

Psalm 19

To Read:

1. Romans 1:18-32
2. Psalm 8

1 I. Introduction

A. This morning we are taking a short break from our longer book studies to look at Psalm 19

1. Psalm 19 has always been on a short list of my favorite Psalms, both because of how it begins and how it ends
2. Psalm 19 begins with a meditation on the glories of creation and there are so many mornings during prayer that I simply recite the words of this Psalm to God as I watch the sun rise over the hills
3. And Psalm 19 ends with a plea to God that our worship would be worthy - that our meditation would be acceptable in His sight - another plea that I often make during prayer and during my times of study

B. This morning as we study Psalm 19, I want to think about how David gets from one side to the other

1. How does David get from a meditation on the glories of nature to a meditation on his worthiness to worship, and what does that teach us?
2. And why is there a meditation on the Scriptures right in the middle of Psalm 19 - how does this connect the two sides of this Psalm?
3. As we work through each section of this Psalm and work toward an answer, we'll see that when David sees the sun rise, His thought are inexorably drawn to a promised redeemer

C. Let's read Psalm 19 together

1D. Proposition: All creation calls us to worship the risen Christ

1. God's glory is revealed to us in nature
2. God's glory is restored to us in Scripture
3. God's glory makes demands on us
4. God's glory is satisfied in us through a Savior
5. God's glory is perfected in Jesus Christ

1 II. God's Glory Is Revealed to Us in Nature

A. As Psalm 19 starts, you can almost imagine David out on the roof of his palace looking at the stars

1. Maybe it is very early morning - there is no hint of the sun yet, but David has come to see the dawn of a new day
2. But, as David looks out and sees the innumerable stars, he can't ignore their beauty or the message they are proclaiming
3. And the message of the heavens is clear to David - *The heavens declare the glory of God! The sky above proclaims His works!*

1 B. And this becomes David's theme for Psalm 19 - we can see the glory of God!

1. Every time we walk out under the sky, we are seeing the glory of God proclaimed in the grandest way
 - a. Every day the heavens speak to us and every night the sky teaches us knowledge of the Creator God
 - b. And David is amazed - we can see that! We can look out at creation and see the glory of God speaking to us
2. And think how much of God's glory is revealed in just the heavens as we look at the sky above
 - a. We can look up and see the beauty of the stars and we should see the beauty of God - if the stars paint such a beautiful picture for us, how much more beautiful must their maker be?
 - b. We can look up and see the vastness of space, millions and billions of miles, light-year upon light-year, distances so great that we can keep making up new words to describe them and still not exhaust the vastness of space and we should see the infinite God - our God is infinitely greater than us, and His creation cries that out every night - if space continues on beyond our imagination, how much greater must our God be?
 - c. We can look up and see the stars run in their courses, the sun rising to rule the day and the moon rising to rule the night and we should see the order and the design of God - if such order and such careful design are incorporated into creation, our God must be full of order and His design must be perfect
 - d. We can look up and see the sun beaming down on us, lighting and warming this world and we should see the power of God - and when we think of what the sun is, a massive fusion reactor burning millions upon millions of tons of hydrogen above our heads, our view of God's power is only deepened - if such power is incorporated into creation, how powerful must our God be?
 - e. We can look up and see the light of the sun providing food for us, the rain from the clouds watering the earth, the darkness of night providing a place of rest and we should see the goodness of God - God has provided well for His creation, everything that we need has been given to us by God
3. And this is only a small tithe of the glories of God displayed every day and every night if we just look up
 - a. We ought to be awed simply by looking around ourselves - everything in creation is testifying to us of God's greatness
 - b. And this calls us to look - we ought not get caught up in ourselves and our deeds so that we can't simply go outside and see how great our God is - we ought to devote time to be awed by what our God has done
 - c. And this also calls us to mourn - how often do we go outside and see the sun and the stars and fail to be overwhelmed with the glory of God? The glory of God is displayed every day and night, and so often we overlook it.

