

# Specific Revelation

## Scripture Focus

Psalm 19:7-14

## Key Verse

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple (Psalm 19:7).

## Overview

Specific Revelation is information God has chosen to make known regarding Himself. His Holy Spirit inspired the authors of Scripture to write the exact words of God, but in their own language and personality, yet guarding every word from error.

## Theme

God has spoken. This truth is an awe-inspiring reality. As believers, we should stand amazed that the one true God chose to make Himself known with such detail and precision as putting His character and activity into words.

## Desired Learner Response

To gain a deeper level of thankfulness for the Bible as God's written revelation of Himself and to give evidence of that thankfulness by measuring words, heart intentions, and actions by the Word of God.

## Outline

- I. The Glory of God in Creation (1-6) Part 1
- II. The Glory of God in Revelation (7-11)
- III. The Glory of God in Transformation (12-14)

## Getting Started

**Ask:** We studied Psalm 19:1-6 last week: What can we learn about God through creation?

**Ask:** What can we only know of God because He has made it known to us in the Bible?

## Searching the Scriptures

### II. The Glory of God in Revelation (vv. 7-11)

Several premises must be stated when teaching your people about the written revelation of God. First, we believe that God exists and is able to make Himself known to man. Second, we believe that God has enabled man with the ability to understand His self-revelation. Third, we believe that human language is sufficient to convey that which God has made known of Himself.<sup>1</sup>

#### A. Verse 7

1. "law": Doctrine or teachings of God; not just the law of Moses.
2. "perfect": Complete; capable to enable believers to know God and obey Him.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Akin, *Systematic Theology Notes*, "Inerrancy of Scripture."

3. “converting”: Restoring to the place from which sin took him.
  1. The means of our restoration is the Word of God.
  2. Displays divine love and gives a clear picture of redeeming grace.
4. “soul”: Not just outward; restoration begins inward.
5. “testimony”: Emphasis on the revelation being personally from God.
6. “sure”: It cannot be weakened; it stands firm against all criticism, attacks and contrary philosophies; not false; true.
7. “wise the simple”:
  1. Humble minds receive the Word and walk faithfully in it.
  2. The Word not only saves, it continuously builds the believer. Believers are as much dependent on the Word of God for salvation as they are for daily growth in godliness.
8. God perfectly knows our souls and can perfectly erase our sin.

#### **B. Verse 8**

1. “statutes”: Word of God; God’s holy expectations for those that are called by His name and called to represent Him rightly in the world. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, believers must constantly measure and direct all aspects of life by the Word of God.
2. “right”: It meets our every need; just as a doctor gives the right medicine, so does the Word meet the right need. This term emphasizes the sufficiency of God’s Word not just above all other sources but exclusive of all other sources. His Word is all we need for all of life. To simply affirm one’s belief in the truthfulness of God’s Word is a vain affirmation if not supported by a life that is guided by the verses of the Bible.
3. “rejoicing the heart”: The Word makes us “wise” (v. 7) and happy. A heart obedience to the Word of God places the heart in a godly disposition, which is content in Christ regardless of external circumstances.
4. “commandment”: Further emphasizes that a right view of God includes an understanding that we are submissive to the One that has all authority. The One who has all authority is the One who commands and to whom we submissively obey. An affirmation of belief in God’s Word must include a life that is yielded in every way to Him as ruler of all things. To live biblically requires a heart that is surrendered to the authority of Christ and His Word.
5. “pure”: No mixture of error. God has guarded His Word from any infectious errors.
6. “enlightening the eyes”: As we read God’s Word, He purges away the ungodliness in our minds. Clarity of thought in all of life is found in a mind saturated with the Word of God. To think biblically requires a mind that continuously mediates on the Word of God (Romans 12:2).
7. It is a crime to add to it or alter it or take anything away from God’s Word.

Verse 8 personifies the heart as a rejoicing recipient of the specific revelation of God’s Word. Spurgeon notes that this metaphor is utilized to convey the message of a satisfied life as a result of an encounter with the Word of God.<sup>2</sup> He also notes that the utilization of a personified heart is

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<sup>2</sup>Spurgeon, 273.

for the purpose of demonstrating the progress from the acquirement of head knowledge to the happiness of one who receives this heart knowledge of God.<sup>3</sup> The eyes are also personified as elements that are enlightened by the specific revelation. The wickedness that permeates man's natural mind is removed as the light of truth invades his thoughts, thus enabling him to think biblically about all of life. The eyes are viewed as a passageway to the mind, thus the imagery of the eye being enlightened is a declaration of the mind being set free from its natural sin that is often compared with darkness. As the revelation of God is read, the picture here is that it purges impurities from the mind of man and allows man's understanding of God to be sharpened.

