

Psalm 19:7-11 “No Book Like This Book”**

Main Idea: Psalm 19:7-11 gives us three reasons why we ought to treasure God’s Word.

I. We ought to treasure the Bible because it is personal.

- A. God speaks through His creation (1-6).
- B. God speaks through His written word (7-11).

II. We ought to treasure the Bible because of its potential (7-9).

- A. It revives the soul (7a).
 - 1. Man-made solutions are superficial.
 - 2. God’s Word offers solutions to our deepest needs.
- B. It makes simple people wise (7b).
 - 1. A simple person has an open door on his brain.
 - 2. God’s Word teaches a person to be discerning.
- C. It gives joy to the heart (8a).
 - 1. People are looking for joy in all the wrong places.
 - 2. God’s Word offers a certain guarantee.
- D. It gives clarity to the eyes (8b).
 - 1. When making decisions, look to the Book.
 - 2. God’s will never violates God’s Word.

E. It stands the test of time (9a).

- 1. The Bible is a manual on fearing God.
- 2. It will never go out of print.

F. It is completely dependable (9b).

- 1. It came from a righteous God.
- 2. It makes people righteous.

III. We ought to treasure the Bible because of its purpose (10-11).

- A. By God’s design, it satisfies (10).
- B. By God’s design, it warns (11a).
- C. By God’s design, it rewards (11b).

The Bottom Line: Cherish the Book!

When it comes to treasures some people just don't know what they have. You may have seen the television program, *Antiques Road Show*...

A person brings in an old painting, one that's been collecting cobwebs for years as it leans against an attic wall under a dusty sheet. The appraiser takes one look at the framed picture and says, "Do you know what you have here? This is a rare find," and begins to give the history of the artist whose name appears in the corner. "You've got a jewel, for sure. It's worth, oh I'd say fifty, maybe sixty..." "Fifty or sixty dollars?" the owner interrupts. "No," says the assessor, "Fifty or sixty *thousand* dollars!"

I'll guarantee you the owner doesn't throw that painting in the back seat of the car for the ride home like he did on the ride *to* the show. And it's not going back to the attic, for sure! When you know something is a treasure it affects the way you treat it.

I want to tell you at the outset where this message is heading. You've got a treasure, but you may not know it. Or you may know it, but have forgotten just how valuable it is. My aim is to convince you that if you have a Bible you have a treasure unlike any other treasure, and therefore, you ought to treasure it!

Around the year 1800 John Burton, a Baptist layman in England, helped compile the *Nottingham Sunday School Union Hymn Book*. He himself penned the following song:

*Holy Bible, Book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came;
Mine to teach me what I am.*

*Mine to chide me when I rove;
Mine to show a Savior's love;
Mine thou art to guide and guard;
Mine to punish or reward.*

*Mine to comfort in distress;
Suffering in this wilderness;
Mine to show, by living faith,
Man can triumph over death.*

*Mine to tell of joys to come,
And the rebel sinner's doom;
O thou holy Book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine. [11](#)*

Do we really grasp how valuable the Bible is? Why should a person read it daily, memorize it, listen to sermons from it, meditate on it, and share it with others? What makes this book so special?

Psalm 19 tells us. I'm not sure there's a more compelling answer anywhere in the Bible than in Psalm 19. C. S. Lewis said this about Psalm 19, "I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world."^[2] But our intent in coming to Psalm 19 isn't merely to behold a fine piece of literature. We have a question to answer. Why should we treasure the Bible? Psalm 19:7-11 gives us three convincing reasons.

I. We ought to treasure the Bible because it is personal.

Before looking at verses 7-11, allow me to comment briefly on the entire psalm. Psalm 19, according to the heading, is a psalm *of David*, a psalm that was put in the music directors hands so that the rest of God's people might learn it and sing it. In the psalm David praises God because God has revealed Himself by *speaking* to mankind. According to David, God speaks in two attention-grabbing ways: one, through His works in creation (verses 1-6), that is, through what theologians call His *general revelation*; and two, through His written word (verses 7-11), which is called His *special revelation*.^[3]

Notice that first of all...

A. God speaks through His creation (1-6). "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth **speech**; night after night they display knowledge. There is no **speech** or **language** where their **voice** is not heard. Their **voice** goes out into all the earth, their **words** to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat."

In Psalm 8 David said he learned about God from looking at the moon and the stars. Here it's the sun. As a shepherd boy he watched the sun rise, move across the sky, and set in the distance time after time, and through that very activity he says that God was *speaking*.

