

Creation and God's Existence

Building a Christian Mind

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Bible Verse: Psalm 19:1-6
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For the text of our sermon this morning, I invite you to turn to the book of Psalms in Psalm 19, and I'm going to read the entire Psalm, although for this morning we're only going to consider the first six verses. Psalm 19, beginning in verse 1. This is a Psalm of David, the man after God's own heart.

1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. 4 Their 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, 5 which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. 6 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. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts 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 rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. 13 Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and 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 rock and my redeemer.

Today is the beginning point of a long journey that we're going to take together here at Truth Community Church, and I'm very, very much anticipating what the Lord will do with it. Over the next several months, we're going to be doing a series of series of messages that I am calling "Building a Christian Mind." That is our goal over the coming months is to build in you a Christian mind, a solid biblical way of thinking.

And if I can take the liberty to expound on my own chosen title, every word is important in that title and I just want you to have a sense of what I mean by it. The word "mind," we'll reverse engineer it here, the word "mind" tells us that thinking is important in the Christian life. Christianity is not a mystical religion in the sense that it is based on subjective impulses apart from rational considerations. It is not a series of rituals to be rigidly obeyed and enforced without engagement of the mind. That's not Christianity. Christianity involves and addresses the mind, that's why Paul says in Romans 12:2, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind," and why Jesus said in Matthew 22, "You must love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind." The mind is central to true worship.

Now the word "Christian mind," the Christian mind tells us that there is a distinct way for Christians to think. We are not to be conformed to this world, and that's not simply a reference to matters of outward behavior, we are not to think the way that the world thinks. The world thinks in terms of the here and now, either denying or ignoring the eternal, either denying or ignoring the existence of God. You and I are not to think that way. The world is motivated by what can be accomplished for our glory and for our profit in the here and now, "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die." That is not the Christian perspective at all. A Christian mind thinks differently about the entire approach to life and different priorities than what the world knows, and so there's a Christian mind to be had. And as we've, as I said two weeks ago, there's a lot of challenge against that to undermine our effort to think in a biblical way, and when I say think, I don't just mean thinking in the moment, thinking about how to approach a particular problem, but a comprehensive view of life through which everything else is interpreted. And so a Christian mind is something worthwhile to aspire after, a Christian mind, a biblical mind is something that is desirable. It is lovely in the sight of God. It is the point of our sanctification, and in many ways it is something to be sought after and developed and pursued as though it were a pearl of great price.

And the word "building" a Christian mind, the word "building" is what I want to pause on here for just a moment. If you think about building a house, you know, I'm not a contractor, I can barely swing a hammer, let alone to do anything that's actually constructive with materials and tools, that is not what the Lord made me to do. But if you think about just in a basic way, the building of a house, what does a contractor do and how does he do it? He builds a home with a lot of different materials. He uses concrete and wood, bricks and drywall, carpet and paint, glass and fixtures and plumbing apparatus, and whatever else goes into the making of a house. Often when we see a house, we just see it as a unit, we just see as we're driving through a neighborhood, we just see a unit and say, "Oh, that's a lovely house. Look at what they've done with that." And we appreciate it. But if we look more closely and we think just a little bit more deeply, we realize that within that unit there is a diversity of material that was put together by the mind of the architect and implemented by the skill of the contractors and the carpenters that brought together a lot of diverse materials into a single place to make it a place that you could call home, in which people could safely live and have their family life and enjoy the good gifts of God. The contractor uses a lot of different things to do that in order to bring that final result about. Not only that, beloved, and this is

important for our sense of expectation going forward here at Truth Community Church, think about it this way: a contractor does not build a home in a few hours or even in a few days. A well-built home is something that is done over the course of weeks and months before someone goes in to live and dwell in it, and a hastily built house is one that will fall. Think of the end of Matthew 7, "The house built on the sand, the winds came, burst on that house, and it fell and great was its fall," because they were in a hurry, and they didn't take the time to build the house in the right way.

