

Psalms 18-12-20

Good evening, welcome to the Thursday night Bible class at Grace and Truth Bible Church. We're going to continue our study tonight in Psalm 19, to which you might want to turn. We'll take a moment as we begin to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and on our study and to bless this portion of his word to the encouragement of our hearts.

Shall we pray? Father, it is always a refreshment and an encouragement to remember that we are not sustained by our own strength or our own power or even our own faithfulness, but by your grace and by your faithfulness. And we're thankful for the Lord Jesus who has entered us into a relationship with you that is permanent and eternal, that holds for us a bright future and a opportunity to not just be saved and to be passively rescued from our dark situation, but to be useful to serve and to reflect your glory and to vindicate the decision the Lord Jesus made when he willingly left glory to come and live among us and to bear our sins, to return to your right hand and to intercede on our behalf awaiting the day when he comes to take us to himself and when we're qualified to present us before your throne. We pray that as we look at this portion of the Psalms tonight that your Holy Spirit will make it meaningful and helpful to each one.

May all of us grow in grace and knowledge so that we can be fruitful, productive, and make the most of the time that you have allotted to us in this life. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We are, as I say, going to continue our study tonight in the Psalms, picking up in Psalm 19. So let's take a look at this psalm. You'll remember it, I think, from our coverage a week ago.

The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven and its circuit to the other end, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

And that was our first section. And in that, you saw what many see as an appeal to nature, to looking at the God of creation and general revelation of his person and his power in what he has made. Then there is a distinct change in content, beginning at verse 7. And 7 through 11, there is a distinct change in content, beginning at verse 9, where he talks about the written revelation, the law of the Lord, his statutes, his testimony, his commandments, his judgments.

And so this has led to the opinion that it was pasted together from other psalms or some sort of an editor's creation. And what I wanted to suggest to you last time is that in reality, this is a very integral introduction. It's necessary to David's point to begin with the fact that there is general revelation that everyone sees.

And talking about the sun emerging from the tent, this, after the general revelation of the heavens and the firmament, to then see the sun emerge, this is a distinct and very separate item. And when it emerges and makes its traverse across the sky, nothing is hidden from its heat. You see at the end of verse 6, nothing is hidden from its heat.

You might put a little star right there by the word hidden, because that's a particular Hebrew word that we're going to see again shortly. So you have then this description of the law of the Lord. And I mentioned last time that these six verses here, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, actually breaks into, I've got six parts here, I guess that's five verses, but there are really six lines here that make double comparisons.

So in verse 7, we have the law of the Lord, which is the Torah, which is complete. It is not lacking. It is sufficient.

Sometimes people say, well, you know, it's great to have Christianity and have the Bible, but we also need to contribute to it. There's nobody more famous for this than Catholics who say you need the Bible and the church, and they are equal. And it's like left foot, right foot.

And if you're going to walk through life, you need the word of God, and then you need the church of God, and mother church, and father in heaven gives you your complete guidance in life. Well, we don't hold with that because what we recognize is that scripture is sufficient. David says God's law is complete.

There is no deficit. There's no lack. Everything you need is there.

And so more so than just perfect. And then it says converting the soul. This is something that changes the soul, but changes it in a positive way.

So you get the more fulsome idea that this is refreshment, restoration. If you're heading in a wrong direction, it turns you back into the right way. It puts your soul right.

Turning back is only a part of it. And even refreshing and restoring is only a part. As I've said many times, Hebrew words are like videos.

They have a lot of meanings. And I think I mentioned last time, I read a little further in an article, and I'd heard this in seminary where somebody said, in the Old Testament, passage is only allowed to have one meaning. And it's the meaning that somebody in that day would have understood.

So if Daniel starts talking about the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and he writes it down in Daniel, only what somebody would have understood in that day applies. And it can't be polyvalent. It can't be multidimensional.

It can't speak of a near and a far idea unless that far idea is developed in the New Testament. You're allowed to see more than one thing in an Old Testament scripture. If Matthew says, as it

says in the prophet, a virgin will conceive.

Okay, now you can have another meaning, but only because you're licensed by the New Testament. Well, I disagree. I think that the New Testament gives us examples of how compact and how fraught with meaning the Old Testament is.

They want to have this rule because they're afraid people are going to run amok and get wild with their interpretations and read things into it, which happens. But trust me, making that rule isn't going to stop people from doing that. So you're wasting your time.

And what you do is limit. For example, I'll give you another one. In Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, you have the woe song to the king of Tyre.

You were in the garden of God. You walked among the stones of fire. You were the guardian cherub who covers your pipes and your timbrels and all the rest of it.

