

The Foundations of Faith & the Nature of God

Weekly Devotion #1

Below is a short devotion based on the Week 1 Devotion questions in your Renew: Session 1 handout. You'll get the most out of this devotion if you answer the questions yourself first. The goal is not for you to have the exact same response, but to understand the correct meaning of the Biblical text and then apply it personally in a way that uniquely helps you grow in your knowledge, love, and worship of God.

Psalms 19:1-3 To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. 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.

During our previous Renew class, we talked about how God has revealed Himself to us in the created world. In Romans 1, the Apostle Paul tells us that we can clearly perceive God's eternal power and divine nature in the things that have been made. Here in Psalm 19, some one thousand years before Paul, King David echoes that same truth. He's telling us that, if we listen carefully, not with our physical ears, but with our minds and our hearts, we can hear the daytime sky and the nighttime heavens speaking to us about God. And not us only - but everyone everywhere can hear this speech (verses 3-4). So, what are they telling us - what knowledge do the heavens reveal to us (verse 2)? **That God is glorious!**

If the sun shining in the noon sky is so brilliant that we can't look upon it with the naked eye and so powerful that it brings light and heat and life to everyone on earth, then how much more brilliant and life-giving is the God who made it? If we try to count the stars in the midnight expanse and begin to lose count after a few hundred, then how deep and unsearchable must be the knowledge and wisdom of the God who knows them all by name (Psalm 147:4)? When we look at the beauty and glory in the world around us, it should cause us to ask: where did this come from? Why does this move me? Why do I feel so small and insignificant staring up at the heavens? The most reasonable and satisfying answer is that this glory we find around us isn't merely a happy accident springing from a mindless universe and it isn't just a mental illusion that evolved to help us survive. No. This glory is real and it means something. It's pointing us to something beyond ourselves and beyond this material world - to God, the Source of glory. But this general revelation can only get us so far. We need special revelation to get us all the way to the Source - to see God's glory clearly and fully. We need the Father, Son, and Spirit revealed to us in Scripture.

In the Gospel of John chapter 1, Jesus Christ is called "the Word" and is described as One who simultaneously IS God and WITH God. And we're told in verse 14 that Jesus "became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen His glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Like the skies above, **Jesus reveals God's glory.** But, unlike the skies above, He doesn't just give us a partial view of that glory, He reveals the *fullness* of it. Through His obedient life, humble death, and victorious resurrection, we see the fullness of God's grace and truth inviting us to not simply admire Him from a distance, but enter into His glory and share it ourselves as His children (2Cor. 4:17).

The only question that remains is: have you seen His glory? Have you experienced the fullness of grace and truth that comes from seeing it? This kind of "vision" can only come by the power of the Holy Spirit, removing the veil that covers our spiritual eyes. That's why, in the verse immediately prior, John says that those who see His glory "were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:13). Let's make it our prayer that **the Spirit would constantly open our eyes to see the glory of God** - in the world and people around us, but especially in our Lord Jesus Christ!

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, you are more glorious than my feeble mind can appreciate! Thank you for loving us so much that you don't keep that glory hidden - you share it with us through the sun, moon, stars, mountains, oceans, trees, and my fellow humans. But thank you even more that you didn't leave us with this partial view of your glory, but revealed it fully by sending your Son in human flesh to live, die, and rise again. Forgive me for being so distracted and so easily satisfied by foolish things that I ignore and fail to stand in awe of your glory. May your Holy Spirit open my eyes to see your glory all around me and especially in Christ so that I may worship you as you deserve. I am confident that you will answer this prayer, not because of my own goodness or efforts, but because the promises you have made to me in your Word and that are mine in Jesus Christ. It's in His glorious name I pray. Amen.