### C. Verse 9

1. "fear":
  1. The spiritual effect of God's Word. Healthy fear of God is necessary for one to relate biblically to Him.
  2. Absolute reverence; when you revere God you submit to Him.
  3. A clear understanding that God will punish those who are called by His name and also misrepresent Him to the world.
2. "clean": The Word of God continues the cleansing effect of grace in a believer's life. The only way for a believer to stay clean from the impurities of the world is the constant bathing of the heart and mind in the Word of God.
3. "enduring forever": Filth and sin bring decay. Since there is no defilement in the Word, there is no decay of the Word.
4. "judgments": God determines what is true, right, and acceptable. We do not have to decide what is right in any given situation. Biblical thinking leads one to biblical living, which is to yield to the standards God already established in His Word. Our call is to be led by the Spirit of God to discern that which God has already determined as right and wrong. The value of memorizing God's Word finds significance in this text. As we memorize the Word we fill a reservoir from which to draw in times of discerning that which God determined to be good or bad.
5. "true and righteous": No mixture of error; pure in every regard. There are very few grey areas in a life that is lived with an open Bible. Biblical living includes boundaries as wide as God's grace and as narrow as God's law. God's Word is true in that it is the determinant of all that is certain and absolute. God's Word is righteous in that it is right in all that it states, asserts, and records.
6. "altogether": To deny any part of God's Word is to deny all of God's Word. If we deny any part of God's Word, we have placed our self as a judge over God. Denial of any part of God's Word is yet another attempt by man to be God.

Verse 9 personifies fear as an individual that is clean or as a cleansing agent on the hearer. The fear is not what is being cleansed, but rather the person who receives the specific revelation of God is cleansed by His Word and enters into a new demeanor in his approach to the presence of God. This is the spiritual effect of God's Word in contrast with the mental effect of general revelation. As one comes to an understanding that there is a God by looking at creation, his mind is captured by the reality of God. As one comes to understand that there is a law giving, moral,

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

saving, loving and personal God by looking into His Word, his heart is captured by the grace of God. As one enters into a relationship with God through the declaration of His specific revelation, the previous disregard for God is replaced by a reverent fear for Him.

#### **D. Verse 10**

1. “desired”: Proverbs 2:3-5; A believer in right relationship with God hungers to worship God through the application of His Word. This desire for the Word pictures an individual that longs for nothing more in life and is satisfied by nothing else than the nourishment and obedience of the Word.
2. “gold”: Nothing satisfies a saved soul like Scripture; gold also represents the purity of Scripture.
3. “sweeter...honeycomb”: An understanding of what is truly valuable. Honeycomb was a valued food among the Israelites. It was a refreshing and delightful savor in their mouths. The Word of God in the heart of the believer is more refreshing and more delightful than the honeycomb. This is also a reminder that the physical never brings satisfaction to the believer like the Word of God.

The emphasis of each word is that the specific revelation of God far exceeds the value of any created object. Specifically, the specific revelation of God exceeds the value of gold that promises to satisfy man’s hunger for wealth and the honeycomb that promises to satisfy man’s hunger for pleasure. The figures of speech in the first six verses, as well as this example in verse 10, contain a message of the invaluable asset of the knowledge of God.

#### **E. Verse 11**

1. “warned”:
  1. Of our duty to warn others with the Word.
  2. It is the Word alone that keeps us on right course
  3. The Bible is our mentor and monitor.
2. “reward”: In the present and the future. The value of the believer’s reward should not be limited to earthly measurements. Rather, the reward which believers receive is valuable because of the priceless nature of the One that gives the reward.
3. “keeping”: Holding them; making them evident in our lifestyle and choices. An internal belief that is evidenced by external actions.

**Discussion: Ask – What are other sources of direction people have a tendency to look when faced with life’s choices? After writing several answers on the board ask: Why is it dangerous to look for direction in any other source but the written revelation of God? After several responses note that the Bible is solely sufficient for the believer seeking to live, relate, think, and proclaim in a way that honors Christ.**

## **II. The Glory of God in Transformation (vv. 12-14)**

Reading the Bible or listening to lessons or sermons is all vanity if life is not changed. God’s revelation is for the purpose of life transformation so that His creation, man, may bring the glory to Him that He alone is worthy. Biblical thinking, living, relating, and proclaiming requires that we be continuously transformed by the Word of God.