Well, beloved, I trust that with that little bit of homely example, in that homely example, I trust that you see the pattern, the blueprint for the building of a Christian mind. We build a Christian mind with many biblical texts and with many biblical doctrines that are developed over the course of time. We could not possibly develop a Christian mind in a 30 minute message and send you out thinking like a Christian. That would be impossible, it would be ridiculous, and it would be an offense to the majesty of the word of God to even try to do that. No, it will take more than a few messages and it will take more than a little bit of time in order for us to do that, and as we go forward, if you choose to be with us as we go forward on this here in the room, over the live stream, we're so glad for the many of you that find a spiritual kinship with us at Truth Community Church, you know, you write and you tell us that this matters to you. Oh, I want you to know from this side of the pulpit that your presence with us joining us, it matters to us as well. But as we do this together in the room, in other places, to understand that this was something that will be developed over time and we must be patient in the process for us to do that.

And this is the last time I'm going to give you the overview of these things, but over the next few months we're going to do a series of several series of messages, and this is not one series, this is several series that we are doing all of them dealing with how do we know, how to know certain important doctrines, certain important things to think. How to know that God exists. How to know the Bible is true. How to know Jesus is Lord. How to know God rules over all. How to know that Christianity is true. How to know that truth exists. How to know true salvation. Beloved, I could have expanded those series, but those seven should be sufficient for our purposes, but every one of those is fundamental to the proper operation of your mind. If you neglect or ignore or are ignorant of any one of these essential topics and the biblical grounds that undergird them, your mind is not going to function properly. And if perhaps for some of you that are newer to the faith, new to our church, you've come out of emotionally-driven environments and you're looking for biblical truth, maybe you saw the sign driving by our church building. It said "Truth Community Church" and the word "Truth" stood out to you, "I'd like to know truth." Well, then this is just the place and the time for you. It's amazing as I talk to people, how many people walk through our doors simply because of the sign out front, Truth Community Church, and the Lord uses that very word to draw them in, but we're going to be doing this over a series of months and so what I want you to know as we come week-by-week, Sunday and Tuesday, it's all united together in one track of preaching, for better or for worse there is a long-term plan in place and every message is like a brick going into the house being built up into the edification of the saints. That is what we seek.

And so today we start this entire series, "Building a Christian Mind," and we begin with the topic how to know that God exists. How to know that God exists. Listen to the words of a 7th century pastor named Stephen Charnock who wrote extensively and well on this matter. He said this, this is kind of the launchpad for everything to come. Charnock said this. He said, "The existence of God is the foundation of all religion. The whole building totters if the foundation be out of course. If we do not have deliberate and right notions of it, we shall perform no worship, no service, and yield no affection to him." Charnock goes on to say, "We must first believe that he is and that he is what he declares himself to be before we can seek him, adore him, and devote our affections to him." How are we going to worship God if it's not clear in our minds that he exists and how we know that he exists? If we've never really seriously considered those things, we are vulnerable to being led astray by false approaches to worship that tell you to bypass your mind and just speak out whatever syllables happen to come into your mouth, and we're vulnerable to being led astray by false claims of authority from those that run the Catholic Church and demand obedience based on their tradition, their magisterium, rather than according to the truth of God. And one of the things that's going to be so delightful to you about this, I believe it should be anyway, is that you're going to be able to use your mind to consider these things objectively. There is nothing of Joseph Smith or Ellen G. White in what we're about to say here, by which I mean people have come along and said, "Take my word for it and just trust what I tell you that God said this to me." There's none of that. This is a pointing out to objective things outside of yourself that you can look and consider with the mind and common sense that God has given you and see the perfect reasonableness of it all. The writer of Hebrews spoke to the importance of a conviction about the existence of God when he said in chapter 11, verse 6. He said, "without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

This is the most fundamental of all principles, and it's important that we get it right. It's important that we know it clearly, and as I just wrap up this little bit of introduction, let me add what Charnock says in a different location. He says, "It is important that we should know why we believe that our belief of God may be found to be upon undeniable evidence, and that we may give a better reason for his existence than that which we have heard from our parents and our teachers perhaps." You know, when I was a kid, long before I was a Christian, there was a song, I won't call it a hymn, that was sung in the churches that we attend, and the chorus of the song was, "You ask me how I know he lives. He lives within my heart." Now that's kind of sugary, it's kind of sentimental, and it also borders on the meaningless because that is not an adequate basis upon which to believe, to simply say it all depends on what I feel inside. Beloved, that is precisely what we have rejected in our prior messages over the past two or three weeks. We're not saying that we believe because we feel it inside, and I know that perhaps some of you, perhaps many of you were raised and nurtured on that kind of sentimental approach to Christianity. We need a stronger foundation than that. What happens if you start to feel bad? What happens if trials come and you lose that sense of feeling? Have you suddenly lost the groundwork, the foundation upon which you can believe? It's inevitable to happen. It's inevitable to happen. We have to dig deeper and we have to understand why we believe and not simply say that we believe. And so in bringing forth the existence of