1 C. But, as David continues to meditate on the glory of God revealed in the heavens, He thinks about one specific thing

1. David looks up at the sky, and he realizes that everyone can see exactly what he is seeing now
 - a. *There is no speech, nor are there words where their voice is not heard!*
 - b. *Or again - their measure goes out through all the earth, their words to the end of the world!*
2. God's glory is not only powerfully revealed in the heavens, it is freely revealed in the heavens
 - a. There's not a single person in all of creation that can't see God's glory because they can just go outside
 - b. God has been incredibly gracious to us - He has not hidden His beauty from His creation, but He puts it on display every night if we would just look
3. And this truth will become a cornerstone of this Psalm - if everyone can see the glory of God, then everyone ought to respond to the glory of God - but we'll come to this more in a few minutes
 - a. No one can claim an excuse for failing to see and to respond to the glory of God - all men have seen, we have simply turned away - it's never been that we don't know, only that we don't care

1 D. As we move toward verse 5, we can envision David standing at the ramparts again, but now the sun is just rising over the hills

1. And David takes His own words to heart and lets himself be awed by the glory of the sun - we could paraphrase verse 5 by saying, "Oh wow! Look! The sun!"
 - a. David sees the sun, and he rejoices in its glory - it is like a bridegroom coming out energetically to claim his bride, like a runner running his course exuberantly - and boy does it run far, from one end of the earth to the other
 - b. And the glory of the sun calls David to look once again at the glory of God who put the sun there for him to see, in fact that's where he starts - *In them he [GOD] has set a tent for the sun* - the sun, in all of its blazing glory is merely a creation of God, a servant of the Almighty - the sun's points David to God's glory
2. And once again, David thinks of how the blessing of God's glory is proclaimed to all men
 - a. There are no men anywhere who haven't experienced the glories of the sun - *there is nothing hidden from its heat*
 - b. Men may not see the glory of God, they may not worship the Creator, but it's not because His glory isn't there

1 III. God's Glory Is Restored to Us in God's Word

A. After David's exalted, almost mystical rejoicing in the beauty of the stars and the sun and the greater glory that they point to, David turns to examine the Word of God

1. And there's a clear connection here - both creation and Scripture testify to the glory of God, in fact the ultimate purpose of both is to reveal the glory of God
2. But as I've meditated on this Psalm, I've tried to figure out what led David's mind from one to the other - why did the glory of God in creation lead David to the glory of God in Scripture?

1 B. Perhaps, as David was rejoicing in the glory of the sun as it rose, as he turned to go back down into the palace he started to wonder - why doesn't everyone rejoice in God?

1. Maybe he even wondered why so often he failed to rejoice in God - it had been a glorious morning and his soul had truly worshipped on that morning, but there had surely been many mornings when his heart was dull and empty, and probably many of his fellow Israelites had experienced the same thing - a waning and waxing desire to see the glory of God
2. And, outside of Israel, so many saw the sun, the moon and the stars and completely failed to see the glory of the God who created them, they failed to stand in awe and worship - how could this be?
3. What was it that brought David back and let him see the glory of God declared at the rising of the sun? What made David different than so many heathens who would never worship YHWH?

2 C. As David perhaps meditated on this, his thoughts turned to the Word of God

1. David was as prone as any sinful man to overlook and ignore the glory of God displayed in creation - he could be as blind as everyone else and unable to see the glory of God, but God had given something special to him, something that acted as a corrective lens, something that restored and revived His ability to see the glory of God
2. What allowed David to see what so many others had failed to see? Was it not the Word of God?

D. So David turns and rejoices in the Word of God, using Hebrew parallelism to heap repeated praises as to how good Scripture is

- 3 1. *The law of the Lord is perfect... the testimony of the Lord is sure... the precepts of the Lord are right... the commandment of the Lord is pure... the fear of the Lord is clean... the rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether!*
- 1 2. And so he concludes - *more to be desired are they than pure gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb!*
3. God's Word declared the glory of God to David - they showed David God's perfection, His faithfulness, His righteousness, His purity, His majesty and so the Scriptures were to be desired above all other things

2 E. And Scripture did what David could not - they opened His eyes to see the glories of God!

1. So, interspersed in his recounting of how good God's Word is, David declares what they did for Him
2. They had revived his soul, they had made him wise even when he had been simple, they had caused his heart to rejoice, they had enlightened his eyes - their promises and warnings had opened His eyes to see the glories of God displayed around him
3. The Scriptures had been a corrective lens to restore David's awe at God's glory - everyone can and should see the glory of God displayed in the heavens, but the truth is we haven't
4. Our sin has blinded us to the glories of God, it has made it so we cannot see and we do not understand - but God has provided a way for us to see again, a way for our souls to be revived and rejoice again in the glory of God
5. God had revealed Himself in nature so that all men are without excuse, but when all men failed to see His glory, God revealed His glory again in an even clearer way through His Scriptures
6. Why could David see the glory of God? Because David's heart had been renewed through the Word of God!

