

[Acts 17:22-27] Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. ²³For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. ²⁴God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

²⁵Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; ²⁶And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; ²⁷That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

The Lord wants men to **find** Him. The men at Mars Hill in Greece were **seeking** God. They knew he existed. They acknowledged Him, they worshipped him, **but it wasn't enough!** They needed God's Word, brought to them by the Apostle Paul, to complete the process. ALL men need this:

[Luke 13:3] I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Three things are necessary for repentance to salvation, to prevent our perishing:

Men must first recognize there IS a God and SEEK after Him.
Once they find Him, they must LEARN what He wants of them.
Then, they must OBEY.

Those that do not OBEY God, will be condemned at Judgment Day.
But if they do not LEARN of God, they cannot REPENT and OBEY,
And if they do not SEEK God, they can not LEARN.

To be JUST, God must give ALL men the plain, unmistakable opportunity to SEEK Him, to LEARN of Him and to OBEY him.

God has done so! He has declared himself to ALL men, no matter where they are and regardless of what language they speak, and He has delivered the Gospel message of Jesus Christ for those who seek him.

Psalm 19 is a good, concise illustration of these 3 points:

First, to SEEK God, men must first know that there IS a God and that He IS God.

[Psalm 19:1-6] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

[V1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

PSALM 19

The heavens are glorious above anything we can even IMAGINE to do.
God has MADE them, they are the work of His hands – his handwork.
We also are a part of that firmament, His CREATION, made in His image, by Him.

[Psalm 113:5,6] Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth

Yes, God humbles himself to consider us.

[Psalm 8:3,4] When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

The proper response on our part is to forget everything of ours and fall down on our face in fear and awe and reverence to Him.

[V2] Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

We feel the sun and wind during the day, and see the stars and planets at night.
God is communicating to everyone, every moment that He is GOD!

[V3] There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

What language of man doesn't have words for the Sun, the heavens, the earth, the wind, the oceans and mountains? These things of God's creation are things **all** languages speak of. They are things ALL of God's creation can understand.

And we all know these things had a beginning – they were CREATED and they are NOT something we could make ourselves. They were made by a god, THE GOD of heaven.

Unfortunately, many see the effect – but deny there is a cause

[Romans 1:18-20] For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; ¹⁹Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. ²⁰For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Revealed from heaven – the heavens declare the Glory of God.

THERE CAN BE NO IGNORANCE HERE!

The truth of God's creation is evident to all.

This is truth, whether men believe it or not, doesn't affect the fact God made them.

Do we know **how** these things were made? No!

But that doesn't matter because what IS to be known is God's eternal power – everlasting without beginning or end, and his Godhead – He IS GOD.

And if we don't get the message, WE ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE! As he says here:

[V4] Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

[Romans 10:17-18] So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. ¹⁸But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their **sound** went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world

Their line or “sound” as translated in Romans 10:18 is gone out throughout all the earth. The sun is contained by God’s heavens, He has made a tabernacle for them: something that will contain or hold the Earth and the sun and all the stars and galaxies – He, God, has the power to do so.

[V5] Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

God’s creation does that for which it is perfectly suited – to show men there is a God and He is almighty. This is God’s perfect plan, nothing is missing, nothing could do it better.

We, all men, can see God’s glory – the glory He has shown to US and we all can rejoice, as a bride groom that has been perfectly provided for and has everything he could possibly want and is deliriously happy. We also can rejoice that God has given us the power and strength we need to run the race he has set before us – there should be no fear of failure or weakness in us, just confidence and happiness that what we have is enough.

[Philippians 4:13] I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

[V6] His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

From beginning to end, all is covered. ALL is under God’s dominion and power and control; there are no parts He neglects.

Nothing is hid from the heat of the sun. A blind and deaf man can feel the warmth of the sun and know there is a God that made him and gives him what he can not give himself.

