

## Psalm 19 - Week of July 10

### **Memory Verse Psalm 19:14**

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Psalm 19 describes the two ways that God has spoken to people; two ways that God is speaking to you. Theologians describe these two ways of communication with the terms general revelation and specific revelation. The first half of Psalm 19 is about general revelation – it says that God speaks to you through creation. Creation, the world around us, points to a creator and tells us something of what he is like. The “heavens” speak to us, they “declare the glory of God.” They “proclaim” the works of his hands. They “pour forth speech” and “declare knowledge.” All of creation declares the majesty, order, precision, power, and control of God. The universe shouts to us that there is a God of glory and creative power.

In verses 3 and 4 we learn that this general revelation of God is in fact universal – there is no place on earth where God has not revealed himself through creation. Paul speaks more clearly about this in Romans 1:20, which reads, “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.” Paul says that God has revealed himself to all people through creation. No one can claim that he has not heard from God. Are you listening to God through creation? Do you marvel at his sense of beauty or his immense power and creativity? He has designed the universe to broadcast his greatness to all humanity.

While the first six verses of this Psalm concern general revelation, the second half reveals a second way that God is speaking to you. God is talking to you through the Bible. This is what we have termed specific revelation. While creation declares some of God’s attributes, it does not communicate the depth of his mercy and love. Neither does creation teach us about our sin and our need for a savior. Verses 7-9 provide six titles for the Bible: the law of the Lord, the statutes of the Lord, the precepts of the Lord, the commands of the Lord, the fear of the Lord, and the ordinances of the Lord.

These verses also describe six characteristics of the Bible: it is perfect (it is without error), trustworthy (it will not lead you astray), right (just and true), radiant (describing who our God is in all his glory), pure (the exact words of God), and sure (beneficial for us). The effects of knowing the Bible are also described: the Bible revives the soul, makes us wise, gives joy to the heart, gives light to the eyes, and it leads us to eternal life and righteousness. We can all experience these benefits as we study and grow in our knowledge and practice of the word of God.

The Psalmist also describes the great value of the Bible, encouraging us to devote our lives to its study. We see in verse 10 that the Bible is more precious than gold. Gold has for centuries been valued for its beauty and has always been a measure of wealth. Here, the psalmist describes the Bible as being worth more than gold. The time we spend studying the Bible will be far more profitable for us than even gold. The Bible is also said to be sweeter than honey. This means God's word brings greater sweetness and joy than any other pleasure. We also see that the Bible protects us as it warns us of disaster. As we read and obey God's word, we are protected from danger.

Psalm 19 ends with a prayer – a prayer for forgiveness, protection, and guidance. In fact, the last verse (our memory verse) is a great short prayer we should all pray as we begin each day! This prayer points us to the ultimate purpose of God's revelation – both general and specific revelation. Why does God speak to us through creation? Why does God speak to us through his word, the Bible? Ultimately, he speaks to us to bring us into relationship with him. The glory of creation shows us his perfection. The word of God shows us our imperfection. Because of this difference we cannot be near God, we cannot know him personally. So, he has communicated to us in his word that we must confess our sin and seek his mercy through faith in Jesus Christ. It is only then that you can know God and praise him as “my Rock and my Redeemer.”

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