About what? What message do the heavens and skies proclaim? According to verse 1 God uses creation to declare *His glory*. Verse 2 says it happens every day without fail, and verse 3 makes it clear that no matter where you live on planet earth, you see and hear this message. God exists and He is glorious!

David is expressing poetically what Paul later puts in theological terms in Romans 1:20.^[4] "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

So can man come to know God personally through creation? No. Through general revelation we learn that God exists and that He is powerful, but we need more if we are to know Him *personally*. And He has given us more...

B. God speaks through His written word (7-11). In verses 7-11 David praises God for His special revelation, His written word, and uses six different words to refer to God's self-disclosure: verse 7—"The *law* of the LORD... the *statutes* of the LORD;" verse 8—"the *precepts* of the LORD...the *commands* of the LORD;" verse 9—"the *fear* of the LORD...the *ordinances* of the LORD." These six terms represent six different, yet related facets of God's written revelation. And with each, the source is the same: *of the LORD, of the LORD, of the LORD...*

The Book we're talking about came *from the LORD*. That's why it's so valuable. No wonder David cherished it, as should we. It's God's message to us. It came from a person, the Greatest Person in the universe, indeed the Creator of the universe.

Why should we cherish the Bible? First, because it is *personal*.

By the way, how much of the Bible did David possess? David lived around 1,000 B.C., some four hundred years after God gave the Pentateuch to Moses on Mount Sinai. Let that sink in. For David the "Bible" was probably only the first five books of our Bible, and maybe Joshua and Judges, maybe.^[5]

To many folks today, the Pentateuch seems to be one of the *least* interesting sections of the Bible, yet David cherished it. Lane comments, “Evidently it was possible with only these few books to form a view of God complete enough to worship him and clear enough to find salvation.”¹⁶ Yes, David cherished and praised God for the limited portion of Scripture that he possessed, because it’s so *personal*. How much more should we who possess the entire canon!

II. We ought to treasure the Bible because of its potential (7-9).

“The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.”

The Bible is unlike any other book. It can accomplish things that no psychology textbook can touch and that’s because of its unique authorship. This Book didn’t originate with man. Although He used human instruments, God Himself is the author, and produced a Book that is inerrant, infallible, and sufficient (see 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

So what can the Bible do that other books cannot do? David mentions and praises God for six accomplishments here. Here is the unique potential of God’s Word.

A. It revives the soul (7a). “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul.” Yahweh’s law is *perfect*, says David. The Hebrew adjective *tamim* means “all sided,” and communicates the idea of *completeness*. In another context it’s used to refer to an animal with no known defect which is thus qualified to be offered to God as a sacrifice. Here it indicates that God’s revelation is whole, entire, unblemished, blameless, and complete. And what does God’s complete Word do?

It “revives the soul.” The Hebrew participle *shoob* means “to turn” or “return.” A related word appears in the familiar Psalm 23:3, “He *restores* my soul.”

There’s lots of talk about *revival* in the Bible Belt. “Our church has *revival* meetings every September. How about yours?” For starters, answer this. Did the early church have yearly “revival” meetings? Not that I’ve seen in the Scriptures. Did God’s people need and experience revival in Bible times? Absolutely. And what produced it? David says *the Book did*. The Book *revives* (puts life back into) the soul.

Do we really believe that? I’m not against having special meetings, but I am against the notion that we can manufacture revival by putting it on our schedule. We can’t produce revival. The question is, do we really believe that the ministry of the Word of God *can*, that it is sufficient to bring revival to the souls of men and women, and boys and girls in this community? You see, the Bible can do soul work. By contrast...

1. *Man-made solutions are superficial.* It’s like rearranging furniture on the sinking Titanic. Quite frankly, that’s the best that man-crafted and man-centered psychological theories can accomplish. But know this...

2. *God’s Word offers solutions to our deepest needs.* Far from being superficial, the Bible goes deep and gets to the core issues in the hearts of men and women. Hebrews 4:12 states, “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Are you feeling dry spiritually? Then don’t wait for a revival meeting. Begin a steady intake of God’s Word *now*, daily in your own home, weekly with God’s people. This Book revives the soul. What’s more...

B. It makes simple people wise (7b). “The statutes [‘testimony’ in the KJV] of the LORD are trustworthy [Hebrew *‘aman*, ‘to be true, established, firm’], making wise the simple.”