God, we have reached the bedrock of the proper function of a Christian mind. This must be in place and it's not simply that he exists that we're after, we want you to be able to articulate with clarity and with conviction why you believe that because that is essential to the proper function of a Christian mind.

So how do we know that God exists? We can't see him. Can't touch him. Can't feel him. He doesn't speak in audible voices to us, contrary to what some would say. We can't sniff the aroma of him as we could burning incense or a flavored candle. So how do we know that he exists and how can we be certain about that? Well, today we set forth the first of five different principles and they're coming, the first three will come from Psalm 19 on today, Tuesday and next Sunday, if it all goes according to plan. But let me just say up front, those of you that have perhaps done some reading in philosophy, in perhaps some Christian philosophical courses or things like that, you'll know, and if you're not familiar with this you can forget that I even referred to this, but I need to acknowledge it, some theologians and some Christians even would try to resort to complex philosophical arguments in order to establish a probability case that God exists and the common thread through those philosophical arguments, in my opinion, is that the names of these theories are all difficult to pronounce, and the reasons for them are even more difficult to remember. And beloved, philosophical arguments appeal only to a certain kind of person, a certain kind of thinker, those who have the mental ability to grasp very abstract argument and it's a mental ability that, frankly, most men and women, including me, do not have, do not even have the patience to try to wade through this as the existence of God is sought to be established through philosophical arguments rather than the testimony of Scripture. We're not going that direction. I've read that stuff. I don't think it's helpful. I think there's a far more clear convicting method in which to establish the existence of God, and that's what we're going to do over the next few messages.

How do we know that God exists? Can we know that God exists? Is that knowledge even possible? Well, the answers are so simple, beloved, that a child can understand them. A child of 6 or 7 or 8, 10 years old can hear these things and say, "That makes sense to me. I believe that. That's compelling to me." And yet the answers to that question are also so profound that the best trained of adults cannot plumb the depths of the significance of what they mean. And so that's what we're going to lay out in the coming weeks are five principles, and let me just give them to you right now and so you'll have a sense of anticipation of what is to come. They all start with C and the first three are lined out for us in Psalm 19. There is a direct exegetical expositional base for this that I'm not making up by taking Scriptures out of context. All right, so number 1: creation. That is our topic for today. Secondly, the Canon by which we mean God has spoken and made himself known in the 66 books of the Bible. Thirdly, in conscience. Fourthly, in Christ. And fifthly, in conversion, in Christian salvation. So if you just want to have the overview in mind, it goes creation, the Canon, conscience, Christ and conversion. Those are the five principles that we're going to explore, each one independently on their own sufficient to establish beyond doubt the existence of God. That is so important for you to see. These are independent grounds for the conclusion that we are asserting that God exists. When you take the five of them together, it becomes so overwhelming and so encouraging to your faith, so formative to the scaffolding upon which your Christian mind is to be built,

that as you consider these things, as you rehearse them repeatedly in your mind, your mind starts to function in the way that God intended.

But I want to deal with a preliminary matter before we get to those five and to the first one here today in creation. If you're taking notes, you like to take notes, we'll make this the first point for this morning and that is the principle of personal accountability. The principle of personal accountability. Someone, a skeptic perhaps, someone who, lazy perhaps who doesn't want to have to engage the mental discipline to enter into these things, might try to foreclose the question by saying, "There are so many different opinions about these things. There are scholars that deny everything that you say, preacher. Where did you get your doctorate? Oh, you don't have one? Well, the doctors here in science and in other fields say that there is no God and that that can't be known." Look, I gladly embrace the fact that there are competing ideas in the world. I acknowledge that prominent authors with great book royalties would deny everything that I'm about to say and challenge and reject it. I acknowledge that freely. Beloved, I have close relatives that would mock and deny everything that I am about to say and so do many of you. Does that mean that we are wasting our time trying to build a Christian mind? Does that mean that we are wasting our time in establishing the grounds upon which we believe that God exists? Does the mere fact that someone who maybe is more intelligent than you and has a strong opinion to the contrary, mean that you are precluded from entering into the confident faith that Hebrews says is necessary to know that God exists and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him? We need to address that, don't we?

