innocent of all sin.

[31 : 13] It doesn't stop there, church. The whole Christian life is one of constant pursuit of the glory of God. And so we have to tune our ears in to listen as He speaks.

Psalm 19 begs us, church, don't just aimlessly exist in the world. Think, look, behold, reflect, admire the beauty of creation and listen to its message.

There is a God and He is glorious. Would you read the book of creation and listen to its message? But don't just stop there, church. God has written another extraordinary book.

Would you listen to the voice of God in the Word of God? Read the book. Read the book. Open the book.

Devote yourself to the book. Seek the glory of God in the book. God has written a book to be reached out and grabbed off the shelf anytime you please.

[32 : 21] Open it. Study it. Meditate on it. Memorize it. Share it. Rejoice in it. Immerse yourself in the glory of God in His Word that you might rightly understand the glory of God in His world.

And see in it the beauty and the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ who is Himself the living Word of God. Church, as we close in prayer, what sins need to be confessed to Him this morning? Those known and those unknown, those visible and those hidden, what words need to be transformed by the grace of God to be made acceptable in His sight? Who here needs to say for the first time, God, You are glorious and I am a sinner.

I've fallen short. Would You make me righteous by Your grace and faith in Jesus Christ? God has spoken. He's speaking still. We've heard from Him this morning.

Are you listening? How will you respond? Let's pray. Lord, we thank You for the ways that You have spoken in creation that declares the glory of God and Your Word that shows us Your holiness and Your goodness and Your purity and supremely so in the gospel of Jesus Christ who is the image of the invisible God.

[33 : 51] And Father, we pray, Lord, if there are any here who do not know You, Father, would You open their ears and their hearts and their eyes to behold the glory of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

and Lord, as we grow in You together as a church, Father, would You transform our works and our words that they might be acceptable in Your sight.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.