### **A. Verse 12**

1. “understand his errors”:
  1. “He best knows himself who best knows the Word.” Spurgeon
  2. The Word serves as a spotlight, revealing our sin and showing the way. We must be willing to agree with God when His Word corrects our sinful hearts.
2. “cleansing”: From the sin of moral leprosy: sick within and evident without. We need cleansing from the wrong belief that has produced wrong behavior. We sin because we are sinners. Confession of sin is a daily act in the life a believer that is daily in the Word of God.
3. “secret”: Wash away those sins my conscience has been unable to detect. We can never know all our sin. Since God is all knowing, He knows all our sin.

### **B. Verse 13**

1. “Keep back”: A prayer that man offers as he willingly places himself in God’s restraining hand. It is a confession before God that we know we are weak and prone to habitual sin.
2. “presumptuous”: Willful sin without regard or thought of the consequences. Sinning without consideration of the judgment of God. The “little white lie” is an example of presumptuous sin. Sin is offensive to God regardless of the magnitude of the earthly consequences.
3. “dominion”: All un-confessed sin will dominate your life. Sin places us in a constant state of bondage.
4. “innocent”: Only declared by God. We can be declared innocent because Jesus died in our place. He took our punishment, death, when He died in our place.
5. “great”: Much; significant. A right view of one’s self includes a confession that we sin much more than we realize. The purity of God’s assessment reveals much more sin than the impurity of our self-assessment.

The psalmist presents the image of sin as having dominion over him and pleads for the God who has made Himself known in creation and in specific revelation to free him from sin’s dominating power. Spurgeon suggests that this imagery of domination is utilized in order to demonstrate the especially oppressive status of one who succumbs to temptation and follows through into sin.<sup>4</sup> There is also a tone in the use of “dominion” that presents the message of being led to greater danger than the present sinful state. Spurgeon states, “He who tempts the devil to tempt him is in a path which will lead him from bad to worse, and from the worse to the worst.”<sup>5</sup> The metaphors relating to revelation were powerful in their imagery of the greatness of God. David changes the tone of his writing by using “dominion” as a word of warning and impending danger to all who will follow their sin. This prayer is also reflective in nature. If David had made this his plea before God prior to his sins against Bathsheba and Uriah, he would not have sensed the dominion of sin over his life.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Spurgeon, 275.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, 144.

### C. Verse 14

1. “mouth . . . meditation”: It is a mockery of God and His Word if our heart does not meditate before our mouths speaks. Living biblically requires that our words are conditioned by the Word of God before we speak.
2. “acceptable”: words and meditation are useless unless accepted by grace. Our daily walk of faith totally depends on God. We are called to be responsible with the Word, but must live with the reality that without God intervening in our lives all our attempts at obedience are in vain.
3. “sight”: God’s perfect measure of right and wrong is applied to all He sees. If we please man, and displease God, all is in vain. If we please God and displease man all is for His glory.
4. “strength”: Rock; a constant, steadfast enabling by God of His people.
5. “Redeemer”: The only hope of David’s salvation is in the One who alone can cleanse the sinner. Jesus, our redeemer, suffered in full the death penalty that was ours.

David refers to God as “my rock.” Vines notes that this imagery is a figure of speech employed to designate security.<sup>7</sup> The psalmist makes his plea before God personal. After a liturgy of figurative language relating the message of creation to man, followed by a statement of the power of God’s specific revelation to man presented in propositional form, David demonstrates through the figure of a rock the personal nature of God. This figure of a rock denotes God’s “immovable faithfulness to His promise.”<sup>8</sup> Spurgeon concludes that Psalm 19 begins with the heavens but ends with the personal redeemer who is available for man to come before in a prayer of petition and who will answer man’s call for help.<sup>9</sup> The figurative language leads to the concrete promises of God.

### Making It Personal

Challenge your class to make Psalm 19:12-14 their daily prayer this week. Encourage them to be open to the reality that there is sin in their life that they will not see apart from allowing the light of the Word to shine. God’s Word reveals sin, corrects our hearts, and transforms our lives.

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<sup>7</sup>Vine, 208.

<sup>8</sup>Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, 144.

<sup>9</sup>Spurgeon, 275.