

**Intro:**

We are working on this theme for Christmas:

*The Word made Flesh.*

In consideration of the theme, we began looking at Psalm 19 last week. This is a song or a prayer about the way God makes himself known to men.

- First, we considered how the greatness and glory of God are made known in the creation, especially in the heavens. Apart from very isolated instances of *direct revelation*, this *general revelation* is all men had up until the time of Moses — one third of humanity's existence.
- Next we began looking at what our Psalm says about the Law, the written revelation of God. This is God's *special revelation*, the revelation of God's mind through the minds of his prophets and written down for succeeding generations.

It is through the special revelation, the Bible, that men can know how to have access to God.

Last Sunday afternoon we considered the vocabulary with which this written word is described in our Psalm, and we looked at six figures in the Christmas story whose lives reflected the effect the Word of God had on their lives.

- Zechariah and Elizabeth
- Joseph and Mary
- Simeon and Anna

Our services today are going to linger here in Ps 19. We want to give more consideration to the written Word before we come to the incarnate Word next week.

Today, I have entitled our message:

*The Word at Work*

We talked about the effect of the word in the principle lives involved in the Christmas record. I want to examine today a bit more about how that works.

Read Ps 19.7-8

**Proposition:** God's word has spiritual power to change your inner man.

I was actually led to this series by a series of messages on Psalm 19 by Mark Minnick. He preached 5 messages on vv. 7-8! I am going to try to get away with just one.

## I. The ministry of the word in converting the soul (7a)

A. The pattern of these verses: term || attribute || effect (or change)

1. First phrase: law || perfect || restoring
2. This phrase could almost be considered a ‘title phrase’ for this section, a general statement at the head of more specific statements
3. Since we have talked about the vocabulary of these terms, I’ll spend most of my time on the attributes and effects today

B. The perfect law

1. You will remember that the term ‘law’ is ‘torah’ which means the whole instruction of God – the written word – not simply lists of rules
2. Meaning of *perfect*
  - a. Can mean *blameless, sincere, honest*
  - b. Fundamental idea *completeness, wholeness* (Josh 10.13 – a whole day, a complete day)
  - c. Primary application: *without defect, without blemish* (Ex 12.5, etc, a *perfect* lamb, an *unblemished* sacrifice)
3. Application to the written word of God
  - a. Inerrant – no defect, no fault, no error

“God didn’t give you a Bible that was ‘blind in one eye’.”

b. Sufficient – nothing else needed for your life, we have all we need and we have what we need

When someone says you need some other teaching to ‘unlock’ the secrets of the Bible, they are teaching error.

C. Converting the soul

1. The soul is the inner man
  - a. ‘Soul’ translated over 20 different ways by KJV, over 30 different ways by NAU
  - b. Words like: *heart, mind, will, desire, appetite, etc.*
  - c. ‘Soul’ is a comprehensive term that covers all these different individual aspects of the inner man

2. The word of God converts the soul

- a. Fundamental idea of ‘convert’ or ‘restore’ is *to turn, to return, to turn back*
- b. The word implies that something is wrong with the soul such that it needs turning
  - 1) Our Psalm up to this point has been occupied with glory – God’s glory as displayed by natural revelation
  - 2) Our Psalm now looks at us and says we need something more than just *awe* and *worship* of the great God who made us
  - 3) Our Psalm looks at us and says we need turning

Men say, oh, sure, the murderer needs turning, the doper, the drunk, the criminal — people like that need turning.  
God’s word says all men need turning

- Pr 21.10 - The soul of the wicked desires evil
- Eph 2.2 - Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath

The word was given because the soul needs converting – will you receive it?

## II. The ministry of the word in making wise the simple (7b)

A. The need of the simple

1. One of five major terms in Proverbs for people who lack wisdom

Wisdom = *skill for handling life, the ability of long experience*

2. Some descriptions of the simple

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**Proverbs 14:15** The simple believeth every word

**Proverbs 22:3** A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished

**Proverbs 1:32** For the turning away of the simple shall slay them

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3. The nature of a simple person
  - a. No long view – only see the immediate
  - b. No benefit from experience (not simply ‘inexperienced’, but also unable to learn from the experience that they do have)
4. The extent of simplicity
  - a. Everyone is simple to some extent
    - 1) You can’t live long enough to experience everything
    - 2) You are born too late to experience some things
  - b. Only God has all wisdom – he is eternal

So if you want the true wisdom, where should you look?  
To the testimony or witness of the one who has been  
there – God.

B. The sure witness (testimony)

There used to be a game show called *Family Feud*. The contestants were trying to guess what a survey gave as the top answers to various questions – the whole concept was based on being well versed in average North American culture.  
  
We are talking about consulting an opinion poll of one: God.

1. God witnesses to us concerning the futility of living a life for one’s immediate passions: consider Esau
2. God witnesses to us concerning the damage done in families when you indulge ‘just once’ in a secret sin: consider David and Bathsheba
3. God witnesses to us concerning the value of laying aside the indulgence of fleshly desires and replacing them with the walk of the Spirit: consider Gal 5 and Eph 4-6

The witness of God is *sure* and it makes wise the simple.