Turn to the gospel of Matthew 16. This is my favorite place to go when this question comes up. Beloved, here's the thing, you are personally accountable for your own response regardless of what anybody else thinks, but it's not only a matter of accountability, it is a matter of availability. There is opportunity for you to know these things truly for yourself regardless of what other people think. You are responsible to think and answer for yourself, and you cannot pass that responsibility off on the confusion of the age or the fact that some really smart guy went on the television and mocked Christianity and said, "There's nothing beyond this life. The cosmos is all that there ever was, all that there is, and all that there ever will be," famous men have said. Well, what are we to say about that? Are we bound by what a man says and we can't look beyond that? Is it possible that a man is wrong? Is the fact that there is conflict in the thinking of the world an insurmountable barrier to you having a confident belief? Well, I find great encouragement in the fact that in Matthew 16 we see that even in the days of Jesus men had conflicting opinions about him. Jesus was right there himself and men were arguing back and forth about the significance of his person.

Look at Matthew 16:13 and 14. "Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?'" Now look, Jesus isn't asking for information that he didn't have, he's drawing out a discussion in order to accomplish the triumph of faith that will occur in just a few verses. The disciples answered his questions and in essence they say, "Lord, the opinions are all over the map." Verse 14, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of

the prophets." They said, "Lord, there are multiple opinions out there about who you are. This is the state of the age, people talk about you and they can't come to any settled consensus about who you are. The best that we can say, Lord, is that there is such a confusion of opinions, and these opinions are mutually exclusive. They can't all be right." And Jesus just cuts through like a hot knife through butter or whatever metaphor you want to use. Jesus brushes aside the human controversy and he says, "But who do you say that I am? Who do you say that I am? Forget that, forget the world and the conflicting opinions out there. You've seen me, you see it for yourself, what do you say? You're accountable. You're responsible." And the very nature of his question shows us this: the contradictions of men as they argue amongst themselves and the confusion of men on spiritual matters, does not consign you to a mental hell of uncertainty unable to know what the truth is. As Jesus draws out the disciples, he simply uses that conflict among men to bring forth the birth of eternal conviction in the hearts of his disciples. "Who do you say that I am?" Jesus says, "You've got a mind, use it. Make it up, come to a decision. What do you say about who I am."

Verse 16, "Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" You're no mere prophet. You're no mere man. You are the Son of the living God. You are God in human flesh. You are the Messiah that God has promised for millennia to our people. You're the one, the chosen one. "Here I stand, I can do no other," Luther would have said in the moment. "God help me. Amen."

Peter got it right. We know that by what Jesus said in verse 17, "Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.'" He says, "Simon, that is correct. You did not reach this by human wisdom. It has been granted to you by God, but you have stood out apart from the confusion of the world and rightly identified me." How did Peter know in the midst of the unbelief that surrounded him and the confusion? Jesus says, "God revealed truth to him. God made it known to him." There is accountability. There is the possibility of true belief. But Peter knew because God had revealed truth to him. In his heart he had made it known.

Now listen to me carefully because this is a critical pivot point for several messages to come. How do we know that God exists? We know because God himself has spoken. God himself has made himself known in those five areas of creation, Canon, conscience, Christ and conversion. God has manifested himself. He has revealed himself. He has made himself known. He has spoken there.

So there are two critical things to come away with from this principle of personal accountability. One is the fact that men fight about these issues and disagree is no barrier to you personally having a confident right belief. We do not yield to the postmodern mindset that says, "Truth cannot really be known and so just keep your opinions to yourself." No, something is true and something else is false. This is right and that is wrong. That's critical to understand but, beloved, we, if you think about it this way, if you think about living in a world that has a veil around it, let's say, and if we were only bound by time and senses and that was the only realm that we could operate in, we would not

have the ability as men and women, boys and girls, to puncture that veil and to look out beyond it to see what lied beyond. It doesn't depend on us doing that. The way that the veil has been punctured is not by man puncturing it through his reason to find God that way, the veil is punctured from the other direction, God has punctured it and made himself known. That's critical for us to understand and God has created us in his image, he has given us minds that are capable of receiving and understanding what he has made known and Scripture is abundantly abundantly clear on that.

