



Community Group Discussion Guide

The Revelation of God
January 7, 2024 | Psalm 19

MOTIVATE

Starter Question:

- ⇒ ***Can you describe a time when you had a profound awareness of God in His created world?***
- ⇒ ***Why did your thoughts turn to Him?***

Optional Activity:

- ⇒ ***Prepare and present a slideshow with images of God's creation: mountains, sunsets, wildflowers, stars, oceans, etc. Discuss what these reveal about God.***

DISCUSS

Psalm 19 is in Book One of Psalms (see Psalms Overview). Written by David, it is considered to be a Thanksgiving Psalm. These types of psalms express a profound awareness of and deep gratitude for God's gracious blessings. Their form is to praise God through descriptions of Him and to reflect gratitude toward Him. In this psalm, David praised God for the revelation of Himself and His glory through:

a. His world (Psalm 19:1-6): This is general revelation based on God's self-disclosure through His creation. This revelation is available to all people and provides basic, foundational truths about God's existence and attributes.

- ⇒ ***Can you give an example of how God reveals Himself in nature? (For example: The birth of any child or creature causes a person to ponder the mystery and the source of such a miracle).***

b. His Word (Psalm 19:7-14): This is special revelation of God's manifested greatness to people through the Bible. This goes beyond the elementary truths of general revelation. It testifies as to how a person may know this great God and how he or she may live in a manner pleasing to Him.

- ⇒ ***Can you give an example of how God reveals Himself in His Word? (For example: David's own words in Psalm 19:10 caused him to understand what his true desire should be).***
- ⇒ ***How do you define God's glory?***

There is a distinction between God's intrinsic glory and His ascribed glory. God's intrinsic glory is the sum total of His divine attributes like holiness, sovereignty, righteousness, grace, truth, goodness,

mercy, and justice. God desires to display these in His creation and His scriptural revelation. As God unveils His intrinsic glory to humanity, we are to praise Him, which is ascribed glory, or the glory due His name. This is our chief purpose in life: to make God's glory known in the world and to ascribe glory to Him. The word *glory* signals high honor. It comes from a Hebrew word meaning *weighty* or *important*. God's glory is God's priority (see also Isaiah 48:11; Leviticus 10:3; Isaiah 43:7; Psalm 50:15).

- ⇒ ***Can you describe a time when you personally witnessed God's intrinsic glory?***
- ⇒ ***What ascribed glory did you give to Him as a result of what you witnessed?***
- ⇒ ***How can we make His glory known in our world?***

God's glory revealed in His world.

Psalm 19:1-6 *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.*

The Holman Commentary on this psalm describes the disclosure of God's glory in His world as a "soundless sermon continually communicated in the skies."¹ Even though creation does not speak audible words that can be heard, creation's voice reaches all nations and communicates God to those who will listen. It is equally accessible wherever human speech and language is spoken (verse 3). Since the entire globe is covered in God's handiwork, no person anywhere is without His self-revelation through His creation.

- ⇒ ***What is the implication of God's self-revelation to all people through His creation?***
- ⇒ ***How does this relate to Romans 1:19-20?***

The words "declare" and "proclaim" (verse 1) are indicative of continuous, ongoing revelation. This means that the creation keeps on declaring and keeps on proclaiming the powerful witness of God's glory from one day to the next in an unbroken chain of communication going back to creation. The heavenly message is unimpeded and continues to sound twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, for eternity.

The knowledge David speaks of in verse 2 is the general revelation of God's character, especially His eternal power, goodness, kindness, and faithfulness. To quote Austrian composer Franz Joseph Haydn who wrote a musical piece based on Psalm 19, "The heavens are telling."

- ⇒ ***What does God's creation tell or reveal about Him?***

¹ Lawson, S. (2004). [Psalms 1–75](#). (M. Anders, Ed.) (Vol. 11, pp. 99–100). Nashville, TN: Holman Reference.

⇒ ***Discuss this truth: There is no part of humanity—whatever the language—that has escaped the proclamation of the heavens about their Creator.²***

David focused on the sun in verses 4-6. Rather than worshipping the sun, moon, and stars as the pagans did, David noted that, as a part of creation, these heavenly bodies were made to glorify their Creator. For example: just as the sun is always at work in all places, so is God its Creator. As the sun makes its daily journey across the skies, it pours out its heat on every creature, making its presence felt. So it is with God, making Himself known throughout the earth, illuminating all that humans do and say.

