

Psalm 19

“The Two Books of God”

November 26, 2023

1. Intro

- a. Around the late 1500's, a group of pastors and theologians spent MULTIPLE decades trying to come to a consensus on how to answer certain questions of the faith
 - i. Out of this lengthy process, they would create what is now known as the Belgic Confession
 - ii. For years the Belgic Confession stood as the main confessional document of many churches, much like the Baptist Faith & Message does for Southern Baptists today
- b. In this confession, Article 2 sought to answer the question, “How do we know God?”
 - i. The answer given in this Confession is this:
 1. “We know God by two means: first, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe, since that universe is before our eyes like a beautiful book, in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God... Second, God makes Himself known to us more clearly by His holy and divine Word, as much as we need in this life, for God’s glory and for our salvation.”
 - a. So how do we know God?
 - i. Through the beautiful book of His creation
 - ii. And the divine book of His Word
 - ii. This idea of God giving two books to reveal Himself to man has been taught throughout the history of the church
 1. Augustine wrote in the late 300's, “In your great wisdom you, who are our God, speak to us of these things in your Book, the firmament made by You.”
 - a. The first book, the book of the firmament, or the earth, resounds with the words of our great God
 2. In the 1600's, the great philosopher, Sir Francis Bacon, wrote, “God has, in fact, written two books, not just one. Of course, we are all familiar with the first book he wrote, namely Scripture. But he has written a second book called creation.”
 - a. While this view has been taught throughout the church’s history, these men did not invent the idea of God revealing himself to us in two books
 - i. This concept was given to us CENTURIES before Augustine came along, as King David wrote the majestic words of Psalm 19
 1. Let’s look at this Psalm together...

c. Psalm 19

i. To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. ¹The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ²Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. ³There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. ⁴Their 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, ⁵which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. ⁶Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. ⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. ¹²Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. ¹³Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. ¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

- d. In this Psalm, we find three sections:
 - i. The book of God’s creation

- ii. The book of God's Word
- iii. The prayer of God's people
- 2. First, we'll look at the book of God's creation
 - a. In verses 1-6, David speaks of God's creation, not as a bunch of inanimate objects, but as a chorus of voices singing forth the praises of God
 - i. Just look at the verbs David uses in these verses
 - 1. The heavens DECLARE...
 - 2. The sky above PROCLAIMS...
 - 3. The day POURS OUT speech...
 - 4. The night REVEALS knowledge...
 - 5. Their voice GOES OUT through all the earth...
 - ii. Isn't that incredible language?!
 - 1. Science defines our sun and the stars as "massive, self-luminous celestial bodies of gas that shine by radiation derived from their internal energy sources"
 - a. David would say that as they shine, the sun and the stars are DECLARING the glory of God for all who would have ears to ear!
 - 2. Science defines the sky as "the upper atmosphere or expanse of space that constitutes a great vault over the earth"
 - a. David would say that as the sky stretches above our heads, it is PROCLAIMING the handiwork of our God to all who would listen!
 - 3. Science defines the day as the period of time during which the sun is shining on parts of the earth as it rotates, and the night as the period of time when those same parts rotate away from the sun
 - a. David would say that the day is POURING OUT speech, and the night is REVEALING knowledge – all 24 hours of it speaking of the works of our great God!
 - b. I wonder, in our day and age of constant background noise, are we able to hear these same songs that David heard in his day?
 - i. We've got a nice back porch at our house, that we try to enjoy as often as possible when the flies and mosquitos aren't buzzing all around
 - 1. But probably 7 out of the 10 times we go out there, at least one neighbor has their music playing loud enough for everyone around to hear
 - a. And if it's not the neighbor's music, it is the multitude of dogs barking from every single direction
 - 2. But it's not just our backyard...
 - a. It's the same story if you go camping at a public campgrounds, or if you go hang out at the beach or on the shores of a lake, or if you're on a float trip down a river
 - i. It is almost inevitable that SOMEONE will have their music blasting at excessively loud volumes
 - 3. The skies above are proclaiming the glory of God, but it is becoming increasingly harder to hear their words over all of our commotion
 - c. But, regardless of this annoyance, the great thing about God's creation is this – even if the noise pollution is so loud that we cannot hear the words of what they are saying, we cannot escape the HEAT of the sun!
 - i. David goes on in verses 4-6 as he says, *"In the heavens God 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."*
 - 1. I love the picture that David paints for us in these words
 - a. When the sun rises in the east, it is as if a bridegroom is leaving his chamber to go and bring home his bride
 - i. Or it's as if a strong man, or a professional athlete, doesn't just run his course, but he runs it WITH JOY!
 - b. There is NOTHING on earth that can escape the light and the heat of the sun
 - i. Have you ever pondered that reality?