So with all of that introduction, Psalm 19 is now a wonderful, instructive place for us to start. Let's go back there, if you would, to Psalm 19. And you could if you're taking notes, make a second point here. You could just title it creation and God's existence. Creation and God's existence. There's a remarkable wonderful symmetry to the mind of God to Scripture and to the knowledge of God in all of these things, and what I mean by that is this, is that the knowledge of God's existence starts at the very beginning of time before you and I were born. The knowledge of God's existence starts at the very beginning of time and at the very beginning of Scripture. Scripture opens with the principle, with the statement, the declaratory indicative statement, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." That is the beginning of time and it is at the very point of creation that we begin to build a Christian mind. The cornerstone of building a Christian mind is having an appropriate, rightly directed appreciation for the creation that is all around you.

Now before we look at the text I want to say this because I don't want this to get lost in the midst of the exposition of the text. Beloved, God created the heavens and the earth, Genesis 1:1. That has consequences. The universe belongs to God. It's his. It's not something that came about by an unexpected explosion of nothing that somehow became everything. That's silly. God made the universe and therefore it belongs to him. The Psalm says the earth is the Lord's and all that is within them. And for you and me, that has an incredible, shaping, fundamental force in the way that we think. Beloved, God made the universe and it belongs to him. That means something. That means that you and I, we are guests in the realm of God. This universe belongs to him and we are guests. We are tenants, you might say. You know, we are citizens in a realm that belongs to him. And that fundamentally changes, as we'll see in the months to come, the way that we respond to life itself. We think completely differently. If you exist in a realm that belongs to God, then you're accountable to him and the life that has been given to you somehow must be given back to him because it all belongs to him. We can no longer live for ourselves. You've been bought with the price therefore glorify God with your body, 1 Corinthians 6. Stated differently, someone else has said the beginning point of human knowledge is this: there is a God and you are not he. You're not the boss. You're not sovereign. Man is not the final measure of things. The thinking of man is not the final measure of what is true. The thinking of man is not the final measure of what is right. And all of a sudden, not just individually, the whole class of humanity throughout the ages has been put in its place under God, in the realm of God, not existing separately and apart from him.

And so creation and God's existence, let's look at the first verse that introduces this to us and we'll try to go through this with deliberate speed. Verse 1,

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

How do we know that God exists? God has testified to his own power and wisdom in the creation and nature that is all around us. Every aspect of creation is somehow revealing, testifying to the reality and the existence of God. And there are three aspects to this testimony. Look at verse 2. The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Now verse 2,

2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is an unbroken testimony in the creation all around you that signifies and points you to the existence of God. One day gives way to another in expressing his existence as we go out under the umbrella of the skies and within the realm of visible creation all around us. We'll see more about this in just a moment. One day with the sun shining brightly, continual testimony to the greater glory of the one who put the sun in the sky. Every night when it's clear enough, you see the stars moving in their orbit. You can look up and you can identify the planet Mars by its red hue millions of miles away and say, "And it's there just like it was last night." Unbroken testimony. This is admittedly an unspoken testimony. It is an unbroken testimony. It is an unspoken testimony. Look at verse 3.

3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard.

In other words, God conveys this knowledge in a way that goes beyond human language. He's not speaking in words as I am now speaking to you, he's speaking in a different way. He has made himself in creation and he makes that known without literal words. In other words, what God has done in creation and every day, every day creation is faithfully making the same testimony over and over again. God has shown himself in creation. He has imprinted – think about it this way – he has imprinted into creation, into the very fabric of creation, the knowledge of God and he is addressing through that imprint in creation, he is addressing the faculty of the human mind that he himself gave to us so that when we look up we're not supposed to simply say, "Oh, the sun is shining brightly." We're to look up and recognize, and we are accountable for this as we'll see in a moment, to look up and see the blinding glory of the sun is a testimony to a greater blinding glory of the one who put it there. And there is no other explanation for it.