David has a particular type of person in mind here, called ‘the simple.’ The root of this word means “to be open, spacious, wide.” A simple person is an immature person, one who is vulnerable to external enticements. It’s the person who is easily persuaded, even deceived. *Naïve* would fit. So would *gullible*. His problem?

1. *A simple person has an open door on his brain.* Every goes in and then everything goes out.^[7] To use computer terminology, the person who has no anti-virus protection. He believes everything he hears. “A simple man believes anything (Prov. 14:15).” Consequently, “The simple inherit folly (Prov. 14:18).”

If you want to know why our country is in a moral free-fall, here it is. It’s not a lack of knowledge (we’ve got more educational opportunities than ever). The problem is we’ve forgotten how to close the doors on our brains. To the contrary, society urges us to be open-minded, promoting whole-scale tolerance and acceptance. Society says to forget about convictions and absolute standards of right and wrong, asserting that everything is right if you think it’s right. And so drugs are rampant, sexually transmitted diseases are rampant, violent crime is rampant, the tragic consequences of having an open door on the brain.

Is there a solution? Absolutely! What is it? David says that God’s Word “makes wise the simple.” In other words...

2. *God’s Word teaches a person to be discerning.* When you read the Bible, it puts filters in place, pop-up blockers: “That piece of information can enter. Hold it! Not that piece, you’re out of here!” And so on.

Reading the Bible doesn’t make you smart (although I can recall my grandmother talking about using the Bible as part of her one-room-school curriculum). It does make you *wise*. It gives you practical insight into how to raise a family, how to run your business, what to do if you’ve got an interpersonal problem, and more.

Parents, if you want to prepare your children to succeed in the real world, listen to David. Make sure you are giving them God’s Word. Teach them God’s Word at home. Take advantage of the many opportunities the church offers to help you. It’s a proven fact. This Book prepares young people for life. That’s not all...

C. It gives joy to the heart (8a). “The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.” God’s precepts are *right*, not “right” as opposed to “wrong,” but right in the sense that they show us the *right path* to walk in life. The Bible reveals how to *live right*. It’s like an instruction manual for life.

And what happens when you follow the instructions? This Book, when followed, “gives joy to the heart.”

I talk with people all the time who are looking for joy. In many cases they’re shelling out a lot of money and time in their pursuit of joy, yet at the end of the day they’re like the hamster on a wheel. It’s a fact...

1. *People are looking for joy in all the wrong places.* You’ll never find lasting joy in the world because we didn’t lose joy there. The Bible indicates that mankind lost God’s gift of joy back in the garden when Adam and Eve turned away from God and transgressed His Word. Yet there’s hope!

2. *God’s Word offers a certain guarantee.* “The precepts of the LORD are right, *giving joy to the heart.*” There’s the guarantee. The Book gives joy to human hearts.

What exactly is joy? Joy isn’t synonymous with happiness, although the concepts are certainly related. Joy is the settled confidence that all is well between you and God.^[8]

You see, when you build your life on the Book you don’t have to wonder where you stand with God. You can know that all is well between you and God because He says so, in the Book!

Let me clarify something. You don’t make yourself right with God by obeying the Book. The same Book that shows us how to live makes it clear that we all fall short. There are hundreds of God-given commands in the Pentateuch, and David fell short. There are thousands of God-given commands in the entire Bible, and we fall short. The solution? God sent Someone into the world who *didn’t fall short*. Indeed, this Someone kept the entire Law of

God perfectly, and God offers the merit of that Person to you, if you will admit your sin and receive Him as your Savior. Indeed, this Person also, after living a perfect life, chose to die as a substitute for sinners, to pay their penalty as law-breakers. Consequently, by means of that Person's atoning death, God offers forgiveness and new life to all who will place their trust in Him.

But there's more! The moment a sinner believes in this perfect Person, God credits the merit of that perfect Person to his or her account (see Heb. 10:14). By means of that merit, the now justified sinner has the ability to do what he or she could *not* do previously, and that is to *live by the Book*.

That person is Jesus Christ! Prior to knowing Christ this Book judges us and condemns us, continually reminding us that we've fallen short. But after trusting in Christ, this Book gives joy to our hearts, Christ-centered, Christ-exalting, Christ-honoring joy that comes because His Book is now being lived out in our lives by His power.

But there's more!

D. It gives clarity to the eyes (8b). "The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes." The word 'radiant' ['pure' in the KJV] speaks of that which is *clean* (Prov. 14:4 "Where no oxen are, the crib is *clean*"). God's Word is absolutely free from any moral fault. Psalm 12:6 puts it this way, "The words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times."