1. As the sun sets here in Sapulpa, OK, it is rising in other parts of the world, isn't it?
 - a. So God isn't just creating one miraculously beautiful sunrise and sunset each day – He is creating a continuous, never-ending, always unique set of sunrises and sunsets, all over the world, 24 hours a day!
 - c. There is NOTHING hidden from the heat of the sun!!
- d. My friends, these are the realities Paul was preaching about in the passage we heard at the beginning of the service, in Romans 1
 - i. Again, in verse 20, it says, *“For God’s invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been CLEARLY perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they... WE... are WITHOUT EXCUSE.”*
 1. This is the answer to the question that so often comes from people out in the world...
 - a. “What about the native out on the isolated island who has never heard about Jesus? Will God condemn him, even though he never knew about God’s Word, or the Messiah, or God’s great plan of redemption?”
 - b. Or, let’s bring it home to our prayer times here at FHBC...
 - i. What about the Lunape in Bhutan? Flip over to the back of your worship guide...
 1. If there is no church that rises up and goes and takes the Gospel to the Lunape people, and that sweet, toothless old woman dies without hearing the Good News about Jesus, will she be condemned to an eternity of hell and condemnation?
 2. The Apostle Paul would say, with great tears and sorrow I think, “YES, she would stand condemned”
 - a. For she has seen the skies proclaiming God’s handiwork, and she has not turned to Him
 - b. She has heard the voices of the day and the night, and she has not turned to the God who has ordained them
 - c. She has felt the heat of the sun, and, instead of worshiping the God who has set its course in the sky, she has instead turned to the gods of Buddhism and shamanism
 - i. And therefore, she is without excuse
 - ii. The book of God’s creation has been made READILY available for EVERY human living on the earth, all throughout the history of the world
 1. And Paul would say that we ALL have exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things
 - a. Or, if not for images of birds and animals and creeping things, maybe we’ve exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images of an apple with a bite taken out of the side
 - i. Or images of an elephant, or a donkey
 - ii. Or maybe simply images of a dollar sign
 - iii. The Book of God’s Creation RESOUNDS with His glory
 1. But sadly, due to the fallen nature of our hearts, we do not have the ears to hear all that His creation proclaims
 - a. Thankfully, by God’s grace, he has provided for us a SECOND book...
3. The Book of God’s Word
 - a. Look again at David’s words in verses 7-11...
 - i. *⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

- b. We could spend some time breaking down the distinctions between the law of the Lord, and the testimony of the Lord, and the precepts of the Lord, and the rules of the Lord
 - i. But ultimately, all of these terms fall under the WORD of the Lord, don't they?
 - 1. And if we apply these verses to the Scriptures as a whole, our Bibles virtually EXPLODE with meaning!
 - a. The Bible is PERFECT, reviving the soul
 - b. The Bible is SURE, making wise the simple
 - c. The Bible is RIGHT, rejoicing the heart
 - d. The Bible is PURE, enlightening the eyes
 - e. The Bible is TRUE, and righteous altogether
 - f. In keeping the words of the Bible, your servants find GREAT reward
 - ii. Brothers and sisters in Christ, is THIS the way you approach the Word of God?!
 - 1. David says that the Word of God is to be more desired than fine gold, sweeter than honey dripping off the honeycomb
 - a. Do WE place such high value upon the words of the Lord?
 - 2. Let's make that question really practical...
 - a. Let's say your boss offered you an extra five hundred dollars a day, if you would just come in at six in the morning, instead of eight o'clock
 - i. Would you jump at the chance, even if it meant you'd lose your time in the Word each morning?
 - 1. An extra \$500 a day is a LOT of money, right?
 - 2. Think about how much more you could give to the church and to missions and to those in need...
 - 3. You could do a LOT of good with an extra \$2500 a week, couldn't you?
 - b. But didn't David just say, "More to be desired is YOUR WORD than gold, even much fine gold..."?
 - iii. Or what about the whole "sweeter than honey" part?
 - 1. Let's say you decide to sleep in a few days next week...
 - a. Does that mean you skip out on reading your Bible?
 - b. Or does that mean you skip out on breakfast?
 - i. Is the Word of the Lord so sweet to our tongues that we CANNOT go a day without savoring the words that God has given to us?
 - ii. Or is satisfying our hunger what REALLY matters as we go about our day?
- c. Again, let's go back to all the things that David said about the Word of God...
 - i. He said that the Word of God is PERFECT, reviving the soul
 - 1. I don't know about you, but I could stand to have my soul revived a little in these crazy and hectic days
 - a. Interestingly, the word that David uses for REVIVING the soul is the same word that is used throughout the Old Testament of repenting and turning back to God
 - i. When we think about our SOULS being revived, that makes complete sense, doesn't it?
 - ii. If we just want our bodies or our minds to be revived, we could just drink a couple of cups of coffee or take some vitamins or supplements
 - 1. But if we long for our SOULS to be revived, the only One who can do that is the One who CREATED our souls
 - a. So when we are tired and worn out, either physically or mentally or emotionally, the Scriptures call us to TURN BACK to God, and our souls will be revived
 - 2. It is no surprise then, that this is what Peter preached, as he stood alongside John in Solomon's Portico in Acts 3:19-20
 - a. Peter said to the masses...

