

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 1 – “Of the Holy Scriptures”, Message # 3 –
“The Scriptures are Necessary unto Salvation”, Presented in the Adult Sunday
School Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on June 30th, 2019.**

Paragraph 1 – The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience⁽¹⁾, although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will which is necessary unto salvation⁽²⁾. Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that, His will, unto his church⁽³⁾; and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.⁽⁴⁾

1) 2nd Timothy 3: 15-17; Isaiah 8: 20; Luke 16: 29 and 31; Ephesians 2 :20; 2) Romans 1: 19-21; 2: 14-15;

Psalms 19: 1-3; 3) Hebrews 1: 1 4) Proverbs 22: 19-21; Romans 15: 4; 2nd Peter 1:1 9-20

We have been looking at the fact that the light of nature is not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and His will which necessary unto salvation. The light of nature proceeds from the law of nature with which we were originally created with, in Adam. I said to you that the light of nature, as all men descended from Adam experientially know, is that light of reason and understanding which we are created with; fallen as we are, in Adam. Even though we are fallen creatures, we still retain the ability to reason. Even though our minds are fallen, yet we are urged in the Scriptures to seek for God, in the hope that we might “grope for God” and “find Him”, as I showed you from Acts 17: 27. Therefore, by the light of nature, the light of their natural reasoning, men are able to see and to behold that which God has created, and to think about it, and to make deductions, and to draw conclusions, which may or may not be correct according to God and His written word the Scriptures. It is certainly true that only God can savingly open the eyes of the spiritually blind, which all men are. But we should also know that God expects all men to use the light of nature within them to draw right conclusions about Himself; that He is good and wise and all-powerful. But we must understand that often fallen man even fails in this. An example of this is given for us in Romans chapter 1.

Romans 1: 18-23 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.” “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”

Why is the wrath of God revealed from heaven? Why is it revealed from heaven against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men? Because they are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness. What truth are they suppressing? The knowledge of God which is manifest in them. Notice the language. It is manifest in them, for God has shown them. What has He

shown them? That since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, in the creation. It is because He has revealed His glory in the creation, that men are without excuse. They have the light of nature, and in this sense they knew God. Even though they had such a knowledge of the being and perfection of God, yet they glorified Him not as God.

In other words, men are without excuse if they do not improve upon the light of nature which they are given. They have an obligation to worship God and to learn to serve God, but they do not do it.

Listen to Jonathan Edwards on this – ““If we look to the heavens or the earth; or birds, beasts, or fishes; or plants and trees: if we do but take notice of it, they all declare to us that we ought to worship, to fear, to love and obey, the God that made all these things. The workmanship of God in our own bodies and souls proclaims aloud the same: all the creatures do declare the same thing.”

The fact that men do not do this, shows us that men need something far greater than the Light of nature in order to come to the knowledge of God and His will which are necessary for salvation.

3. The Law of the Lord is Perfect whereas the Light of Nature and our hearts are not.

Psalm 19: 7-12 – “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” “Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.” “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.” “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”

The word law here is not the law of Moses or the Ten commandments, but the “doctrine of the Lord. The word “Torah” signifies the whole word of God; all the Scriptures of truth which are profitable for doctrine, for setting doctrine in a clear light, and for the vindication and establishment of it. (Gill) They are perfect because they contain the whole mind and will of God, in regard to faith and practice. Converting the soul is one of the main objects God had in mind in the giving of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit by means of the word saves the soul, restores the soul, refreshes the soul, instructs the mind with and by saving knowledge. The commandment of the Lord, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, is a most pure commandment; it enlightens the eyes to the truth that salvation is not to be found in ourselves who are very sinful and imperfect, but only to be found in Christ, the Holy One of God.

As we look at the whole of Psalm 19, we find that there are 3 books which are written by God which He would have each of each of us to read if we would be saved and have eternal life. The first book we looked at last Sunday. It is the book of the heavens which declare the glory of God. (verses 1-6) We have seen that each and every person hears the words of this book declared in their ears, even though their voice is silent; rather it is something that is seen. And in verse 3 it

says that there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. In the heavens God has set a great tabernacle for the sun, which is compared to a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run his race. The sun's giving light and warmth and the successive motions of the earth around it tell us, according to the light of nature, that God has made the sun. The earth revolves around the sun showing that for all created things, their life is entirely dependent upon the sun, what God has done to provide for our many physical needs. This ought to lead us to consider the gospel, that of the Sun of Righteousness, our Lord Jesus Christ being given to the world so that in believing in Him, we might be saved. He, through His gospel ministers, and others who share the gospel, runs His race as a strong man through the course of time. He has all power and authority given to Him in heaven and earth. There is nothing hidden from his heat; that is, His powerful gaze, seeing all and ruling over all during this time of the gospel age.

The 2nd book written by God is the book of His law, which is described in verse 7 as being perfect, converting the soul. The soul of man needs the book of the law in order to find out the will of God and how a person can be made wise through His commandments. It is not as though the soul is converted through keeping the commandments of God. But the soul is taught that the way of the Lord is to be known, understood, and learned in accordance with the grace that God supplies. The law of the Lord is all of the written word of God and more to be desired than gold, and sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. And by it the servant of the Lord is warned of what is sinful and what will dishonor God or what will hurt him or others, and in keeping of His word is great reward.

The 3rd book which is written by God and, which He expects us to read, is the book of heart religion. The book of the law teaches that "out of the heart flow all the issues of life", but you and I need to understand that we must have a heart religion in order to know ourselves and God aright, and to finally be receive into the everlasting dwellings. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. (Hebrews 12: 14) God Himself reads your heart, dear Christian, and He would have you to know that He understands it perfectly, even if you don't. "Who can understand his errors?" "Cleanse me from secret faults", David prays. If we do not know how to pray this way yet, we need to learn, for your heart can easily deceive you. But if you learn to pray the prayers of verses 13 and 14 you will come to know experientially the Lord as your strength and your Redeemer.