

THE REVELATION OF GOD

Psalm 19

2. The nature of the Bible.

(1) It is perfect. Psalm 19:7a.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." God's Word is complete and flawless. Not lacking anything, the Bible is sufficient to meet all the needs of those who turn to God and receive His message. Since it is perfect, it does not need amendment. His Word cannot be improved, either by adding anything to it or by taking anything from it. Nothing should be added to it and nothing should be taken from it. We can always depend upon what is revealed therein.

The Bible gives us a perfect picture of man's condition by nature, and also of the provision which God has made for man's needs. It portrays man's sinfulness and attempts to persuade him to repent or to turn away from his sin.

(2) It is sure. Psalm 19:7b.

"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." The testimony of the Lord is sure because it deals only with matters that are true. It never changes its position, but is always consistent. It is neither changing nor uncertain. Man's reasonings change, but God's Word will endure forever. It is characterized by trustworthiness. It is absolutely dependable.

(3) It is right. Psalm 19:8a.

"The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." The precepts of the Lord are expressions of absolute righteousness because they proceed from God and are, therefore, inherently right. God's Word presents the straight road to man's true goal. No false principles can be found in it, although it does mention some of the false principles on which men act. The Bible sets forth principles which are sound. It is a straight-edge or plumb line by which we can produce upright lives. Those who obey the teachings of the Bible live happy, successful and useful lives.

(4) It is pure. Psalm 19:8b.

"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." A commandment of God is not clouded by ambiguous inferences and double speech. Rather, it is pointed, specific, clear and meaningful.

(5) It is clean. Psalm 19:9a.

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever." God's Word is the finest cleaning agency in the world. This is seen in its effects upon the life. It cleanses thoroughly, both within and without. The Bible will keep you from sin, just as certainly as sin will keep you from God's Word.

(6) It is true. Psalm 19:9b.

"The judgments of the Lord are true." Without exception the decisions of God's Word are true. The soul that would be kept from error or falsehood should keep his mind and heart filled with the Scriptures. They depict the true course of right conduct.

(7) It is righteous. Psalm 19:9c.

"The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." The Bible is the standard by which all men are to be judged. The decisions of the Lord will be based upon the Word, and nobody will be able to say that He was unfair or unrighteous in His judgment.

(8) It is valuable. Psalm 19:10a.

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." It is worth more than money. It is more desirable than gold because it provides a wealth that shall never pass away and will not have to be left behind when we depart from this world.

(9) It is desirable. Psalm 19:10b.

"Sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb." There is not only profit, but pleasure also to be derived from the reading and the study of the Word of God. It is more desirable than honey, for it provides greater enjoyment. The spiritual nourishment enjoyed and gained by the study of the Bible far exceeds the pleasure and joy experienced from eating the finest honey.

The believer who has learned to appreciate the message of God's Word is never satisfied with what he has received, but he is always looking for more. Its desirability is likened to the sweetness of honey. It is so pleasant to the taste that the more we have the more we want.

(10) It is beneficial. Psalm 19:11.

"Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." God's Word promises a reward of peace and satisfaction to all of those who receive its teachings and obey them. When rightly used, the Bible refreshes the spirit, gives wisdom to the mind, brings joy to the heart, illuminates the understanding, and gives effectiveness to life. We must study it and obey its teachings if we are to become the persons God wants us to be.

3. The work of the Bible.

(1) It converts the soul. Psalm 19:7a.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul".

(2) It provides wisdom. Psalm 19:7b.

"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

(3) It gives joy. Psalm 19:8a.

"The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart."

(4) It affords enlightenment. Psalm 19:8b.

"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

(5) It produces righteous deeds. Psalm 19:9.

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

(6) It gives satisfaction. Psalm 19:10.

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

(7) It sounds a warning. Psalm 19:11a.

"Moreover by them is thy servant warned."

(8) It rewards the obedient. Psalm 19:11b.

"In keeping of them there is great reward."