- a. TRUE wisdom will ONLY come from the Word of God
 - b. The Word of God is SURE, making wise the simple
 - iii. David also says in verse 8, “The Word of God is RIGHT, rejoicing the heart”
 - 1. When you look at the original Hebrew of the word, “rejoicing,” the different translations of this word are fantastic...
 - a. To cheer... to gladden... to give joy... to give happiness... to make merry... to brighten up... to be full of glee
 - i. Aren’t those great?!
 - 2. This is what David is telling us that the Word of God can do for us!
 - a. Yes, there are times when the Word of God corrects us, or rebukes us, or even cuts us
 - i. But the Word of God ALSO can bring great joy to our hearts, and fill our hearts with glee and happiness
 - b. And David says that the reason why the Word rejoices our heart is because the Word is RIGHT
 - i. Think about if you’ve ever been hiking out in the woods, or driving down some backroad you aren’t familiar with
 - 1. As you get farther away from the trail, or farther away from civilization, there is a certain degree of concern and uneasiness, isn’t there?
 - a. Stray from the path for too long, and that uneasiness will turn into downright fear and anxiety
 - 2. But what happens to your heart when you see that sign that says, “Destination ahead”?
 - a. All of that fear and anxiety INSTANTLY disappears, because you finally found the RIGHT way
 - 3. This is what David is teaching us in this verse... the Word of God is RIGHT
 - a. And when you stay on the straight and narrow and RIGHT path of the Word, your heart will REJOICE!
 - i. This is what Jesus also teaches us when he says in John 15:10-11,
 - 1. *¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*
 - ii. Christian, one of the best ways to maintain your joy in your life is to keep the Father’s commands
 - b. For the Word of God is RIGHT, rejoicing the heart
- iv. David keeps going in verse 8, as he says the commandment of the Lord is PURE, enlightening the eyes
 - 1. This is just building on the previous idea...
 - a. Again, think back to straying off the trail and getting lost in the woods
 - i. Now, imagine that the sun is starting to go down, and your flashlight doesn’t want to work
 - 1. Now the panic REALLY sets in, doesn’t it?
 - ii. But, after you move the batteries around, and give the flashlight a good shake, the light comes back on, and you can see that the trail is actually just a few yards away from you
 - 1. Peace... right?
 - a. The commandments of the Lord give a pure light to our steps, and our eyes are enlightened to see the way
 - b. This truth is given to us plainly and sweetly in Psalm 119, verse 105,

i. ¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path

2. The commandments of the Lord are PURE, enlightening the eyes

v. And in verse 9, David says that the rules of the Lord are TRUE, and RIGHTEOUS ALTOGETHER

