

"Gods Holy Word"

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.
Amen.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth."

The creation speaks volumes regarding God's existence. If the Creator did not exist, the universe would not exist. God spoke the universe into being and every part of the universe displays the handiwork of God.

The man who built this lectern for me back in 1991 is with the Lord now. His name is Ralph Conrad and Ralph is one of the finest of Christian men I have ever known. I wrote to Ralph's family after his death, that distinguished seminary and college professors preached behind this lectern. I was speaking of course about Dr. Bob Yarbrough, Dr. Doug Sweeney, Dr. Walter Liefeld, Dr. David Luy, Dr. Stephen Greggo, Dr. Bradley Gundlach, and a professor from Moody whose name I do not remember. This lectern was a labor of love and every week that I preach, I do think of Ralph who built this lectern. I see his handiwork and know the love that went into building it. I touch his work of labor and love. The lectern did not come together by chance or by accident, but every part is the way it is because of the skill of the man who built it. I cannot help but think of Ralph as I use this because he is the one who made it.

It never ceases to amaze me how educated human beings can ponder the universe and not acknowledge, see, nor hear the God of glory. Now I know none of you look at this lectern and think of Ralph. Why would you? I also know that millions of people look at the heavens and the earth and are blind to One who made it, deaf to the One who spoke it into existence, and unable to speak of the existence of the One who brought all things into existence. The human heart has grown so dull to God and to God's glory that human beings can study the universe and say, "This all happened by chance, without any design, nor was there a Designer.

1. The universe declares the glory of God but the human heart has become so proud and arrogant as to silence the truth of God existence.

Friend's you never want to silence God. Those who do not believe in Christ have no excuse for not believing. They are without excuse for the Bible says, **2. "From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God"**. Romans 1:20.

3. We are born with a God consciousness. Every human being knows deep within their soul that God exists. And the reason people refuse to acknowledge this truth is that they suppress the truth for a lie. Instead of acknowledging and worshipping the Creator, they pervert this inner knowledge of God and worship the creation. This leads to all sorts of perversions listed in Romans 1:26-32. They exchange the truth for a lie and that is why they are blind to God and God's glory.

On the other hand, when God has his rightful place in your life, you are set free to see God's hand, God's power, and God's eternal attributes displayed in that which He has made. There is something in your soul that leaps for joy when you see evidence of God's glory in the heavens and on the earth.

Something that nature has taught me is this. **4. The evidence of the Creator is there but people love the creation more than the Creator.** I used to live in the least churchied county in the whole United States. Those who attended worship were a little over 2 percent of the population. In Snohomish country you are facing mountains when you look East or West. And my friends, these are real mountains, not pip squeak little hills. Puget Sound is breathtaking. But none of this beauty draws people to worship with God's people. The heavens declare the glory of God but far too many give a deaf ear to what is declared. The Bible says they are without excuse.

It takes a special act of God for His Truth to get through. And that special act is called grace where God takes the special revelation of Jesus Christ and applies it to your heart. And this happens as you hear the Word of God and you sense God speaking directly to you. The Word of God is so very powerful, powerful enough to create faith in the hearers of God's Word. The creation points to God and God's great power but you only learn of God personally through His Holy Word.

I know of nothing more perfect in this world than the Word of God. **5. The Word is God's gift to you from heaven.** It's origin is in the very Throne Room of God. The Holy Spirit fully inspired the human authors to write exactly what God wanted written. The Holy Spirit did not override the authors' personality, writing styles, background, or vocabulary. The Holy Spirit did not dictate what was to be written. The Bible explains inspiration like this. 2 Peter 1:21, "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." The Scripture is fully the Word of God, even though it is recorded in the words of human beings," (ESV study notes for 2 Peter 1:21). I call this the Divine, human intersection.

Verse 7, "The Law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul." The word law means torah and root of torah means instruction. David is speaking of all the words that God has spoken and revealed in the Scriptures, not just the 10 commandments or other laws. In other words, God's holy word revives your soul. It nourishes your soul. The Word of God has exactly what your soul needs to thrive. Friends, if you are a Christian, your soul craves for what only God can give, pure truth and that is only found in the Bible.

