



MOUNTAIN SUNRISE MEDITATION

PSALM 19:1

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”

EXPERIENCE

I take each of my kids up to the summit of Laurel Mountain in the fall. The sunrises are glorious (pictured above). My son and I were standing awaiting the morning sunrise when a group of three college students arrived. It was obvious from their sweatshirts that they were from a local Catholic university, so I was emboldened to share with these young women that they were in for a treat. I explained to them how beautiful the sunrises were from this spot, and I shared that the ancient psalmist, David, wrote that the heavens declare the glory of God. Unable to contain my enthusiasm, I remarked, “So get ready to see glory this morning!” I was heartened when one of the students replied, “Oh, that makes seeing this sunrise so much better.”

Indeed, the sunrise was glorious on the mountain that morning. After the sun rose, I asked the students if they had enjoyed the sunrise? One of the girls replied dismissively, “I’m just looking forward to my donut from the Pie Shoppe on the way back.” I whispered to my son Ben, “Evidently she missed the glory of God this morning.”

Like all of us are frequently prone to do, this student was more concerned with filling her stomach with something sweet, than having the Lord fill her soul with something glorious. Our earthly appetites for pleasure often overpower our spiritual hunger for Christ and his majestic beauty. Christ’s glory is evident in much more than just sunrises. How might you have missed savoring God’s glory this morning?

CONTEMPLATION

One of the reasons I take my children up the mountain to see the sunrise is to cultivate a hunger and thirst for the glory of God, to awaken their spiritual tastebuds to Christ’s majesty. A sunrise alone will not accomplish this goal. However, when a sunrise is paired with biblical meditation, this wedded witness of world and Word can truly nourish the soul. My soul, as well as my children’s souls, are richly blessed every time we go meditate on the sunrise from the mountaintop.

Psalm 19 is a profound meditation on God’s glory displayed in the skies (verses 1-6) and the Scriptures (verses 7-11). There are many layers of insights to explore as one considers a sunrise and its connection to this particular passage. The writer, David, is evidently considering a sunrise. He writes in v. 4-5, “In [the heavens God] has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his

chamber.” A bridegroom beams with gladness just as the sun shines joyfully as it rises each morning. The glory of God’s gladness is on display when we see a sunrise. God’s glory also shines through his Word. Just as the sun rises and revives the new day, God’s perfect law revives the soul (v. 7). Just as the sunrise brings gladness in its wake so also God’s right precepts rejoice the heart (v. 8). And, just as the dawning light of the sun pierces the darkness, renewing our sight, so also God’s pure commands enlighten the eyes (v. 8). O how glorious to have a restored soul, fresh joy, and a renewed perspective.

Friends, we need the majestic sun and the glorious Scriptures each morning far more than we need a donut. While the Scriptures are most emphatically our primary source for cultivating a hunger and thirst for, and enjoying, God’s glory. The combined experience of sun and Scripture is eminently more brilliant.

PRAYER

Lord God, might the glory of the skies awaken our appetite for you this morning. Might you increase our hunger and thirst to savor the glory of who you are in your Word and in your created world. We ask that the superior satisfaction found in you would transform our appetites. We ask that our enjoyment of lesser pleasures might decrease but that our delight in you would increase. Restore our soul this morning. Give us fresh joy. Grant us a renewed perspective, O Lord, so that we may reflect your glory and live to your praise this day. We ask all these requests in Christ’s name. Amen.

CONFIRMATION

Sunrises are a reminder of our daily need to delight in God’s

revelation of himself and an emblem of God's delight to reveal his glorious splendor so that we might be satisfied in him. What we choose to glory in, set our satisfaction in, has a shaping influence on us. The objects of our delight are significant in determining who we become and where we end up in life. The Apostle Paul wrote about those who are opposed to the cross of Christ saying, "Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things" (Philippians 3:19). The Psalmist David was aware of the dangers of his appetite for earthly things when he wrote Psalm 19, that is why in reference to God's glorious revelations, David exclaimed:

*More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.*

What is abundantly clear to both Paul and David is that we are not to fix our appetites on earthly things, rather earthly things when approached with a biblical mindset point our appetites heavenward. The glory of sunrises points our appetites to God and to his Word. Supreme satisfaction is found only in enjoying the glory of Christ Jesus our Lord.



Charles Spurgeon

SERMON #2947 "ROYAL EMBLEMS FOR LOYAL SUBJECTS".

"The advent of Christ brings to the heart celestial beauty. Faith in Him decks us with ornaments and clothes us as with royal apparel. Better garments than [a rich man] had, though he wore scarlet and fine linen, does Christ give to His people when He comes to them. And better

fare than [a rich man] had, though he fared sumptuously every day, does Jesus bestow upon His saints when He shines into their hearts.

Oh, the glory of the sunrise of the Savior on the darkness of the human soul! If a man might rise every morning of the year to look at the rising sun and yet never be tired of it, because the sublimity of the spectacle, methinks a man might consider his own conversion every hour in the day and every day of his life—and yet never be wearied with the thrice-heavenly spectacle of Christ arising over the mountains of his guilt, to banish the dense darkness of his despair.”¹

¹ <https://www.spurgeongems.org/sermon/chs2947.pdf>