It is an unbroken testimony day to day, night to night. It is an unspoken testimony made without human language. And in verse 4 through 6, we see that it is a universal testimony. This unbroken, unspoken display of the knowledge of God is universal. It goes in like manner to all men everywhere. Verse 4,

4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

In other words, this universal testimony is available to all men everywhere. There's not a man anywhere in the world at any point in the history of time or ever will be before God brings it all to an end, that has not been the recipient of revelation from God about his own existence because it is imprinted and woven into the fabric of creation.

David focuses on the sun as the preeminent display of this glory. At the end of verse 4 he says,

In them he has set a tent for the sun, 5 which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. 6 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.

The sun warms all the earth. The sun is present for all men to see during the course of the calendar year. I realize that there are places in the Arctic Circle and down in Antarctica where there are times where, you know, it's night all day long, but the sun is displaying the greater glory of the one who put it there. That is crucial for us to understand in developing the Christian mind. We set aside, we've all heard it, some of you were taught and trained in this, some of you perhaps sadly, have taught these things in the past to others, you know, about a Big Bang existence of the universe, a Big Bang explanation, and we're not going to silence men from saying those things by what we teach here. That's not the goal. The goal is for you to recognize to look up, to look about you and take the personal accountability, the personal opportunity, the personal possibility, as it were, the Spirit of God comes to you and speaks to your heart and says, "But what do you say? What is your answer as you look at the heavens? How do you explain this majestic precise ordering of the universe?"

David here has spoken about what theologians call general revelation. General revelation, it's the revelation that's available to all men everywhere by which God has made his presence and power known in nature. He testifies in a way that all men can understand, and as we'll see in a moment, all men do understand it. This general revelation, you can't look at the sky, you can't look at the motions of the planetary bodies and come to a knowledge of the gospel. You can't come to a knowledge about everything that Scripture reveals about the nature and attributes of God. But it is not sufficient to save you from sin but it is sufficient to put you on notice that God exists. It is sufficient for you to know that he exists with certainty and without doubt. The incomprehensible magnitude and order of the universe point to the God who established it by his wisdom and power.

Now look, something really important to understand here. The fact that most of us perhaps don't really give much thought to this aspect of it, you know, we just go about our business and we get off to the store or to school or to work and don't give any thought to it, doesn't lessen the reality and the efficacy of the testimony. The fact that men ignore it, take it for granted, take for granted that the sun is going to rise tomorrow like it did today, on what basis does anyone believe that that denies the existence of God? How can you know the sun will rise tomorrow if everything is random? My point is that the fact that we neglect this does not at all lessen the conclusive nature of the testimony. We see

the sun by day, the moon by night, and a kaleidoscope of stars in the heavens. Astronomers chart their movement to the moment, to the minute, so that every one of you with a cell phone can look at the phone and see what time the sun is scheduled to rise tomorrow. Where did that precision come from? That magnitude and precision speaks to the reality of a living Creator who is over all. That is David's point in the first six verses of Psalm 19, that creation speaks to the existence of God. It declares his glory, verse 1, it proclaims his handiwork.

Now let's go to our third point here this morning and look at the supporting testimony from other Scripture. The supporting testimony from other Scripture, and here we ask a question that is really vital. Someone could ask, "Is creation really enough to know for certain that God exists? Is it really enough?" You know, we've been so steeped in the skepticism of the past, you know, the past age of philosophy, so critical and slow to believe and so conditioned to deny God, to ignore God, to ignore these kinds of matters, so it's understandable to me if someone would sincerely ask, "Is creation, is what you've just described in 10 or 15 minutes really sufficient to know that God exists.?" Well, I'd say first of all, understand that I may have summarized it in 10 or 15 minutes, but this testimony has been going on for thousands of years, and it's always out there, and so the fact that I deal with it briefly doesn't diminish the magnitude of the fullness of with which God has spoken. But look at Romans 1. The question is: is creation alone sufficient to compel men to believe in God, to know without question that God exists? We've turned to this passage many times. There's a reason for that, it's fundamental to the proper building of a Christian mind.

Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God," look, how to know God exists, that's the title of the series. You see that these things come directly from the text. The things that we're talking about, the issues, the themes that we are emphasizing here, they come directly from the most fundamental texts of Scripture. We're not on a side diversion here. We haven't taken a detour into something not important. We're dealing with the most fundamental matters with which Paul opens his entire systematic expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the book of Romans. It starts right here, what can be known about God, does he exist and can we know it? This is fundamental to the gospel.