1 F. So David calls us to value the Word of God above all things, even to rejoice in the Word of God

1. We ought to seek to cultivate the same attitude as David, valuing God's Word above a mountain of gold, loving it more than the sweetest food
2. And this desire ought to be reflected in us by driving us to search out the warnings and the promises of God's Word so that we can see and rejoice in the perfection and the faithfulness and the righteousness of God as David had - it should be reflected in a desire to be in God's Word before anything else in our lives, letting nothing cut us off from its glories
3. But David would also call us to see that the Word of God will have no effect on our heart to show us the glory of God unless we come with an attitude of obedience - this is why his meditation on God's Word is primarily filled with pictures of God's commands: God's law, God's precepts, God's rules that call us to fear God - knowing God's Word will not be enough to open our eyes to God's glory, we must come in submission to God's Word in order to allow it to open our eyes to God's glory
4. Which leads us naturally into our third point:

1 IV. God's Glory Makes Demand on Us

A. One thing that I've spent a lot of time meditating on in Psalm 19 is how verses 12-14 connect to the rest of the Psalm

1. Especially the cry of verse 12 - *Who can discern his errors?*
2. On a shallow reading of Psalm 19, this seems like an abrupt change of topic with little connection to the rest of the Psalm
3. But obviously in David's mind this thought flows naturally from his meditation so far and I think we can see how by seeing something that came up in both of David's meditations on God's glory

1 B. In both sections, on nature and on Scripture, David sees that seeing God's glory demands something from us

1. So, in verses 1-6, David looks at the heavens, the sun, the moon and the stars and sees God's glory declared through all the earth, he says - *There is no speech, nor are there words, where their voice is not heard.*
 - 1 a. Everyone has seen God's glory, everyone should see God's glory, but then David goes on and makes a more intense statement - *Their measure goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*
 - b. That word 'measure' or in some of your translations it might say 'line' is the word for a measuring tape that you would use in building and it carries the connotation of a standard, something to measure up to
 - c. The heavens not only declare the glory of God, but also declare that therefore there is standard that we must measure up to - the revelation of the glory of God makes demands on us
 - d. Those demands may not be very clear in nature, but at least they demand that we worship and revere the God who created, they demand that we stand in awe of God's creation and, in turn, stand in awe of God Himself
 - e. Their declaration and their measure stands over all the earth - all the earth has seen the glory of God and all the earth knows that God has made demands on them
2. And, in verses 7-10, David looks at Scriptures, the law and the testimony of God, and he says something similar
 - 1 a. He starts by declaring how glorious they are and how they reveal the glory of God, but he ends by saying - *Moreover, by them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*
 - b. The clearer revelation of God's glory in Scripture makes even clearer demands on us - demands for worship and obedience, demands for rejoicing and forsaking, demands to love His law, to desire His Word and to keep His precepts
 - c. This is the very nature of the glory of God - seeing the glory of God cannot be a neutral activity - when we see the glory of God, we respond to the glory of God, either in reverent, obedient worship, or in self-serving blindness and the more of the glory of God we see, the more we are called to respond - the more specific the call to worship, the greater the demand for obedience
 - d. So, as Scripture acts as a corrective lens, restoring our vision of the glory of God, it also increases our understanding of the demands of God's glory and therefore our culpability and responsibility for worship and obedience
 - e. When we see God's glory we either respond rightly or wrongly, and the more we see of God's glory, the greater our response is - either in worship or rejection

2 C. And this brings us to David's cry in verse 12 - *Who can discern his errors?*

1. David has been on the ramparts seeing the glory of God in the heavens and knowing its demand on him and he has been meditating on the glories of the Word of God and knowing their demands on him, and he knows how often he has failed to meet that demand
2. In fact, if the Psalm ended with that cry, it would be a terrifying and heart wrenching psalm - the glory of God has been twice displayed! It was declared to us in nature, but in our self-centeredness we blinded our eyes, and it has been restored to us in Scripture, but we have failed to live up to its demands
- 1 3. Seeing the glory of God is not enough for sinful man - seeing the glory of God is rather a terror to sinful man, a terror that Isaiah communicates well to us in Isaiah 6:1-5 - *In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"*
4. David is having a similar experience here - perhaps less intense, but he is seeing the glory of the same God and responding in the same way - I have seen the glory of God and woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.