III. The Revelation Of God In Experience. Psalm 19:12-14.

While speaking of the law of God, some of its searching rays streamed down into David's soul and revealed regions of darkness which he had not suspected, as well as the tremendous contrast between himself and God. Overwhelmed with astonishment and grief, while comprehending the number and the frequency of his sins, and knowing full well that he had sins within him whose depths were still unfathomed, David cried: "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults."

This experience finds its parallel in every Christian heart and life. The most godly people readily acknowledge that every day of their lives gives them some new understanding of the sinfulness of their own hearts. Isn't it strange that, while the most holy people recognize that they are great sinners, there are those who make no profession of religion and have no aspirations whatever after holiness and yet they are scarcely conscious that they are sinners at all? In fact, it seems that the greatest transgressors are troubled the least by the accusations of conscience. Sensual and selfish men have the tendency to deny or to excuse the fact of sin, to conceal or to ignore it.

As to the unconsciousness of sin, I should like to mention three things:

1. The certainty of it.

(1) Some of our sins are unknown to others.

There is a certain portion of each of our lives which is sheltered from the popular gaze. Most of us put our best side to the world. How carefully we veil from others our thoughts, our schemes of pride, our unspoken anger, our fits of envy, our greed and our stained imaginations! However, it should be stated that the sins which people keep secret from others are not nearly as numerous as they think.

(2) Some of our sins are unknown to us.

There are sins in your life and mine of which we are unaware. Some of our sins are hidden behind self-interest, prejudice or pride. Other sins are hidden behind rationalizations. Rationalization is a process whereby the mind tries to justify an attitude or an action which we know to be wrong. It is an effort to find relief from a guilt complex by some means other than repentance. Many are given to rationalizing their faults until they all but persuade themselves that their sins are virtues. Still other sins are hidden behind commendable deeds. One says, "I don't go to church, but I live uprightly." By putting some commendable trait over against a bad one we frequently balance the account in our own favor and try to forget that our sins are still there. Our faculty of judging ourselves is most unreliable. Sins of which we are not conscious are the ones which harm us most.

~~(3) None of our sins are unknown to God.~~

Every sin in thought, motive, attitude, intention, plan, word or deed is known by the Lord.

2. The consequences of it.

(1) Secret sins make right decisions more difficult.

(2) Secret sins prepare people for open falls.

3. The cure for it.

(1) Recognize that the sins of which we are unconscious are real.

(2) Remember that God sees and knows the sins of which we are unconscious.

(3) Repent of your sins of which you are unconscious.

(4) Request God to cleanse you of your unconscious sins.

The Psalmist prayed, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." Then let us inquire: --

1. What are presumptuous sins?

- (1) Sins committed willfully against manifest light and knowledge.
To do that which is known to be wrong, or even questionable, is to commit a sin of presumption. When a man knows better, and sins in the very face of his increased light and knowledge, he is a presumptuous sinner. One commits the sin of presumption by sinning against the warnings of conscience, the admonitions of friends or the voice of God through His Word, His Spirit or His servants.
- (2) Sins committed after deliberation.
When one considers whether he shall sin or not and then at length decides to do so, that is indeed a presumptuous sin.
- (3) Sins committed with purpose of heart.
We sometimes "make provision for the flesh to fullfill the lusts thereof." Intentional sins stand in contrast with unconscious sins, or those committed ignorantly. Intentional sins are the embodiment of forethought, the result of desire, against the voice of conscience, antagonistic to God, and committed with the hope of escaping the consequences.

2. How does God restrain men from sinning presumptuously?

- (1) By warnings.
- (2) By His providential dealings.
- (3) By His grace.
He quickens, prevents, directs, assists and sanctifies by His marvelous grace.

3. How can we avoid committing presumptuous sins?

We can avoid committing presumptuous sins by carefully examining ourselves, striving for the mastery of self, guarding against unnecessary exposure to temptation, refraining from sinful engagements and entanglements, being very watchful of our personal conduct and by being faithful in prayer. This prayer of the Psalmist should be that of each of us who know the Lord as Saviour: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."