Well, I went to a pastor's conference where a president of a seminary came and spoke and said, you can't see Satan in that because nobody in the ancient day reading Isaiah or Ezekiel would have seen Satan. They would have said, this is the king of Tyre. Well, how are you going to understand the five I wills replying to Satan? How are you going to understand what Satan was trying to do with the Lord Jesus if you don't understand that the king of Tyre was a near term Old Testament embodiment in the same way that the Alma, the young woman who would conceive and bear a child, and before he knew his right hand from his left, and before he quit eating his curds and whey and all the rest of it, the Pico-Resin Confederacy was going to break down in the near term.

But it is a harbinger. It is a portent. It portends and foretells what's going to happen when another virgin has a son.

And so you just can't limit yourself that way. I mean, you can, but I don't think you're going to have near as much fun studying the Old Testament. This is why a lot of churches spend all their time in the New because they say, well, that was then, this is now, and there's nothing in the Old Testament really for us.

That was all Israel. Well, Israel is for us. And what was given to Israel has meaning for us.

You go to the law and you look at the civil code and you look at the dietary code and you look at the Sabbath code and what was supposed to happen on the Sabbath and the Old Testament sacrifices. It's not just instructions on how to slaughter a cow. There is, it's imbued.

It's just, it's oozing with meaning for the work of the Lord Jesus. And if you're not allowed to see that because an Old Testament guy wouldn't have seen it in the articles of the law, you just, I think it's short-sighted and it wants to put God and God's word in a kind of box that is manageable. We're not going to manage God's word any more than we can manage God's character or God's power or God's infinitude.

We just have to do our best to, you know, grab a hold of something and hang on and do the best we can and ask God for wisdom and insight and to keep us from going astray as we seek the meaning. So I say that to say, the law of the Lord is wonderful for the soul. It restores, it feeds, it energizes, it directs, it encourages us back into the way.

And there's no lack. Anything your soul needs is in the law of the Lord. You will find it there, but you're not going to find it if you... Remember, I used to have 3D movies that had two pictures.

One was blue and one was red. And then they'd give you glasses that had a red lens and a blue lens. And that would filter what got into each eye so that you could see 3D.

And other times they had a secret picture that was hidden in another picture and you put these special red glasses on and it filtered out all the red ink and then you could see the hidden message behind it because it was in blue ink. And if you start making up rules like no parable can have a name in it, if it has a name, it's not a parable, it's a real thing. Lazarus and the rich man, Lazarus is a name, so that's not a parable.

That's a real thing that actually happened. Well, you're never going to figure out that parable, in my opinion, if you think that this Lazarus died and actually went and sat in Abraham's lap and the other guy actually was in torments and actually wanted Lazarus to come and dip his formerly diseased, dog-licked finger into water and put one drop on his tongue. If you think that that's all that's going on in that story because it's a real thing, and if you think that nobody else is around Abraham, where's Daniel, where's Moses, where's Joshua, where's David, where's all of the Old Testament saints, all you see in that picture is Abraham with this guy on his lap.

And Abraham talks to the guy and talks about the great gulf and the rest of it. Well, you make up a rule and then you've got your red glasses on and you're not going to see the whole picture, you're only going to see a part. So it's important to let the law of God speak and to not underestimate it.

It's complete, everything is there, and it is everything you need for your soul. So then he says the testimony, which is a different word. This is the counsel that it gives, the testimony that it offers.

How many times have you wanted to go to a restaurant and you ask around, you ask your friends, you know, I've got guests coming in, I'd like to take them to a nice restaurant. Have you been to one? Do you have a witness or a testimony or advice based on your experience that you can give me? That's what a duke is, that's what the word testimony here means. It means you're getting advice and counsel that someone is giving you that you really couldn't get on your own.

The testimony of the Lord is a sure foundation. It is solid. It doesn't shift, it doesn't move, it doesn't change.

It's always the same. It is a support that you can rely on. The surveyors put little concrete things in the ground back before we had GPS, and if they wanted to do survey, they would go to one

of these markers that they'd put their, set up their tripod and they had a transit up there and then they would carefully measure and do angles and all the rest of it to figure out where the borders of your land were, and those things were fixed.

They were never supposed to move. It wasn't like magnetic north that shifts across the years. They have to update maps with the magnetic declination.

I don't even know if they bother with that now that we've got GPS, but you used to have to know the difference between true north and magnetic north. Well, the magnetic north pole moves around. It's not fixed.

The word of God, the testimony, the advice and counsel that it gives is fixed. It's always good. And what does it do? It makes wise the humble, those who are simple in the sense of straightforward.

You're not devious. You're not crafty. You're not coming up with a big strategy.