1. Brothers and sisters in Christ, God has given to all mankind the general revelation of Himself in His first book, the book of His creation

a. The heavens are resounding with the glory due to His name

2. Unfortunately, because of the fallen nature we all have in Adam, we simply refuse to hear the songs that creation is singing

a. So, by His grace and mercy, God has given to us a more specific revelation of who He is, His second book, the Word of God... the Sacred Scriptures

i. And David tells us that THIS Book is TRUE

ii. THIS Book, and all the rules contained within it, are ALTOGETHER RIGHTEOUS

1. For these are the very words of God Himself!

3. Back to Paul's words to Timothy in 2 Timothy, chapter 3... in verses 16-17, Paul writes,

a. ¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be COMPLETE, equipped for every good work.

i. The book of God's creation is stunningly beautiful and pleasing to our eyes

1. But it cannot train us for righteousness

2. It cannot make us COMPLETE

ii. Only God's second book, the Bible, can do that

1. But even here, we encounter a problem, don't we?

a. For there are self-proclaimed atheists, agnostics, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and all sorts of other religions who have read all the words of this Book, and they haven't changed, have they?

i. Just as we cannot hear the songs of creation because of the hardness of our hearts, neither can we see the light of the Word, because our eyes have been blinded

2. Which leads us to our final point...

4. The prayer of God's people

a. As we conclude this morning by looking at the final section of Psalm 19, David asks a crucial question in verse 12...

i. After speaking of the majesty and glory of God's creation, and after extolling the wonders of God's Word, David seems to run straight into a roadblock in verse 12

1. ¹²Who can discern his errors? (repeat)

a. It's almost as if, after spending time contemplating how amazing God is, it hit David how sinful he was himself

i. Friends, this is the RIGHT response for ALL of mankind when confronted with the holiness of God and the purity and righteousness of His Word

2. Think back to verses 1-6, as David thought about nature and the heavens and the skies

a. One of the ways that the heavens and the skies and the sun bring glory to God through their "speech," is that they do EXACTLY what they have been told to do

i. The stars don't ever have a rough night and then say to God in the morning, "We've had enough... we're taking tomorrow night off so we can have some time to focus on ourselves"

ii. The sun doesn't ever look to God and say, "You know, I'm tired of running this same course over and over and over again... I think I'll shift a few miles closer to the earth tomorrow to see how much of it I can set on fire"

- iii. No, the heavens and the skies, and the night and the day, all obey God PERFECTLY
 - b. And then David gets to verses 7-11, as he is blown away by how perfect and sure and right and true the Word of God is, and how there is nothing on earth that compares with the sweetness of its taste
 - i. David reflects on all of these things, and then he looks at himself and RIGHTLY says
 - 1. Who can discern his own errors?!
 - a. I am full of hidden faults!
 - b. I am consumed by presumptuous sins!
- ii. And so David does the only thing that ANY OF US can ever do in light of these truths – he goes to the Lord in prayer, for HIS help
 - 1. My friends, the only way WE can be blameless before God, or innocent of OUR great transgression against Him, is if HE keeps us from sin, and if HE keeps them from having dominion over us
 - a. The reality is that we ALL have hidden sins deep within our hearts
 - b. We ALL presume upon God, as He freely pours out His grace upon our lives, providing us with food and clothing and the comforts of life, and we turn around and reject the commands that we find too challenging or inconvenient
 - c. We are ALL guilty of GREAT transgression
 - i. So, like David, we ALL must go to God in prayer
 - 1. For HE is the ONLY one who can declare the guilty to be innocent
 - 2. And the ONLY way He can declare the guilty to be innocent is if SOMEONE ELSE takes the punishment that was due to us
- iii. And that is exactly what happened, isn't it?
 - 1. Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, emptied himself of his heavenly glory, and he took on our nature, that he might live the perfect life that none of us could ever live
 - a. And after living this perfect life, the Son of God WILLINGLY went to the cross on our behalf, absorbing the wrath of His Father for YOU, and for ME
 - b. And after completing the sentence of death, God raised Jesus back to life, and this Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father, interceding on behalf of all who would surrender their hearts to him
 - c. By THIS intercession, we are made INNOCENT before the Father
 - d. By CHRIST's death upon the cross, we are made BLAMELESS
 - i. All because HE has become OUR Redeemer
- iv. David closes this wonderful Psalm by writing in verse 14,
 - 1. *¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer*
 - a. How do we keep the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts acceptable before God?
 - i. By looking continually to our Rock and our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ!
 - ii. And as we look to Jesus Christ, THEN we will have the eyes to see and the ears to hear BOTH of the incredible books of our great God!