### III. The ministry of the word in rejoicing the heart (8a)

- A. This ministration of the word is to the emotional aspect of our nature
  1. The Bible’s application is to the whole man – not mind alone, but whole psychological makeup

- a. Making wise the simple has to do with mental processes – that is needed, but that is not all
- b. ‘Rejoicing the heart’ has to do with the emotional aspect of man

The Bible doesn’t appeal to our reason at all; it doesn’t call us to think through the answers to life questions. Instead, the Bible proclaims truths that it expects us to accept.

- For example, v. 7 simply assumes that we have a soul.
- Gen 2 tells us how men got that soul.
- You won’t think right about men if you deny that man has a soul.

But the Bible doesn’t reason it out for you, it simply expects you to accept it by faith.

When you accept the Bible by faith, you will make yourself wise instead of simple, and you will rejoice your heart.

2. The heart is a general term almost synonymous with soul
  - a. Can mean: mind, will, conscience, *and* emotion
  - b. But in this context, clearly referring to emotions – because of the word ‘rejoice’
3. The meaning of rejoice
  - a. Delight
  - b. Thrill

The proposition of our passage is that this delight is the product of the Word of God.

If you don’t have any delight in reading the Bible, in Bible study, in listening to Bible sermons, you should be asking yourself some hard questions.

## B. Statutes produce joy

1. What are statutes?

- a. NAU = ‘precepts’
  - b. Root has the idea of a superior inspecting, supervising, guiding an inferior
  - c. Word occurs 24 times in Bible, all in Psalms, 21 of them in Ps 119
    - 1) Keep diligently (119.4)
    - 2) Testimony of the psalmist – I kept your precepts (119.56)
    - 3) The decision of the psalmist – I will keep precepts (119.69)
2. Revolutionary concept – statutes (precepts) ... *divine supervision* produces joy
- a. The statutes produce joy because they are *right* – they mark out the straight path, the path of God’s mind and God’s blessing
  - b. World marks out paths to joy that are crooked
    - 1) Alcohol – drown your sorrows in a bottle (or some other drug)
    - 2) Another woman or another man
      - a) We largely get married on feelings
      - b) When the feelings subside, we look for new feelings
      - c) We think a new man or a new woman will give that to us

What do you think Tiger Woods would advise you about that today?

Do you think he is rejoicing? (I hope he know a Bible believing Christian who can really help him.)

3. Salvation – a converted soul – turns God’s will into joy
- a. Jesus said, ‘my yoke is easy and my burden is light’
  - b. The believer is now programmed by his new nature to love God’s word and ways
  - c. So the believer finds joy in walking in the light

What about believers who disobey the word?

- Maybe they are false professors...
- Or maybe they are among the most miserable people in the world, fighting against the very new nature God gave them

The precepts are right – there is nothing wrong with the precepts!

- If the word – the commandments of God – doesn't produce joy in your life, the problem is with you.

#### IV. The ministry of the word in enlightening the eyes (8b)

##### A. The metaphor of the eyes

I am going to just read several passages without turning to them in the interest of time.

##### 1. The eyes a metaphor for conscience

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<sup>KJV</sup> **Dt 12.8** Ye shall not do after all *the things* that we do here this day, every man whatsoever *is* right in his own eyes.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Jdg 21.25** In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes. (See also 17.6)

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##### 2. The metaphor refers to another aspect of the inner man corrupted by the fall

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<sup>KJV</sup> **Pr 16.2** All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Pr 21.2** Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

<sup>KJV</sup> **Pr 14.12** There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

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##### 3. The area where the judge Samson met his downfall

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<sup>KJV</sup> **Jdg 14.2-3** And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. <sup>3</sup> Then his father and his mother said unto

him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.

- a. 'She pleases me well' = lit., 'she is right in my eyes'
- b. A few chapters later they put out his eyes

How do you explain a mankind where it is possible for a whole nation of educated refined people to tolerate the murder of 6 million Jews in the Holocaust?

How do you explain a mankind where millions and millions of babies are violently put to death every year at the hands of their parents through abortion?

How do you explain the existence of slavery?

- John Newton continued as the captain of a slave ship even after his conversion to Christ. He testified that he thought his work was given to him by God – he later testified that his *eyes had been blinded*.
- How did he change?
- *His eyes were enlightened*.

B. The pure commandments of the Lord enlighten the eyes (inform the conscience)

1. Men's eyes are enlightened by the book of Proverbs to avoid the brazen woman who dress like harlots
2. Men's eyes are enlightened by 1 Tim 5.2 when they are instructed to treat the younger women as sisters, with all purity
3. All people's eyes are enlightened when they see that a good name is better to be chosen than great riches
4. All are enlightened when we are taught not to envy sinners

If there is time, go to Pr 3.5-13 and discuss conscience-enlightening truths from these verses.

## Conclusion:

**Proposition:** God's word has spiritual power to change your inner man.

We cannot find this kind of transforming power from the revelation of God in the heavens.

We must have more... and we have it in the written word of God from the apostles and prophets, the Bible.