You're just walking through your day in a straight line, but you don't want to get slammed because you're predictable or because you're not hiding who you are or what you do. And there's a danger when you're, you know, the evil forces in the world want to take advantage of those who are simple, who are transparent, who have nothing to hide and aren't hiding. They told us at Fort Bragg when we were going over to Lebanon with all kinds of people trying to make us dead, they said, vary your routine.

Don't be simple. Don't be predictable. Don't be in the same place at the same time.

Take different routes. Always check under your car with a mirror and make sure nobody's wired it up in the night. And you've got to be really watchful and protect yourself and try to think like a bad guy and outsmart him.

Be smarter than he is. Be more devious and crafty than he is. God's Word equips us that we don't have to be so concerned with trying to look out for ourselves and trying to preserve ourselves from evil and trying to see through the stratagems and the wiles.

The Word of God makes us wise. If we follow the Word of God, if we're applying our faith to it, we don't have to rely on human security measures. You don't want to be imprudent.

You don't want to walk around into traffic. But that's not where your faith is. Your faith is not in the strength of your password or how many locks you've got on your door.

You take reasonable steps. But the Word of God, the advice, testimony, witness, and counsel of God gives us the wisdom that we need rather than getting it from the world. Well, that's all in verse 7. Verse 8 says, the statutes, and this is the PQDE, the P-I-Q-U-Q-Q-U-D-E, double Q there, P-I-Q-Q-U-D-E, the statutes and the precepts.

What is a statute? This is a law that's on the books that defines how people act. The statutes talk

about right-of-ways on roads and it governs behavior in your group, in your community. Statutes are pretty much community laws, right? And this is so we can all live with each other without harming or stepping on each other or taking advantage or trampling someone's rights.

Well, the statutes of the Lord are not just righteous. This is not tzedek. Remember Melchizedek, the King of Righteousness, Melchizedek? This is not tzedek for right or righteousness.

This is Yescharim. This is a reference. This is like a straight line reference.

It's like a plumb line or a level. And you can always go to God's precepts and God's statutes and find a perfect guide. It's like a ruler.

I always liked the wooden rulers that had the strip of metal in one edge so that when you were drawing a line, you know, your plastic ruler would get dinged over time. The plastic is kind of soft. If you had wood without metal, you'd get a line that would have all these little, at least I did because I wasn't careful with it.

But you get one of those that's got that little strip of metal and you get a razor sharp straight line. Use a number six pencil. And I mean, you know, you're doing drafting or whatever.

You get these perfect straight lines off of that. That's what the statutes of God are. They're a perfect reference.

They will give you a straight line every time. It's true, upright, correct, just. It's like a scale that always weighs exactly.

And what does that do for us? Having those statutes that are constant and true and right and just makes our heart glad. This is what children need. They need firm rules that are right, that are fairly applied, that are consistently enforced.

It will rejoice their heart. It makes them happy. It's like giving a tomato plant something to climb up.

You have a fixed set of guidelines that you know exactly where the limits are. You know what you can do and what you shouldn't do. And it doesn't change.

It doesn't move. It's not a piece of string on a stick. And it rains and your stick and your string are gone.

This is bedrock. And it rejoices the heart to know that there is absolute right and wrong. There is a God in heaven who knows what's right and communicates it to us through his statutes and through his commandments, his Mishvat.

His commands are pure. And they illuminate for our eyes. You think, well, you know, don't bother to understand why I'm telling you something.

Just do it. You know, I don't have to explain why. I've worked for people to say, you know, they give you a command and you say, well, I could probably do this better if I understood why I'm doing what you're telling me to do.

And most of us are that way. And if somebody doesn't have time to explain it, we're just kind of flying blind. So you want me to uncoil this hose and stick one end of it into the drain and put the other end of it in the skylight? I don't understand why I'm doing what I'm doing.

God's commands aren't that way. God's commands actually shine a light on for our eyes. It illuminates what our eyes are trying to look at.

It enhances our understanding. God's commands are not inscrutable. They're not senseless.

They may seem that way. Take again the Levitical offerings. Okay, when you bring this kind of an offering, here's what you do with the legs and here's what you do with the skin and here's what you do with the tail.

And this one is burnt completely up. This one, only a portion is offered and the priest eats some of it and you take some of it home. It's a fellowship offering.

It's a Thanksgiving offering. It's an offering for a particular feast day. The rules are different.

Well, these are just commands. And people say, well, you know, God was just making stuff up. This one needs to be different than the last one.

So this time you pour the blood around the base of the altar. The next time you're going to do something else with it. And one time you dip a bird in it and set him free.

And another time you put it on a goat, put him in the wilderness and use azazel. And people go through Leviticus and say, well, this is just, this makes no sense. But if you study the Levitical offerings, those commands of God, they actually illuminate our eyes.