Verse 19, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them." It is obvious God himself has made sure that it could not be missed.

Verse 20, "For his invisible attributes, namely," or specifically, "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 are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves," and on it goes.

Beloved, Scripture tells us the answer to the question. Is creation sufficient reason to believe in God? Think about it this way: to deny the existence of God, to ignore the existence of God, to defy the existence of God in light of creation, is grounds for eternal judgment. That alone is sufficient to judge a man and bring him under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is revealed against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. And why is God angry? Why is God wrathful against mankind? He says it right here, God has imprinted upon creation the unmissable, the undeniable reality of his existence and men turn away from it, harden their hearts, and deny him any way. There is no excuse for that and that condition of mankind, that condition of the minds of unbelieving men, and I fear perhaps even for some of you within the room here today have been living in this way, "I don't care. I reject it. I'm pushing it away. That's not what I think." That state of the human heart, that state of the human mind, beloved, I say it with a broken heart but in fidelity to Scripture, that state of mind individually and collectively for mankind, it is damnable. There is no excuse for that.

If you've ever driven in the country at night, which is fun to do, you know, and you get out and the stars are, you know, away from the light pollution they just jump out at you and, you know, I remember going with my mom decades ago out into the country to see a comet that was passing through the heavens back then, and just the glory of that. Think about being in a dark country place like that on a clear night. No lights. No moon. It's just that enveloping darkness of the natural cycle of time. The testimony of creation – now I'm going from the reality to a metaphor here, okay? The testimony of creation in the world around us is like being in that dark country place and yet there is a big billboard with flashing neon lights on the side of the road on that dark night, and it's just flashing and pulsating its relevance and its existence and it's light to you. You can't miss it. You're on the dark road and then suddenly out of nowhere, in this little illustration that I'm making up here, all of a sudden a big billboard comes up and it's just displaying these flashing blinding lights. You can't miss that. You can't turn away from it. That billboard is there obviously drowning out everything else with the testimony of its existence. Well, in a far greater way, beloved, greater than that little illustration, in a far greater way creation speaks to all men everywhere of the existence of God. If that billboard really existed, you could not possibly be excused for saying, "Oh, I never saw it." Of course you saw it. You couldn't miss it. In a far greater way, to be a guest in the realm of God where he has displayed the knowledge of his existence in creation is inexcusable which is the negative way of saying that there is a certain knowledge to be had, and the Christian mind embraces that and comes to the conviction, "Creation tells me that God exists, period, and I will not yield to the next media promoted argument against the existence of God that comes down the road. My feet are put down and my mind is made-up," you say. "And this is a conviction that guides the way I determine the way I respond to everything else."

And we see this confirmed elsewhere in the Bible. Turn back to the book of Acts for a moment. Genesis 1, Psalm 19, Romans 1, Acts 14. Acts 14:15. A crowd was trying to worship Paul and Barnabas. Paul stops them. He cries out in verse 15, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good

news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." What's Paul saying there? He's saying the God who created the world has imprinted in the flow of the seasons, one season following naturally after another, those seasons testify to the existence of God. The regular course of the seasons manifest his existence in a way for all men to know. As Christians, we accept that testimony. We say, Yes. Amen and Amen."

Chapter 17, verse 22. As Paul was speaking to a bunch of idolaters who head up a memorial, an altar to the unknown God, Paul says to them in verse 22, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place," notice this, beloved, in the room now in verse 27, "that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Paul points to creation and says the effect of creation, the moral implications of living in the realm of God where he testifies in the heavens and in the regular seasons to his existence in an unbroken, unspoken way universally to all men, the moral implication of that, verse 27, is that they should seek God.

Beloved, creation and the course of nature puts men on notice. It is the flashing neon billboard that no man can escape. God exists and in light of that knowledge, God now commands men everywhere to repent from their worldliness, from their godlessness, and to turn to him in Christ. For those of us that want to develop a Christian mind, here's how we respond to that: the Christian mind, the way that we think in light of creation and what Scripture says to us about it is this, the Christian mind acknowledges this testimony and says, "It is sufficient, period. There is no debate about this." The Christian mind affirms the justice of God in it. God, who created this realm and put us as guests in it, God has a right for the subjects of his realm to honor him, to recognize him, to seek him. The fact that they don't is no indication that the testimony is inadequate. The testimony is perfect for its intended use. The fact that men spit upon it is on them, not on the one who made the testimony.