The “triumphant sweep” of the sun through the heavens displays the glory of God like a bridegroom, who, dressed in his greatest finery and beaming with the joy of the occasion, leaves his chamber. The public nature of such an occasion would involve the whole village population in the celebration, emphasizing the impossibility of missing the event—or, by parallel, the revelation of God.

⇒ ***Can you draw any other object lesson about God’s glory as revealed through a part of His created world?***

God’s glory revealed in His Word.

Psalm 19:7-14 *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.*

Nature tells us about God’s reality and power but not about His saving grace. It is God’s Word that enlightens us to His offer of redemption. In His Word, God reveals what He is like and how He cares for creation and mankind. Scripture reveals the only way to know God personally.

Shifting focus in verses 7-11, David gave attention to the glory of God revealed in His Word--which goes far beyond what natural revelation does. This section consists, for the most part, of a series of synonyms describing God’s Word, accompanied by a verbal phrase revealing the impact it makes in the life of those who are faithful to it.

² Wilson, G. H. (2002). [Psalms](#) (Vol. 1, p. 363). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

- Psalm 19:7: *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul:* It is whole, complete, and lacking nothing. It is so perfect that it can transform and refresh the entire inner being.
 - Psalm 19:7: *The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple:* In its unwavering and immovable quality, it is able to make a person wise in the issues of daily living.
 - Psalm 19:8: *The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:* It lays out the proper path for the right course in life—empowering the inner person with divine truth and bringing great joy.
 - Psalm 19:8: *The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes:* In its revelation of truth, it is very clear and opens the eyes of everyone who believes and follows its truth.
 - Psalm 19:9: *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever:* This refers to the parts of God’s Word which invoke fear, including passages that reveal God’s holiness and His awesome judgments that are permanently relevant and eternally true. The proper response to all God has done is reverential fear—indicating both a shrinking back from something out of a sense of awe, and an attraction to it in adoration.
 - Psalm 19:9: *The rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether:* Reliable and stable, God’s Word presents His standard for daily living and is designed to help believers obey.
 - Psalm 19:10: *More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb:* God’s Word is to be more desirable than anything this world has to offer as it is the only truth that can fully satisfy our spiritual hunger. It also offers shape, meaning, and purpose to life.
 - Psalm 19:11: *By them is Your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward:* Obedience to God’s Word results in blessing, beginning with a right relationship with God. There can be no spiritual growth in our lives apart from the Word of God.
- ⇒ ***Which of these is the most meaningful to you in your current spiritual journey?***
- ⇒ ***What blessings have you received by following God’s Word?***
- ⇒ ***Do you long for and desire God and His Word more than anything else in your life? Explain your answer.***

David closed in verses 12-14 with a prayer for his sins to be exposed and cleansed so he would only say and think those things that were pleasing to God—his rock and his redeemer. David spoke first of hidden faults which are offenses the sinner tries to keep secret. He also mentioned willful, presumptuous sins which are open acts of rebellion. Only through God’s Word can we discern the sin that must be confessed to God while asking Him to forgive. Scripture is also a powerful restraint that

prevents believers from participating in sin and gives insight in how to live an obedient life that brings God glory.

- ⇒ *Why is David's request of God in verse 14 a fitting conclusion to this psalm?*
- ⇒ *What request does this psalm lead you to make to God?*

TRANSFORM

1. Make personal application: Because God is unmistakably revealed in creation, humans have no excuse for not acknowledging Him. God has also not left us in the dark as to what He expects of us. He provided all we need for life and godliness in His Word. Those who follow this Scriptural guidance can avoid sin and can experience the kind of wholeness of relationship with God that He intends.

- ⇒ *God has revealed Himself through both His World and His Word. How does each contribute to your knowledge of Him and your desire to bring Him glory?*
- ⇒ *What are some other ways God reveals Himself?*
- ⇒ *How can our Community Group seek God's revelation of Himself through His world and through His Word?*

2. Pray: Use this time to ascribe the glory due to God for His revelation of Himself through His world and His Word. Praise Him for His desire to reach all of mankind with His redemptive message. Ask Him to give you a passion for His Word and a desire to bring Him glory.

Resources used, compiled from, and quoted:

- *Holman New Testament Commentary, Psalms 1-75* pages 98-105.
- *The NIV Application Commentary, Psalms, Volume 1*, pages 359-380.
- *Shepherd's Notes, Psalm 1-50*, pages 42-43.