If you pay attention, they're not inscrutable. They make the rest of life scrutable. So the commands of the Lord are pure.

They're not senseless. They're not adulterated. They're not designed to, you know, just feed the priests and empower some people and downtread others.

They are pure. They're unadulterated. There's no admixture.

There's no hidden motive in them. And those commands enlighten the eyes. Verse nine, the fear of the Lord.

This is respect, awe, solemnity when approaching God, giving God his due as creator and as redeemer and as the one who sent the Lord Jesus to die on our behalf in our age. To fear him, this is clean. And this is clean in the sense that the previous one, pure, meant that it is not

mixed with anything.

It's like pure metal that's been refined. This is ceremonially undefiled. To respect the Lord is the path of remaining pure, remaining undefiled.

Respect for God keeps us in that status. And bearing God in mind in everything that we do, we keep our moral purity, our ethical purity, because, you know, the eyes of the Lord are everywhere. And when we respect him and we want to please him, we're not going to go do things that are questionable because we're motivated by that healthy fear.

You think about, I always think about the rocks and shoals and the uniform code of military justice. They used to call it the rocks and shoals, especially in the Navy. But the uniform code is different than the law of the United States.

You know, you can be prosecuted and even executed for things under the UCMJ that civilian law does not cover or address. And the penalties can be very severe. But if you're a good soldier or a good sailor or a good Marine, a good airman, a good officer, a good enlisted guy, a good staff NCO, you're not worrying and fearful of the UCMJ and its penalties.

But you have a healthy respect, and you don't get anywhere near any of the things that it forbids. Or if you observe something going on that is outside of that, you know that this is serious business. If the uniform code has addressed it and attached the penalty to it, that's a no fooling thing to take very seriously.

And that's the kind of fear that this is talking about. God cares about his word. He's magnified his word above his name.

And when he tells us this is bad, we don't want to be anywhere near it. I told you before, this is my view on eternal security. You know, people will argue you can lose your salvation if you recant, if you regret, if you, you know, you can go so far away and you're the prodigal and you never do come back.

And so you lose your salvation. I'm pretty sure you can't lose your salvation. I have a few questions about a few passages that make me wonder, but I'm pretty sure once saved, always saved.

When you're spiritually born, you can't be unborn. But the only person that it actually matters that I can make any difference on is me. I could try to tell somebody, oh, it doesn't matter if you're a complete, you know, terrorist and reprobate and criminal and you're a mass serial killer and murderer and all the rest of it.

You know, you were saved as a child. You're going to go to heaven. I'm not utterly 100% convinced of that.

I'm pretty sure. But my fear of the Lord makes me not go anywhere near that line. Am I going

to lose my salvation? No, not a chance.

Because however, wherever far into the darkness, there may be some line that you can cross and lose your salvation. I'm not going to get anywhere near it. The fear of the Lord keeps me moving into the light with my eyes illuminated and taking advantage of God's forgiving grace and God's restorative power.

And it's kind of an academic question. If somebody can lose their salvation, that's between them and God. I'm not near that line.

And that's what it's saying here. These commands are pure. The fear of the Lord keeps us undefiled.

We're not going to be, you know, can you be so defiled that you can't be cleansed? Can you commit an unforgivable sin? And what does it mean if it's unforgivable? You know, does that mean you're saved but unforgiven or is unforgiven not saved? That's where my question is. You know, there is a sin unto death. Well, is that first death or second death? And you can argue one way or the other.

But look, just don't go anywhere near the line and we have nothing to worry about. The fear of the Lord does that for us. It keeps us pure, moral, pure.

And it endures forever. It never changes. It abides.

It enables us to take a stand and remain. We are fixed and sure forever. So am I eternally secure? Yes, I am.

Am I ever going to lose my salvation? No, I'm not. Why? Because I'm paying attention, not perfectly, but to the extent that we can, we pay attention to this and we avail ourselves of God's grace. And it's an academic question for somebody else.

It endures forever. Then he goes on to say the judgments of the Lord, and this is where it breaks the pattern a little bit, the judgments of the Lord. And this is the justice of the Lord.

Shafat is a judge. Mishafat is what comes from a judge, the judgments, the verdicts, the adjudications, the evaluations. So these are the evaluations, the adjudications of the Lord.

They are truth. This is emet, truth. This is tzedek, righteousness.

And they are of a peace. They are consistent with each other. They are unified.

They are one. He doesn't have one rule for somebody. Remember it says God is no respecter of persons.

He doesn't have one standard for some. Well, these people suffered a lot, so I'm going to let them slide in certain areas of sin. God's justice, His evaluation is utterly fair.

