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Sermon Notes

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God Speaks to a Darkened World: Precious Words of Warning and Reward

Psalm 19

I. Introduction: Groping in the Dark

- A. America is a religious nation
- B. Constant interest in spiritual things; cults always jumping up
- C. Spirituality from human imagination & demonic whisperings
- D. True knowledge of God impossible apart from God's communication
 - 1. God has MADE IT SO!! (1 Cor. 1... "For since in the wisdom of God the world though its wisdom did not know God...")
 - 2. God has made us dependent on His self-revelation
 - 3. Test of faith: will we simply accept His self-revelation, or reject it and make idols
- E. God's three great forms of self-communication
 - 1. Creation
 - 2. Scripture
 - 3. Jesus Christ

King David rejoices over two of these—creation and Scripture—and alludes to the third, His Redeemer, Jesus Christ

This is a great Psalm praising God's self-revelation... God's communication to a darkened world

II. Creation: God Speaks Naturally to Glorify Himself

- A. The Word Comes First

1. All creation the direct result of a spoken word from God
2. The Word comes first, the physical universe comes second
3. Christ Himself is the eternal word, through whom all things were made
4. We must tremble at His word!!

B. Creation Gives a Speech: The Topic—the Glory of God

1. God’s glory: His radiant self-communication
2. Every aspect of creation speaks to us of God
3. Sum total of communication is powerful and unmistakable

Romans 1:20 “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

4. Here, David focuses on the heavens above us... a particularly powerful display of God’s glory
5. The contours and edges of God’s glory: His attributes
 - a. God is powerful: the sun’s constant heat
 - b. God is wise: God’s intricate creation
 - c. God is immense: space’s infinity
 - d. God is good: the sun’s beneficial service
 - e. God is faithful: the sun’s constant rising

C. Heavenly Communication: Speech from the Skies

1. Looking up to listen

Illus. Galileo’s telescope; Hubbel too

2. Communication is **ample**

“declare” “proclaim” “pour forth” “display”

- a. this is not a trickle of communication but a flood

- b. God pours knowledge into our minds when we simply look up
- 3. Communication is **constant**
- 4. Communication is **clear**
- 5. Communication is **universal**

III. Scripture: God Speaks Supernaturally to Save Us

A. God Speaks in Scripture

- 1. Titles of Scripture: (beginning in vs. 7)

“law” “statutes” “precepts” “commands” “judgments”

- 2. The Bible is “God’s word written”

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is God-breathed...”

- 3. The Clarity of Scripture’s Communication: superior to nature
 - a. nature’s laws & ways communicate naturally: that we may know God’s glory
 - b. Scripture communicates supernaturally: that we may be saved from our sins
 - c. Scripture speaks more clearly than does nature
 - i) some see the stars and worship them
 - ii) Scripture tells us plainly: God made the stars, worship Him only!
- 4. To understand the mind & glory of God: read Scripture daily

Matthew 4:4 “Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

B. The Perfections of Scripture (vs. 7-9)

- 1. Unequivocal statement: God’s perfect word

vs. 7 “The law of the Lord is perfect...”

- a. nothing missing, no blemishes, totally complete and upright
- b. absolutely flawless

Psalm 12:6 And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.

c. errors in the Bible??? Just name some!

2. Total security at the foundation

vs. 7 “The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy”

a. unshakable, unmoving... lasting and secure

b. a good place for a foundation... it won't move!!

Illus. Sounding for a foundation (pile drivers driven into Cambridge mud)

Scripture won't move!!

3. Total truthfulness

vs. 8 The precepts of the Lord are right”

a. Hebrew = righteous, telling the truth

b. Scripture is no flatterer... the key to its effect on us is that it tells the truth

Illus. Like a good doctor, it gives an accurate diagnosis and prescription

4. Clarity: transmitting God's light to us

vs. 8 The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes

a. Hebrew = clear, catching and radiating light purely

b. like a clear perfect diamond

Illus. Four c's of diamond: color, cut, clarity, carat... "Clarity enhanced diamonds"

A Clarity Enhanced Diamond is natural, however it has been altered to improve the clarity. For example, if there was a break in the Diamond which broke the surface of the diamond, it is possible to "fill" that "break" with a glassy substance which improves the look of the diamond.

Scripture perfectly transmits the glory and purposes of God... no "clarity enhancement needed!"

5. Purity

vs. 9 *The fear of the Lord is clean*

C. The Power of Scripture (vs. 7-9)

1. Every phrase has a direct impact on the believing reader
2. Look at all scripture does to David:

“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.”

When David’s soul is sagging, it is Scripture that gives him new spiritual energy

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.”