I have a dear friend facing the most difficult period of his life. I cannot tell you why he is in so much pain but the pain is very real and at a high point. Thank God for His word. When we were speaking, the Holy Spirit brought to mind a particular Scripture that fit him to a T. God has given to us His word to encourage us, to build us up and to give us hope. The Bible says of

itself, in **Romans 15:4 (NLT2)** “Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.” The person read the word to me out of Isaiah 43 and it put a smile on his face.

In the Old Testament, God provided food every day for the Israelites out in the wilderness for 40 years. It was called Manna and did the people ever tire of it. A Bible verse that I read this week goes like this, Deut 8:3, “He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”

Last year we asked you to read the entire Bible in one year. And one of the reasons we asked you to do this is for your soul, your inner being, to be revived by the power of God’s life-changing word. As our stomachs hunger for food, your soul hungers for God’s food found in the Bible. No material possession or friendship or marriage or anything can satisfy that ache of the soul for God’s truth. The Bible is not deficient in any way and has exactly what you need.

6. God’s written testimony is sure. God’s word is certain, unwavering, completely trustworthy, and never changes. It makes wise the simple. As you study the Word of God year after year after year you grow in wisdom, in God’s wisdom that is priceless. You may only have a 6th grade education and be in your 80’s. But if you have studied the Bible your entire life, you are far wiser than the person who has several degrees in the wisdom of this world but put a deaf ear to the Word of God.

Verse 8 calls God’s instructions God’s precepts. These instructions cause your heart to rejoice. When I was first taught the 10 commandments in confirmation, I really had no use for them, nor did I like them at all. They were impossible to follow. I thought God was rather mean to give them to us. This God of rules gave me a sour taste. When I began teaching the 10 commandments I learned to love and appreciate every one of them. What brought about the change was this. I now know that each of the commands was given out of God’s pure love to

protect us. They were not given so God could hold something against us. They were given because God is for us and each law is a gift of God's holy protection. If children truly honor their parents as the Lord instructs, their lives will be much better than if they rebel. If we would all follow the first commandment, this world would be a far better place.

These instructions keep us from harming ourselves, damaging ourselves and keep us from harming and damaging others. They come to us because God loves us so much. Now I want to obey them out of love for Him. And friends, I have learned that when you die to your sin and obey the Lord, God provides a joy, an enjoyment of the soul that runs quite deep. You sense God's Holy Presence and there is no greater sense at all this side of heaven. When you disobey, you sense God's displeasure.

God's commands are pure. There is nothing wrong with God's commands. They are righteous and come from his holy love. As the sun gives light for us to see, God's Word gives light so we can see the right way to go without stumbling. God's Word is a lamp unto our feet and light for our path. The word is a reliable transcript of God's will.

It is good to have a healthy fear, a holy reverence in attitude toward God's Word. To hold it in high reverence is very good indeed. Isaiah (66:5) writes, "Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word." Friends, this world will pass away one day but God's Word remains forever.

Friends, when people no longer fear God, they only do that which is right in their own eyes. When a society loses its fear of God, the only direction for that society is downward. One of the first steps back to properly fearing God is rightly esteeming God's Word. May God help us to tremble at his word.

Your soul aches for God's truth. God's words of warning will keep you safe as you follow them. Last summer I just missed getting hit by a train that was traveling 70 miles per hour. When you pull into our farm, you cross the railroad tracks. I honestly did not hear the warning,

the air horn of the train. I drove across the tracks and felt the ground trembling by the weight of the train. All of God's warnings are for your safety, your protection, and it is dangerous to turn a deaf ear and get run over by your own sins. Sin leads to death. There is great reward from God that comes from obedience, life, and peace. And the only way we can be obedient is by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ and of course this is a work of the Holy Spirit.

I close with this thought about the cross of Jesus Christ. When I look to the cross of Christ these past few weeks, the first thought that comes to my mind now is "obedience." The cross is the ultimate symbol of the obedient life. Jesus was obedient by dying on the cross. And as you and I pick up the cross, it is the call of God to so revere God, to so love God, to so fear God, that we obey his every Word. The way of the cross is to obey. Amen and Amen.