It is perfectly righteous and just, and it is all of a peace. It never changes. It never shifts on in some sort of a relative scale.

Well, that's where we left off last time. We looked briefly at verse 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

And we're back to the fact that now in this latter part of the psalm, instead of talking about the general revelation that traverses the earth and lets everybody know that there is a God and that He is a God of power and of order and of pattern and of consistency and rainfalls on the just and the unjust, He seems to give everybody an opportunity. That's general revelation. But when the sun comes out of the tent, this is the law that came forth out of Israel, came forth out of the tabernacle tent.

And that illumination is far more detailed and far more powerful. In seminary, they call this the progress of revelation. In the early days, it was generally known.

There was general sacrifice information, general knowledge that God wanted things done right and there were things that were bad. But when the law came, and Paul talks about this extensively in Romans, he says, I was alive once apart from the law, but when the law came, sin revived and I died. It shined a light on sin and made it specific and made it identifiable.

And there's death in the pot. It shows where death is and where life is. Do these and you will live.

Jesus sums up the law in the prophecy. He says, you know, you know the commandments. Do these and you will live.

There's life in the commandments. Well, they came with Moses. The law came by Moses, John 14.

What came by Jesus Christ? Grace and truth. The law came by Moses. That was the sun coming out of the tabernacle.

That's what David is talking about here. So when he says, more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold. Why? This is the sun in the sky.

What are you going to do with gold if it's darkness and gloom? You can't even enjoy the brilliance of the gold because there's no light to illuminate it. There's nothing to show its value and its its beauty. Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

I don't think it's any accident that these are both sun colored. They're gold colored. The sun is a golden orb in the sky.

You've got fine gold and you've got honey and the honeycomb. And one of them is distant and omnipresent and shines on everyone. Gold is a metal that you can make things out of that are beautiful and ornamental and pleasing to the eye.

But honey and the honeycomb are edible. So you have something that gives you aesthetic pleasure on the outside and you have something that gives you pleasure and nutrition on the inside. And that's what God's judgments and statutes and commandments and testimonies and what his law does.

It is beautiful in the external and it is enjoyable in the internal. I remember the verse that says, thy words were found and I did eat them and they were the joy and rejoicing of my heart. It's like honey and the honeycomb.

Now we pick up tonight in verse 11. And just for planning purposes, we're only having one session tonight. I'm doing well to get this far.

So there'll be one session and we'll have our special music at the end, Lord willing, and I figure out how to play it. But so we're going to pick up now and look at verse 11. Moreover, by them your servant is warned and in keeping them there is great reward.

In keeping them there is great reward. This is a very interesting statement and there's more there than meets the eye. Let's begin with by them.

Moreover, by them your servant is warned. Your servant is warned. So who's not warned? Is everybody warned by what's in the Word of God? Is everybody cautioned and rebuked and corrected and instructed by what's in God's Word? Who gets this benefit? Your servant.

People just gloss over and say, well, Dave is just referring to himself in an abstract sense. No, any servant. God's servants are warned by this.

God's servants get the benefit. What does it take to be a servant? Well done, thou good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in a few things.

I will make you a ruler over many things. Blessed is that servant when his master returns that the master finds fulfilling his stewardship and he doesn't get hungry and start eating out of the pantry and beating his fellow servants and living the life of Riley, as they used to say. I don't know who Riley was, but he must have really been a rake because everybody says, oh, live in the life of Riley.

And I think, well, I don't even know anything. What kind of life did he have? So your servant gets this benefit. By them your servant gets this benefit.

What is the benefit? Well, it says, by them your servant is warned. This word is the Hebrew word, and the root meaning of it is to shine. So by them your servant receives the benefit of illumination.

And you can see where they would get the idea of warning from this and translating it as warned. But it's not just warning. By these, all of these things above, the testimonies, the commandments, the statutes, the law, the judgments, by them your servant receives shining,

receives light.

Light has all kinds of benefits. You know how your vitamin D, they say get out in the sun and get a little bit of, we benefit from being in the light, not just what we see, but in being able to do things. You can grow crops because there is light.

You can enjoy everything from sunrise to sunset and beautiful days and enjoy God's creation because there is light. By these things, your servant receives light. Now, where in this Psalm have we seen light talked about? You remember the part that they said was tacked onto the beginning and you came from a different place? What came out of the tent? The sun traverses the sky and shines and nobody can escape.

Nothing is hidden from its heat. Remember that in verse six, nothing is hidden from its heat. I remember somebody one time using light as an illustration of the Holy Spirit.

You remember this? They said, well, there's three different parts of light. I've never been able to verify this, but it's one of those saws that sounds good. Like, you know, the computers at NASA were traversing the centuries and found the missing day when Joshua had the sun stand still.