So the Christian mind acknowledges this testimony, it affirms the justice of God in it, it affirms the grace of God in it. What a gracious thing for God to establish a realm in which we can actually live. What a gracious thing of God to establish creation in a way that his handprint cannot be missed. What a gracious thing of God to tell me that I am not alone in this realm but that he is there. And in the words of Francis Schaeffer, he is there and he is not silent. He has spoken and the Christian mind delights in the resultant knowledge of God that comes from it. Poetically, Isaac Watts speaks to this in the hymn, "I sing the almighty power of God," much different from that song that I referred to earlier. We've sung this. Let me remind you of it and by the grace of God, I won't stumble as I say these things to you. Watts says summarizing everything we've spoken about here today, he said,

"I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food,
He formed the creatures with his Word, and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed, wherever I turn my eye,
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky."

"Everywhere I look," Isaac Watts said, "it's there." He said it poetically. Stephen Charnock said it theologically in words that I absolutely affirm and agree with, come what may. Charnock said some 350 years ago, he says, "The existence of God is not only probably but conclusively proved from the things of the world. God has given us," this is still Charnock speaking, "God has given us sense to behold the objects in the world and understanding to reason his existence from them." God established the realm in which we live. He's placed us in it. He has given us the human senses as he constituted us as human beings, he's given us the senses to be able to look at these things and to appropriate them, to look, to hear, to see, to smell, to taste, to touch, and beyond that, God constituted us with a human mind that is able to process this with reason and come to conclusions that he exists. He created the realm. He created man in his image. He put man in the realm and gave him everything he needed to drink it all in, so to speak. And then he gave him a mind by which the man is supposed to say, "From all of this, I conclude that there is a God who exists and I need to seek him for in a realm like this I cannot be of my own."

So wrapping this all up, God has spoken in creation. How do we know he exists? It's because God has made himself known. He has revealed himself to us all. That's the first way that we know that God exists and that appreciation for creation builds a framework of certainty in the Christian mind. And so we should walk out encouraged, strengthened, edified as a result of these things. But notice this, beloved, and at the risk of repeating myself, understand this, that everything that we've said here today puts the careless man on notice. It puts the defiant man on notice. It puts the atheistic scholar on notice. And all points in between, they're all on notice that God exists, that God reigns, and that he has appointed a day of judgment. And in light of that, we, speaking collectively as the realm of mankind, we are responsible to seek Christ and to find him. Luke 13:24 says, "Strive to enter through the narrow door." Look for it. You say you're lost, you say you're confused, you say you're hurting. Okay, look for the God who has made himself known and don't give up until you find him and may the Spirit of God help you along the way. Jesus said in John 7, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me." But whatever else we say

about it, beloved, we see this from Scripture: indifference to the existence of God, denial of the existence of God, refusal to seek him, they are inexcusable. There is no excuse for that. There is no excuse for that and there will be a day of accountability, a day of judgment that God has appointed, where what you have done with his testimony in all of these areas, particularly today in creation, where you will give an account. And so indifference is inexcusable and it is spiritually suicidal. J. C. Ryle says this, he says, "Laziness towards Christianity is a great sin. What will be said of the man who neglects his soul and makes no effort to enter the narrow door? There can be only one reply, he is omitting an explicit duty. Christ says to him, strive, and behold, he sits still." God has spoken, beloved. Now he calls you to think and to respond. What will you do?

Let's pray.

Father, we accept your testimony, we acknowledge your testimony in creation. We accept it. We affirm your justice and grace in it. We delight in the knowledge that the God in whose realm we live has made himself known. Thank you for saving us in Christ by his shed blood. Awaken those who have defied and denied you, Father, that they might be shaken to the core of their being as the inescapable testimony of creation surrounds them moment by moment, hour by hour, day after day, until they are left with no option but to bend the knee, to confess Christ, to call upon him for salvation and mercy. Father, these are not matters of trivial consequence, these are matters of sober, eternal significance. Give us joy as we meditate on them. Give us confidence as we seek you. Give mercy to those who are lost. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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