

As I continue to read through the book of Psalms devotionally I am so blessed by each one. I have also been listening to a sermon from Pastor Michael Cloer (North Carolina) on Psalm 19. His sermon spoke volumes to me as he skillfully opened up the wealth of biblical truth in this psalm and here is a brief summation.

We live in an age where more than ever people are looking for a spiritual connection. The New Age phenomenon is but one example of this desire within the community to get some answers for their spiritual questions. The clear distinctive of the Christian church is that we can experience a personal relationship with the one true God. For most of us our entry into the kingdom of God has come about from some sort of crisis or struggle which has awakened us to our need of God, and to know Him personally. For others it is the realization that there has to be more to life than just existing and then push up daisies when our number is up.

The common denominator for all Christians is that in some way or another God has graciously revealed Himself to them. Psalm 19 is all about how God declares to us how we can know Him through three key ways.

1. **The proclamation of His glory in the skies** [v.1-6]

Creation is a wordless book that has spoken to people down through the ages. As it does it reveals God's person in the form of His glory. The word glory in the scriptures has the idea of the sum total of all that God is. In this case it is the idea of God's authority as He spoke the universe into existence. A number of testimonies I have written over the years have indicated that creation has been a key element in their conversion.

Creation also shows God's power not only to create, but to sustain what He has created. The more that is discovered about the universe, as we know it, the more it speaks of God's power and authority. This authority is wonderfully summed up for us in Psalm 29 when David declares in v.2; *"Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name"*. Why? Well in the following

verses David declares that; *"The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the voice of the Lord makes the deer give birth."* All this speaks of the power and authority of the Lord and that nothing happens unless He has ordained it.

Then the heavens speak of the providence of God. God has put a process in place that keeps on happening day after day. This means that every day and every breath is a gift because God has faithfully kept this process in place providentially day after day. The wonderful thing about God's handiwork in the heavens is that it speaks all languages. No matter what country you come from you can see the heavens utter their speech of the ingenuity and creativity of the Almighty God.

PRAISE the Lord for:

- The opportunity to reach out with the gospel into many countries working with wonderful partners
- Our faithful volunteers who come each month to assist us in the wrap and mailing of the newspaper
- Continued speaking opportunities for Carl to promote and develop Challenge

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2. The revelation of God through the Scriptures [v.7-11]

While the heavens show the reality of a creator, designer God, which makes us accountable to God by conviction whether we believe in Him or not, it is not enough to convert the soul. There are a number of characteristics of the Word of God mentioned here that are worth noting.

The Word of God is perfect. Why? Because all scripture is inspired of God and without error, so that it can be completely trusted. Not only is it perfect, it is powerful because it converts the soul. It can transform the most unlikely person into a child of God. The Word of God is plain to understand because one does not need a degree to understand what is being said. When we do understand what is being said it rejoices our heart because we become so aware of the fact that the Word of God is living and powerful and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4 v.12).

Then we see that the Word of God is pure in its goals, purpose and motivation. The Word of God is permanent not just some trend or fad. It has endured through the ages and continues to transform millions of lives year after year. Because of all that the Word of God does and has endured it is precious and should be treasured. Unfortunately in today's western world in particular it is far from treasured and we are seeing the results of this in our churches and homes. The protective aspect of the Word of God in warning us not to do certain things or

PRAYER needed for:

- May edition of the paper going into various places – Australia, South Africa (main,prison) Zimbabwe, Botswana, USA (main,prison,Spanish)
- Upcoming promotion and development trip to South Australia for Carl
- Our global directors – Andrew & Karen Trezona (USA) + Cobus & Christa Britz (South Africa)
- Ongoing funding for the running of Perth office, for personal support, for the supply of Challenge papers globally and for project funding in these countries

in directing our lives, is not being experienced because we don't treasure God's Word as we should. However, as we read and study God's Word we find it profitable as God imparts His wisdom and understanding.

3. The application of God the Holy Spirit [v.12-14]

As we read and study God's Word we come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He reveals things in our lives that maybe we didn't realise were there. This is why David in Psalm 139 cries out to God and says; *"Search me O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me..."* David knew he couldn't trust himself to examine his own heart, so he asked God to do it.

As the Holy Spirit reveals our sin and we confess our sin we experience the cleansing of the Spirit. Not only can we be cleansed by the Spirit, we can be controlled by the Spirit so that we are kept from sinning. This all leads us to enjoying on-going communion with the Holy Spirit as our praise, prayer and meditation are acceptable to Him.

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