Well, this is another one of those. But somebody said, there's three components of light. There's actinic, luminiferous, and calorific.

Actinic, luminiferous, and calorific. They said, the thing about actinic is it is neither seen nor felt. It's basically where the range of ultraviolet and infrared is.

You know how you get sunburned because you don't really feel on a cloudy day that it's hitting you, but then your skin burns and you say, wow, how did that happen? And I didn't feel it and I didn't see it. It was a cloudy day. I wore a short sleeve shirt all day out there doing something and I got burned.

And so that's actinic. And they said, this is like God the Father. He is neither seen nor felt.

Then they said, the second part is luminiferous. And that is the part that is seen, but not felt. And this is God the Son.

He was seen. You've seen me, you've seen the Father. No man has seen the Father at any time.

The Son has revealed him. He's the fullness of deity in bodily form. He walked among us.

John talks about, you know, we beheld his glory. The glory is in the only begotten of the Father. So he's seen, he's luminiferous.

But we don't feel the Lord Jesus because he's gone to glory and seated at the right hand of the Father. But you have this calorific, and you get the idea from calorific that this is the heat component, and you don't see it, but you feel it. And this is the Holy Spirit because he impels, he motivates, he applies the Word of God.

And I thought that was pretty cool. It was cool enough that I remembered it, which is a miracle in and of itself. But here, notice when he says in verse six, that as the sun makes its circuit across the sky, nothing is hid from its heat.

And I like this because of the calorific idea. Who is it that convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment? In Romans one, you have that what may be known of God is manifest in creation. And these people that suppress the truth and unrighteousness are without excuse because when they know him as God, they don't glorify him as God.

They're not thankful. They become vain in their imagination. The foolish heart is darkened.

What's going on? What makes them accountable and responsible? It's the heat. It's the Holy Spirit with his conviction. And he says, look around, you think this all made itself? I can't even get my bed to make itself.

And you're saying all of creation made itself? It's ridiculous. And you ought to know better. And God, the Holy Spirit, witnesses from creation to people that have never seen or heard anything about Christ or the Bible.

But there is what we like to call God consciousness. And when you become conscious of God, it's like anybody else that found themselves in God's presence. You want to go down on your face and say, Lord, depart from me.

I'm sinful. You are mighty, powerful, and righteous. I am weak, fallen, and sinful.

And there is a great gulf here that I can't bridge. And that's when you then get more information. It's at the point that you want to be related to that God that has been revealed.

So up here, the sun, general revelation, nothing escapes its heat. And this is the presence of the Word of God on the earth. And the heat is the Holy Spirit.

And what activates, what makes the Word of God make sense? It's the Holy Spirit. Even the unbelievers, if they're going to understand the gospel, it's the Holy Spirit, not us. If you want to try to debate somebody or talk somebody or rationalize somebody into salvation, it's never going to happen.

It's the Holy Spirit that convicts. That heat from what may be known of God penetrates the soul. But notice down here, moreover, by them, your servant gets light.

He already talked about the enlightening of the eyes in verse eight, and he returns to it here. Your servant gets light. It's not just conviction and it's not just awareness.

When you feel heat in a wall that shouldn't be there, you say, wow, I wonder if there's a fire. They say, feel a door when you're trying to get out of a burning building to make sure there's not fire on the other side. Heat tells us something that we may not be able to see.

When you drive a Volkswagen bus or bug, either one, and you drive somewhere and stop, because it's an air-cooled engine, the way to know if something's wrong is to go back and grab the dipstick after you've been driving for a half hour or longer, the engine's okay. If that engine's getting hot, you won't be able to hold on to the dipstick. The heat tells you what you can't see.

Oil is low or you've got a bearing going or whatever else. I used to also walk around and feel all four of my wheels, because if you have a sticking brake or a bad wheel bearing, that wheel will heat up. I've had smoke come off of my tire and the heat told me something I could not see.

I had a bad bearing or I had a loose main nut that held the wheel onto the axle. So heat can tell you some things, but the statutes and the testimonies and the details that come out of the tent with the Word of God is more than just heat. For the servant of God, it is light, it is illumination, and it gives us details of what we need to know.

And it says, in keeping them there is great reward. In keeping them there is great reward. This is more than what it looks like when it says, in keeping them, this shamar is a participle and it means the one who is in an ongoing pattern.

This is like a, you know, participles are I-N-G words, the one who is keeping them, in the keeping of them, or the one who has established a pattern of observing them, of following them, of heeding them, of paying attention to them. And then it says there is great reward, but this word doesn't mean reward. I looked up, usually I look at the Hebrew and say, what does this Hebrew word mean? Well, I started the other way and I said, what are the words for reward in Hebrew? And there are several, and this isn't any of it.