When David sees himself as simple, ignorant, needing wisdom, it is Scripture that gives him God’s wisdom

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.”

David finds incredible joy in seeing the certainty and perfection in every line of Scripture

The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.”

When David feels darkness and confusion closing around him, it is Scripture that makes everything clear and bright again

3. Scripture’s primary power is in bringing us to the fear of the Lord... the fear of the Lord is what will save our souls through faith in Christ Jesus

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.”

D. The Preciousness & Pleasure of Scripture (vs. 10)

vs. 10 *“They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey from the honey comb.”*

Gold is presently worth @ \$275 / troy ounce; the world’s holding amount to over 33,000 tons, or almost \$300 billion in total value

1. Nothing in all the universe is as precious as the word of God
2. God's word has the power to save your eternal soul... which Jesus said was more valuable than the whole world
3. The words of God are eternal... someday this earth's gold will be destroyed by God!

The Pleasure of Scripture (vs. 7-10)

4. Sweetness to the taste... pleasure in the mouth like pleasure in the mind

Illus.: Honey's value: it takes bees flying a total of 55,000 miles to over 2 million flowers to make 1 pound of honey

Honey's natural sweetness has been prized throughout human history... Ancient Egyptians used it as tribute or to make payments; in Greece, "mead" was an alcoholic drink made from mixing wine with honey, considered the drink of the gods

Honey has one purpose: to bring pleasure to the eater

5. God's word brings incredible joy and delight to the true believer
6. The joy of a clean, pure, fruitful, God-pleasing life!!

Psalm 119:32 I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

E. The Purpose of Scripture (vs. 7-13)

To warn of dangers To produce rewards

"great transgression" vs. "great reward"

vs. 11 By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

1. To Warn of Dangers
 - a. two types of sin

Hidden faults & Willful transgression

Hidden faults are things offensive to God about your life, but you don't know about them yet

- a. we all naturally have blind spots

vs. 12 “Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.”

- b. David still sought forgiveness for sins he knew nothing about
- c. there is also willful sin... blatant disobedience

vs. 13 “Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me.”

David asks God to use Scripture to keep him from willfully sinning against God

“Make me fear you, O Lord, so that I not sin in your face.”

Danger: willful sin leads to bondage and slavery

“May they not rule over me.”

John 8:34 Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

If you are in bondage to some willful sin, only the power of the Spirit using the warnings of Scripture can break the cycle... willful sin is “GREAT TRANSGRESSION”

Scripture contains some dire warnings against sin... we ignore them to our own peril

2. To Produce Rewards

vs. 11 “In keeping them there is great reward.”

- a. fruitful living for God’s glory now... deep joy and satisfaction as we walk in daily fellowship with God Himself
- b. eternal pleasures at God’s right hand
- c. detailed rewards for everything done in obedience to Him

1 Cor. 4:4 “At that time each will receive his praise from God.”

IV. Human Response: A Prayer for the Pleasure of God

- A. God Speaks to Elicit a Response
- B. David’s Response: Speaking Back to God
- C. David’s Prayer Goal: The Pleasure of God

- 1. God’s Pleasure in Us the Goal of Our Creation AND Salvation

- a. God's pleasure central issue of the universe

Revelation 4:11 [KJV] "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

- b. God's pleasure the motivation for our salvation

Luke 12:32 "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

- c. God's pleasure as our goal every day

2 Corinthians 5:9 "So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it."

2. An Aroma Pleasing to God

Proverbs 15:8 The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

God takes delight in your prayers when your whole life is offered to Him through faith in Christ and through daily consecration

3. David's Prayer to Please God

vs. 14 "May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

- a. prayer and a pleasing life

Pleasing God is no small thing; only those who humble themselves and ask succeed

Hebrews 13:21 May [the God of peace] work in us what is pleasing to him through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

YOU CAN'T SANCTIFY YOURSELF!!! Ask God to do it in you!

- b. pleasing words from his mouth

- i) perfect summation of the whole Psalm

God's communication is perfect... let mine be perfect too!!

- ii) words most likely to fail us sinners

James 3:2 We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

In Psalm 19, David asks that all the words he does speak be pleasing to God

c. pleasing meditations in his mind

Intimate connection between words of the mouth and meditations of the heart

[Jesus] *Matthew 12:34 “Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.”*

4. Our Pleasure and God’s: Forever Intimately Connected!!

- Union with Christ
- Holy Spirit grieved at sin
- God rejoices over obedience... He’ll share it with you!

D. David’s Redeemer: God’s Final Word to Humanity

O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer

David’s greater son, Jesus Christ, shed His blood to be David’s redeemer

In Christ alone can our words and meditations be pleasing to God

In Christ alone can all our sins (both willful and ignorant) be forgiven