When someone says, "I'm not satisfied with my life. I'm going to *clean up* my act," what the person means is that he intends to make some changes to make life better. And what source does David say can facilitate this effort to *clean up our lives*? This Book can.

What specifically can the radiant commands of God's Book do? They "give light to the eyes," says David. Our eyes are what we use to look at life. God's Word enables us to look at life and see what it's all about.

We might say the Bible is like a set of contacts. I've got near-sightedness in both eyes. Without my contacts, life is fuzzy, but with them I can see clearly.

The Bible helps us see life rightly, from God's perspective. That means...

1. *When making decisions, look to the Book.* This Book talks about what kind of person to marry, how to raise children, what to do with our money, and more. In fact, God has given us *everything* we need for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). And when you're making decisions remember this very important principle...

2. *God's will never violates God's Word.* "I'm going to marry Andy," says Alison. "He's not a believer yet, but I know God wants us together." If Alison is a believer and Andy isn't, then *I know* God *doesn't* want them together. How do I know? Because He said so. Where? In the Book (1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14). God's will never violates God's Word. Positively stated, God's Word gives clarity to our eyes.

E. It stands the test of time (9a). "The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever." The 'fear of the Lord' refers to the response God's Word will produce in our lives. We might say...

1. *The Bible is a manual on fearing God.* That is, the Bible shows us how to reverence God, how to take Him seriously in day to day living. At the shop, on the ball court, in the lunch room, in your den watching television. The Bible shows us how to put God at the center of life.

Here's an example. Here's a great passage to write on a 3x5 card and put right above your television screen. Psalm 101:2-3 says, "I will be careful to lead a blameless life— when will you come to me? I will walk in my house with blameless heart. I will set before my eyes no vile thing."

If you followed that resolve, "I will set before my eyes no vile thing," would it eliminate any movies you've watched recently? Any sensual sit-coms? For that matter, any suggestive commercials? You see, the Bible makes *fearing God* come alive. We can't see Him, but His Word helps us look at life in ways that please Him. And know

this about the Book...

2. *It will never go out of print.* “Enduring forever,” says David. The term ‘enduring’ literally means, “standing.” This Book has stood and will stand the test of time. As far as potential goes, David tells us one more thing about God’s Word.

F. It is completely dependable (9b). “The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.” The term ‘ordinance’ refers to a decision made in a legal court, a *judgment* [as the KJV renders the word]. God’s decisions as revealed in His Word are two things.

First, they are *sure*. The root idea is ‘firmness, certainty, and support.’ For instance, when a helpless infant is held in the strong arms of a loving parent, it feels *firmness, certainty, and support*. Simply put, God’s Word is *reliable*. You can trust it and build your life on it. Here’s why...

Secondly, it is *altogether righteous*. If you came to church this morning thinking, “I just don’t know what’s *right* any more. Life is so crazy!” then look to the Book. It’s always *right*. Here’s why...

1. *It came from a righteous God.* God always does what’s right. God always *says* what’s right. So what this Book says, from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22, is *right*. Yet there’s another reason His Word is altogether righteous...

2. *It makes people righteous.* How? By pointing us to the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, and then through Him showing us how to live rightly.

Now let that sink in. The Book you are holding revives the soul, makes the simple wise, gives joy to the heart, gives clarity to the eyes, stands the test of time, and is completely dependable. That’s what I call *potential!* And a book that can do *that* is a book we ought to treasure!

Yet another word of caution is in order. We *treasure* the Book but we don’t *worship* the Book. Why not? We worship the *Author* of the Book. The tragic reality is that it’s possible to study the Book, to memorize the Book, even to teach the Book, and not know the Author of the Book. Do you remember what Jesus told the religious leaders? Listen to these sobering words in John 5:39-40, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”

My aim this morning has been to convince you to treasure your Bible. I’ve layed before you two reasons you ought to. One because it is *personal*—the author of this book is the greatest Person in the universe, God Himself. Two, because of its *potential*—this book revives souls, makes simple minded people wise, and so on. Here’s a third reason.

III. We ought to treasure the Bible because of its purpose (10-11).

“They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.”

Why did God give the world this Book? David tells us right here. By God’s design this book accomplishes three things.

A. By God’s design, it satisfies (10). Just how satisfying are the words in this Book? David says, “They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.” How specifically is the Bible better than gold? David mentions two ways in verse 11...