This is really the only place I think in Scripture where it is translated reward. This word means consequence. Consequence.

There is rav, r-a-v, there's great consequence. In the observing of these things, it is very consequential. It makes a big difference.

If you watch out for those precepts and those statutes, if you are respecting the law of the Lord and the Lord himself, who is the author of it, it is extremely consequential in your life. And we think, well, reward, this is like the rat, you know, that hits the green button and a treat falls out or, you know, you do the right thing and out comes a benefit. But consequence is more universal.

Consequence makes a difference in a lot of ways. We may not look at the consequence of a decision. You know, there's people who have maintained their integrity in a business situation and because they were a servant of God, because they feared him, and because they were paying attention to his statutes, they ended up getting fired.

They refused to do a shady thing. They refused to take a shortcut. They refused to comply with a largely ungodly way of doing things, and they lost their job.

That is a consequence, right? Would you say that's a reward? Probably not. You can lose a friendship. You can be ostracized.

You can be a social outcast because you fear God, because you honor his word, because you respect the statutes and the precincts, and because they shine a light on your path and you say, I'm not stepping into that snare. I'm not going to go with bad company. Remember in Corinthians we saw on Sunday, bad company corrupts a good ethos, and I'm not going to spend that inordinate time.

I'm not going to have that contact and be in that realm, and because of that there is consequence. In observing them, there are great consequences. Now, all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose, to those who are servants, right? But what we have to realize is you've got to say, you've got to take the long view, because consequences initially may not look good.

The consequences may initially look bad. John the Baptist had a consequence. The Lord Jesus was true to his mission from the Father, and there was a consequence.

The Apostle Paul was true to his mission, and there was a consequence. We just saw it in Corinthians 15, the list of everything that happened to him, the consequence, because the law of the Lord was his guide. But do you not think that those stripes and those imprisonments and those brutalities and the evils that were inflicted on him are not now stars of glory reflecting the glory of the Lord Jesus and pleasing God the Father, because he was faithful, and he was faithful unto death? Those consequences were momentous, and to a human eye, they might have looked extremely negative, but in God's eyes, it's gold, fine gold.

It's honey and the honeycomb. It's not always going to look like reward. It's consequential.

But from a heavenly perspective, those consequences are an integral part of God's plan and purpose, and they matter. Your faithfulness matters. Your consistency and your identity as a servant and a good and faithful servant is consequential.

Your life means something. You don't have to do a thing to be consequential. Your observing God's Word is itself consequential.

You're not going to be measured at the judgment seat by a tally or silhouettes on your fuselage of some acts of goodness that you performed. It is why you did what you did, how you did what you did. Many times, God gives us the privilege of actually being a blessing to other people, leading someone to the Lord, helping them in their spiritual walk.

It's a wonderful thing. Taking nothing away from that, the consequence is in living in the light of God's Word. That's what makes the difference.

That's what transforms actions into eternal inheritance. And that's what David is saying here. So he says on the positive side, by these judgments and statutes and commandments and

testimonies and the law of the Lord, your servant is shined upon.

There is a shining upon your servant. And in observing them, there is great consequence. It invests everything in your life with meaning, large and small, good and bad, fun and not fun.

It's consequential. I can't tell you how important this reward word is. It's not like, oh, well, if I could just be faithful enough, I'd be blessed.

It invests our lives with meaning. So David, and this is why it makes sense, the transition to verse 12, who can understand his errors, cleanse me from secret faults. Who can understand, the word for understanding here is being able to see or see clearly, to perceive, to be aware of a thing.

Who is aware of, and then it says his errors, notice his is in italics, because the word errors here is literally hidden things. Who is aware of what is hidden? Who can see what can't be seen? Who can see the overheated wheel bearing? Who can see the low oil level inside his engine? It's hidden. You can't see that.

Who can see what is invisible? And then he says, cleanse me from secret, and notice faults is in italics. And cleanse here doesn't mean to wash or to forgive. It means to hold guiltless, to not impute sin, to not charge with error, to view someone as guiltless or innocent.

A lot of times they say a good translation is to acquit, but acquit has a little bit more of an active meaning than what this word conveys. It means, David says, there are always going to be these snares that I can't see. There's going to be pitfalls.

There's going to be chug holes that I'm going to hit because I didn't see them. There's going to be deer that we're going to hit because you don't see them. They jump right in front of your car and you can't help but hit them.

Who can see what can't be seen? Who can see the unforeseeable is the idea. And David says, he's talking to the Lord and he says, hold me guiltless. View me as innocent from what is hiding.