D. And so this Psalm could be a terror to us

1. This Psalm declares that the glory of God and its accompanying demands have been declared throughout all nature, everywhere so no one is blameless before Him
2. And this Psalm declares that the glory of God has been more clearly revealed to us through Scripture, enhancing our responsibility and increasing the blameworthiness of our failure to worship
3. We have seen so much of the glory of God and yet we have failed to worship as we ought - woe is us!

1 V. God's Glory Is Satisfied in Us through a Savior

1 A. As David meditates on the glories of God, he understands its demands and his failures, but the glory of God still calls him to worship

1. But how can he worship a God whom He has failed so intensely? How can His meditation be acceptable in God's sight? How can his praise be brought before a holy God when he has so often rejected that God?
2. David knows he needs to worship - God's glory calls for our total and complete worship - but he also knows that there is no way he can worship God in a way that will truly honor God
3. If David's eyes have been opened to the glories of God and to his own failures, then if he is to respond rightly in a way that will honor God, David needs to be rescued; he needs to be saved; he needs to be washed and made right before God
4. And this is David's prayer at the end of this Psalm - David prays that God would come and save him and make him worthy to worship once again

2 B. So David calls out for God to justify him - to declare him innocent before His throne

1. In verse 12, David cries out to God - *Declare me innocent from hidden faults!*
2. Now there is a lot going on in these last three verses and many levels of meaning here
 - a. Some would make much of the dualistic description of sin that David makes, the divergence between hidden faults and presumptuous sins - and that's a good thing to draw out here, but I don't think it is actually David's main point and I'm not going to run down that path this morning
 - b. Instead I'm going to focus on the two things that David cries out to God for in these verses
3. And in verse 12, David is crying out to God for justification - he knows that his sin is so deep that he can't even discern all of his errors, so he cries out for God to declare him innocent from all of them
 - a. For David to worship God, David must be declared innocent, He must not stand before God guilty if His praise is going to be heard
 - b. And David knows that justification cannot be found in him, so He looks to God to provide justification - You declare me innocent and then I will be worthy

1 C. But David doesn't stop there, He also calls out for God to sanctify him - to keep him back from sin

1. In verse 13, David continues crying out to God - *Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me!*
2. David isn't looking for cheap justification here - God clean me up so I can worship and I'll continue on the same
3. No, David understands that if he would be worthy to worship God, then he needs to be justified and sanctified - He needs to be declared innocent from previous sins and to have his heart changed so that he departs from sin
4. But again, David knows that this is not within him - he no more has the power to change his heart and set aside his sinfulness than he had the ability to declare himself innocent and wash away his sin
5. So he cries out to God, "God change my heart, let me not run after sin anymore, keep me back from desiring the path of sin, let not sin rule over me!"
6. If God would justify him, declaring him innocent from sin, and sanctify him, changing his heart to no longer love sin, then David would be blameless and innocent - worthy to worship the God who deserves His worship

1 D. So David rests his hope in a savior - a rock and a redeemer who will make him acceptable before God

1. In verse 14, David finishes his plea by asking that God would find him worthy to worship - *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer!*
2. This is what David has been building to through the entire Psalm - David must praise, but if he would praise, he must be made worthy - his praise must be made acceptable
3. So his ultimate plea is, "O God, let my praise be acceptable to you!"
4. But he doesn't leave the plea hanging, instead he closes with a statement of rest and trust - he says, "O God, let my praise be acceptable to you, and I trust that it will because you are my rock and my redeemer."
5. David needed God to justify him and he needed God to sanctify him if he was going to worship God rightly, but David rested in the hope that God would be His redeemer and His savior - the Scriptures had promised that a deliverer would come and David rested in that hope
6. David knew that he could acceptably worship God because a savior would come and make him worthy
7. The ultimate hope of Psalm 19 is Jesus Christ - David looks around at nature and sees God's glory, David looks at Scripture and sees God's glory and everything that he is seeing is pointing him forward to the redeemer who was to come, the promised Son who would break the curse
8. Jesus is the center of Psalm 19, which leads us to our last point:

1 VI. God's Glory is Perfected in Jesus Christ

1 A. Jesus Christ is the Creator whose glory is displayed

1. Psalm 19 calls us to see the beauty and the majesty of creation and to turn our gaze to see the glory of the One who made creation, who called the stars and the sun into being, the one who set them in their course and rules them forever
2. And ultimately this is calling us to see the glory of Christ, because He is the Creator God, the One through whom all things were made, the One in whom all things have their being
- 1 3. As Paul says in Colossians 1:15-17 - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities ---all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
4. Creation is a testimony to us of the glories of Christ - there is not one speck of this world that was not designed by God to display the glories of Christ, and we ought to look and see His glory! That ought to be our passion and joy as we go through this world!

2 B. Jesus Christ is the bridegroom rising again to claim His bride

1. At the heart of the verse on creation was a specific glory that David saw - the glory of the rising sun, coming out like a bridegroom to take his bride - David said, the sun is glorious, we shouldn't miss that
2. And, again, ultimately this is us to see the glory of Christ, because He is the Son rising again like a bridegroom, coming to claim His bride - in fact, these are the verses that Dan referenced when we looked at Matthew 28 and saw that Jesus' resurrection was the Dawning of a New Day
- 1 3. Matthew 28:1-6 - *Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.*
4. The bridegroom lay under the earth, but at the dawn of the day, the bridegroom sprang forth, he rose up with glorious radiance and went to seek His bride - the sun is a testimony to us of the glories of Christ!

2 C. Jesus Christ is the Word of God whose glory is displayed in Scripture

1. The second verse of Psalm 19 calls us to see the beauty and the majesty of the Word of God and to see the glory of God radiating through the Word of God
2. And, again, ultimately this is calling us to see the glory of Christ, because He is the Word of God incarnate, the One who perfectly reveals to us the glories of God
- 1 3. As John will say in His gospel, John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
4. So the Scripture, the written Word of God, are a testament, a testimony to the glories of Christ
5. As Jesus Himself says, in Luke 24:25-27 - *And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*
6. All of Scripture is a testimony to us of the glories of Christ - there is not one Word that is written that was not designed by God to display the glories of Christ, and we ought to look and see His glory! That ought to be our passion and joy as we go to God's Word!

2 D. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the law of God

1. At the heart of the verse on Scripture was the glory of the Law of God - the law of God revived the soul, the precepts of God caused the heart to rejoice - the glory of God was specifically revealed in the law of God
2. And once again, ultimately this is calling us to see the glory of Christ, because He is the fulfillment of the law, the One who came to perfectly embody the law and keep it for all of His people
- 1 3. As we read some months ago in Matthew 5:17 - *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*
4. The Law of God stood as a pointer to Christ, Paul would even later call it a tutor that was leading us to Christ - the Law of God is a testimony to us of the glories of Christ

2 E. And, above all, Jesus Christ is our Rock and our Redeemer

1. David's hope rested in the promise that God would send a Redeemer - he believed that he could worship because God would redeem him from the curse of sin
- 1 2. And this is calling us to see the glories of Christ, because, as Paul will say in Galatians 3:13 - *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us---for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"*

2 F. So Psalm 19 ultimately calls us to glory in our Redeemer

1. We ought to be like David and see the glory of Creation and rejoice in the glory of Christ
2. We ought to be like David and see the glory of Scripture and rejoice in the glory of Christ
3. We ought to be like David and see our sinfulness and rejoice in the salvation of Christ

G. So, in a few moments, after we take communion, we are going to sing together, "I will glory in my Redeemer"

1. Let's make that the response of our hearts this morning - all creation is calling us to see the glory of Christ, the Word of God is calling us to see the glory of Christ, even our own sin is calling us to see the glory of Christ, so let's glory in Him!