B. By God’s design, it warns (11a). And...

C. By God’s design, it rewards (11b). “By them is your servant *warned*; in keeping them there is *great reward*.”

You can do a lot with gold. You can buy a house, a nice one, too. Cars, furniture, vacations, yes, if you've got gold, it's all yours.

But gold can't turn your house into a God-honoring, joy-filled home. And gold can't calm an anxious heart, or fix a broken marriage. And gold can't warn you of dangers to your soul. And it certainly can't reward you with eternal life. But the Bible can.

Why cherish the Bible? Because of its *purpose*. The Bible can help a young person stay pure (Psalm 119:9, 11). The Bible offers true success (Josh. 1:8). The Bible can deliver you from an enslaving habit (Ps. 119:133). The Bible can help you grow to be the person God wants you to be (1 Pet. 2:2). The Bible can sanctify you (John 17:17), protect you (Ps. 119:25), guide you (Ps. 119:105), and equip you for a life of God-honoring service (2 Tim. 3:17).

I hope by now you're convinced. We ought to treasure the Bible because it's *personal*, because of its *potential*, and because of its God-given *purpose*. The question now is *how*? How do you show you cherish the Bible? Do you put it under covered glass, like you would a rare coin, or under lock and key, as you would a precious gem? No, you *wear it out*.

When my daughters were toddlers they had a host of stuffed animals. But they each had one particular stuffed animal that was in a class by itself. For one of the girls, it was "Bob Bear" and for the other it was "Pepper Dog." And how did the girls show that they treasured those special friends? By taking them with them wherever they went, especially to bed at night, and absolutely *wearing them out*.

What's the evidence that you truly love the Bible? You read it, study it, think about it, memorize it, listen to sermons from it at church, on the radio and on CD's. You don't merely dabble in the Bible. You devour it! You can't get enough of it. It's not the ink on the page that you love. It's the Person in the Book, the Person who gave the Book, the Person who speaks through the Book that you treasure. You show you love the Book *by wearing it out*.

It's been well said, "A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to a person who's not falling apart."

My friend, let's be honest with ourselves. You don't believe the Bible is a treasure if you don't desire it more than gold and honey.

You may say, "I don't have time to read my Bible today." Answer this. Do you have time to go to work, and do you have time to eat? If you have time to go earn some gold and eat some honey, then you have *time*. The question is, which do you desire *more*, gold and honey, or God's Word?

Over three hundred years ago Isaac Watts, apparently reflecting on Psalm 19, wrote a song about the excellency of the Bible:

Great God, with wonder and with praise

On all thy works I look:

But still thy wisdom, power, and grace

Shine brighter in thy Book.

The stars that in their courses roll

Have much instruction given;

But thy good Word informs my soul

How I may climb to heaven.

The fields provide me food, and show

The goodness of the Lord;

But fruits of life and glory grow

In thy most holy Word.

Here are my choicest treasures hid;

Here my best comfort lies;

Here my desires are satisfied;

And hence my joys arise.

Lord, make me understand thy law:

Show what my faults have been;

And from thy Gospel let me draw

Pardon for all my sin.

Here would I learn how Christ has died

To save my soul from hell:

Not all the books on earth beside

Such heavenly wonders tell.

Then let me love my Bible more;

And take a fresh delight

By day to read these wonders o'er,

And meditate by night. [\[9\]](#)

Beloved, here's the bottom line. We have a treasure, so let's *cherish the Book!*

[After message] To help you cherish the Book we have a gift for you today, an audio New Testament. Today we're embarking on a 40 day trek as a church, listening through the New Testament together. 28 minutes a day, times 40 days, equals a mind that's filled with God's Word, and a hopefully a heart that loves the Author of the Book even more!

****Note:** This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church . It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

[1] <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/h/o/holybibl.htm>

[2] C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms*, p 56. [taken from P. Craigie, p. 183]

[3] In other words, God has revealed Himself using two great books, the sky and the Scriptures, and David studied them both.

[4] Observation by Eric Lane , p. 97.

[5] Eric Lane suggests that Genesis through Deuteronomy were the only written Scriptures available to him, with the stories of Joshua and Judges circulating in oral form. Eric Lane , p. 98.

[6] Eric Lane , pp. 98-99.

[7] I heard John MacArthur share this insight 1/24/90 in a pastor's seminar at Cedarville University .

[8] Observation by John MacArthur, 1/25/90 at Cedarville College .

[9] Isaac Watts, *Divine and Moral Songs: Song #7*, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/watts/divsongs.html>