It doesn't mean secret. It means that which hides. He says, I am a servant.

I have a fear of the Lord. I am seeking to walk in the light of these statutes. But every once in a while, something blindsides me.

Hold me guiltless. I'm not committing an intentional straying here. And that's what verse 13 says.

Keep back your servant notice. You can't claim this. You can't ask for this unless you're a servant.

Keep back your servant from, it says presumptuous sins, but sins is in italics. And presumptuous here, it doesn't really mean presumptuous. It means to be knocked off the path,

to stray.

We can be pulled away by our own desires. We can, it's the world, the flesh and the devil. Anything can, it's a word used for meandering or getting off the path or all we like sheep have gone astray.

It's not so much, you know, a sin of the high hand or Lord protect me from myself and my willful transgression. It's these hidden things that knock you off the path. You've set your mind to serve the Lord, to fear him, to take advantage of all of these wonderful features of his word.

And so he says, don't let me get knocked off the path by these hidden things. Could it include, you know, secret faults, cleanse me from, even in 1 John 1.9, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins that we confess and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, things that we weren't aware of. There is a valid principle.

And I think somebody kind of saw that in this passage, but that's not, it's not limited to that. Anything that hides, it goes all the way back to Cain. What's crouching outside the door? If you do well, you'll be accepted.

But if not, sin is hiding at the door. It's crouching. It's ready to knock you off your path as soon as you walk out.

So that's the idea here. Keep back your servant also from being waylaid, being knocked off the path. Let them not have dominion over me.

I don't want to be carried along by things that jumped out of the dark and got ahold of me and dragged me away from what I'm trying to do, which is to be a servant, to live in the light of God's word. And this is a valid thing to pray. If you want to commit your way unto him, he will bring it to pass, right? Commit your way unto him and he will bring it to pass.

How does he do that? Well, his word will shine on the path of the simple and keep us from being knocked off by hidden things, stuff we didn't see coming, unexpected circumstance, unexpected failures or acts of commission by people around us, unexpected reverses in finances or society or whatever it might be, any environmental factor. Let them not take me over and drive me down a road I don't want to go. Then I shall be blameless and I shall be innocent of great transgression.

And this innocent is the same word you had up above when he says, cleanse me. It's the same word. Hold me innocent.

I want to be innocent in your eyes. God will know that it wasn't my intention to get, you think of David being run out of Jerusalem by his son Absalom. It wasn't his intention that jumped out of the weeds and put him in a bad way.

And David says, I want to be innocent in that regard. I don't want to be guilty of great

transgression. Well, this brings us to the final verse, actually the last half of 13 and 14, which I'm going to save for next time.

But look at the power of the word of God. It is powerful like the sun in the sky is powerful. It is inescapable.

It's unavoidable. And for the servant of God and for the one who fears the Lord, it is life. It is restoration.

It is guidance. It is strength. It is renewal.

It is protection on the path. It invests our lives with significance, with consequence, not just reward, but consequence. Do you want your day to count? Do you want the way you think and the way you struggle to stay on the path and to overcome the flaws in our nature and in the natures of others around us? And in life in general, the road dirt that we pick up just walking along the path.

Lord Jesus wrapped the towel around his waist and said, as I have washed your feet, so you should do for one another. Well, where does the strength to do that come from? It comes from the word of God. The example of the servant that was forgiven much, and then he had an underservant that he was supposed to forgive as well, and he couldn't bring himself to do it.

And he lost his forgiveness. His debt was reinstated with the master. He had been forgiven a great debt, but because he was merciless to a fellow servant, the master called him in and said, you're going to stay in the poorhouse until you pay every penny.

And these are the kinds of things that you see in scripture and think, you know, you can lose forgiveness. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us is in the Lord's prayer. And we have got to respect and have a healthy fear and awe of the Lord and of the statutes of the Lord and of the way his precepts and his ordinances work.

And one of them is forgive one another. And we're not built that way, but the power that comes from God's word gives us that strength. Well, it is a wonderful and powerful piece of truth for us.

And we're going to close here in a word of prayer and bear with me after we pray. Give me a second and we're going to have our special music, but let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for the fulsomeness of it. The thickness of our Bible is just a tremendous gift. So many people in past ages did not have the fulsome revelation that we have.

We thank you for that. We thank you for your Holy Spirit that gives us insight and understanding and remembrance of it. And when the point of application comes, we pray that as we reflect on these things, it will illuminate our path and help us to see clearly how we can

be more faithful and more obedient and more truly servants who can lay claim to these wonderful and precious promises.

We know that in doing so, it will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus and vindicate his work on our behalf and prepare us for life and service in the ages to come. So we pray these things in Jesus name. Amen.