

COS Sermon Study

“Enlightened Living”

Preacher: Pastor Joel

Study Writer: Mark Anders

Third Sunday in Lent – March 3, 2024

Scripture Text: Psalm 19 (NKJV)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.

² Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.

³ *There is* no speech nor language
Where their voice is not heard.

⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,

⁵ Which *is* like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.

⁶ Its rising *is* from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

⁷ The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple;

⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes;

⁹ The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

¹⁰ More to be desired *are they* than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great reward.

¹² Who can understand *his* errors?
Cleanse me from secret *faults*.

¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous *sins*;
Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

God's General Revelation in nature (vs. 1-6):

1. In vs.1 we are reminded that the earth still reverberates with the "and it was good" from God's actions during the days of creation as recorded in Genesis chapters 1&2. His glory can be clearly seen in both the heaven (atmosphere / sky) and earth.
2. How do "days utter speech" (vs.2)?
3. How do "nights reveal knowledge" (vs.2)?
4. What does vs.3 mean?
5. What is meant by the phrase "Their line has gone out through all the earth" (v4)?
6. Note the reference to the sun in vs.4-6. Heathen cultures have made the worship of the sun part of their religions; these verses make it clear that God has created the sun as part of His creation.
Just as the sun illuminates and warms the physical world, God's Word illuminates and enlivens our spiritual lives, which is described in verses 7-14.
Note the phrase "... nothing is hidden from its heat". What does this mean?
7. Look up Romans 1:18-20 and discuss God's *general revelation* to mankind.
8. Can the testimony of nature bring us to saving faith (salvation)?

God's Special Revelation in His Word (vs. 7-14):

These few verses have much to say about God's *special revelation* through His Word. In Psalm 18:28 we read "For you will light my lamp; The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."

Let's examine verses 7-14 to see how this is done ...

1. First, a look at some definitions:
Law – Teaching, direction, instruction
Testimony – To bear witness
Statutes – Governing ordinances
Commandment – Divine orders
Judgments – Judicial decisions
2. Vs.7a states that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul". Your translation may use the word "reviving" or "refreshing" instead of "converting". Look up Romans 7:12. The law is a perfect reflection of God's holy character and the standard for believers to please Him. As Pastor Joel mentioned in his sermon, God's law is His will for creation (and us). Does this verse imply that the law can save us?
3. Vs.7b states that "the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple". God's revealed Word informs all mankind irrespective of background, upbringing, social class, or level of education.
4. Vs.8a – Your translation might also use the word "precepts" instead of "statutes". Being governed by God through his Word is cause for much joy, even though it would seem we are being limited / constrained by His statutes. Look up 1 Peter 2:9.
5. Vs.8b states that "the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes". Look up Psalm 119:105. Just as our physical eyes provide us the means to see and make our way through our days on this earth, God's commands provide the means for "spiritual sight" and discernment as we struggle with sin and temptation.

6. Vs.9a states that “the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever”. The concept of the “Fear of the Lord” is a big one and could be a whole separate study. A good verse on this is Proverbs 9:10 which states “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ...”. Indeed, we are truly wise when we live in the fear of the Lord, because by this we are led to God’s truth and His salvation in Jesus.
This wording “the fear of the Lord is clean (or pure), enduring forever” also brings in the concept that this is the sum total of all that the law requires ... that all of God’s laws / testimonies / statutes / commandments / judgments embody everything that God intends for His people, both now and into eternity.
7. Vs.9b – Your translation may use the word “rules” or “decrees” instead of “judgments”. This states that “the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether”. Jesus is the righteous judge with the authority to judge all mankind (see John 5:30). As for us, we can judge no one ... (see Matthew 7:1-2).
8. Vs.10 makes the comparison of God’s Word to earthly treasure and enjoyable food ... something to be sought after above all other things. Jesus has a similar message in some of His parables: look up Matthew 13:44-45.
How does this work out in your life?
9. Vs.11 speaks to the benefits of following God’s Word (law / testimony / statutes / commandment / judgments):
 - We are warned of things we should avoid and made aware of the consequences of not following God’s ways. Read Proverbs 5:21-23.
 - We are rewarded when we do obey and follow God’s ways. Read Proverbs 4:20-22 and Matthew 6:33.
We are called to obey God’s law, just as the sun faithfully tracks its course each day.
10. In verse 12 the Psalmist refers to our sins that we are not yet aware of.
Are we held to account for sinning in ways that we didn’t even know were sins?
What is the attitude of a person who is asking God to reveal their secret sins?
Look up Psalm 90:8.
11. Vs.13 deals with presumptuous sins ... obvious and egregious faults. While we may make a distinction of different types of sins from an earthly standpoint (murder is worse than stealing, for example), any sin condemns us before God (see James 2:10).
12. In vs.14 we come to the “benediction” of this chapter ... the Psalmist David’s prayer that he (and us!) would be in such close communion with God that both our words and thoughts would be in accord with His Word and Will. By God’s Holy Spirit this is the way we live ... in our Lord, our strength and our redeemer!

Wrap-up:

Do you see the good news of the Gospel in any of these verses?

Through God’s general revelation in nature, we see the glory of God and are aware of His presence in all things. Through God’s special revelation of His Word, we find out who God is and what he requires of us ... and how He redeems us. Praise God for this Psalm of David to help bring these truths to light in our lives!

2 Corinthians 4:6 (NKJV)

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.