Like the sun going from end to end in continual circuit, God is the light of the world, he gives that light to ALL His creation:

[1 John 1:5] This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all

Psalm 19, V1-6 - These verses show how God brings man to Him, the creator, the one who has set in order the universe. God’s creation should set man to looking for God, looking to LEARN of Him. God’s creation is perfectly suited to do this in the heart of an honest man. And once the honest man starts looking, God has promised:

[Matthew 7:7,8] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ⁸For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

So, what is it that God wants us look for and find? Him! To be His children.

We must LEARN of him.

To BE like Him!

He's given 6 ways to do this in the 2nd part of Psalm 19, verses 7-9

[Psalm 19:7-9]

The **law** of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: - We must live by them. They are complete, having everything we need to furnish our soul

[2 Peter 1:3] All things that pertain to life and Godliness

The **testimony** of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. – We must listen and take them to heart. God's testimony, not MAN'S will make us wise

[2 Tim 3:15] That from a young child you have know the holy scriptures

The **statutes** of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: - We KNOW they are right and we rejoice in having God's wisdom. We marvel at their rightness as the Pharisees did:

[Matthews 22:21] Render unto Caesar...

The **commandment** of the LORD is **pure**, enlightening the eyes. – We must obey HIM only. Not adulterating ourselves with the things of the world in order to ESCAPE the things of the world.

[James 3:17] But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

The **fear** of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: - We respect him and know his power that it is the power of DEATH. Through the fear of God, we cast off the things of this world, we repent and turn to Him and our love is made perfect, casting out fear, and enduring forever:

[1 John 4:17,18] Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

The **judgments** of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. – We must accept them and no other. Nothing else is needed.

[Romans 3:22] Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

We seek God because He IS GOD! He made us! We WANT to do His will!

We have faith in Him and in His word and in His holy son Jesus.

We put aside our own thoughts and understanding and instead follow Him:

[Hebrews 11:6] Without faith ...

But what does James say?

[James 2:20] But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

What must we do with these things we LEARN? - WE MUST OBEY!

In the 3rd part of Psalm 19, God shows us the BENEFIT of obeying Him, WHY we should do so:

[Psalm 19:10-14] More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. 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. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

[Psalm 19:10-14] More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

The desire of our mind – for wealth and the freedom from want, and of our body for sweetness and nourishment are satisfied in our FEAR of the Lord and the keeping of God's LAW, TESTIMONY, STATUTES, COMMANDMENTS and JUDGEMENTS.

[V11] Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Warned – **prevents** us from sinning – if we'll listen.

God warns us, "Don't go over there, repent and come to Me".

God promises a "great reward" – enter thou into the joy of thy Lord – **if** He IS our Lord. **if** we act like servants.

[John 14:15] If ye love me, keep my commandments.

[V12] Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Not God's errors – He makes none, - **Our** errors.

Our faults can be secret or unknown to us, but not from God.

[Jeremiah 17:7-10] Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. 9The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? 10I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

We must turn to God, our Creator for what we need. His **word** will reveal our hearts and cleanse us. God warns us that the temptation is for us to lean to our own understanding, to presume to put ourselves in the place of God:

[V13] 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.

These sins can have dominion or power over us, but not if we seek to follow God and walk in the paths He has set for us:

[1 John 1:7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

We Learn there IS A GOD! We **seek** and **learn** of Him through His word.

We have faith in his faithfulness and His great eternal love and desire to save us and we obey him, and as His true children we can thus truly say:

And that brings us to the **conclusion** of Psalm 19 – the purpose of it:

[V14] Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

God is our father, Jesus is our Master, we BELONG to him Heart, Soul and Mind. All power has been given to Him by the Father who said, This is my beloved son, hear Him!

Do believe there is a God.

Do you FEAR that power – you should!

Acknowledge him, not in word, but in deed:

LEARN of the Lord and the keep God's LAW, TESTIMONY, STATUTES, COMMANDMENTS and JUDGEMENTS.

They are simple ... Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess, Be baptized, Live faithfully.

Remember SEEK, LEARN, OBEY – ALL 3 are necessary!

[Matthew 7:21] - Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

This isn't a new thing either,

[Eccl 12:13] - Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

- Ed Kelleher 1/23/2011 West Columbia church of Christ SC