

Outline_Sufficient for What?

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Scripture: Psa. 19, misc

Sermon Audio Blurb: Is the Bible sufficient for counseling without the admixture of psychology. Psalm 19 declares that Scripture is comprehensive as well as complete. Scripture brings joy to the heart even under severe affliction and by taking Scripture seriously a person is made wise (skillful in daily living).

Introduction

A. Critics within Psychology

1. "This book is for the reader interested in a critique of contemporary psychology-the reader who knows, perhaps only intuitively, that psychology has become more a sentiment than a science and is now part of the problem of modern life rather than part of its resolution...self actualization, self-fulfillment, etc., are standard explanations for the purpose of everything from college education to life itself. Countless Christians worry more about losing their self-esteem than about losing their souls." Paul C. Vitz, *The Cult of Self-Worship*, 1994

B. My Moody Experience

1. Psych 101 (the kind you could get at any tech school or Univ.)
2. Neil Anderson's *The Bondage Breaker* (spiritual warfare stuff very popular in the late 80s and 90s)
3. *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Textbook* (Change thinking to change behavior)
4. Reasonable implications drawn from the class
 - a. You need psychology to counsel people biblically.
 - b. Spiritual Warfare is an important part of counseling someone biblically.
 - c. You probably should not be counseling anyone too deep and leave it to the Cognitive Behavioral Therapists. (James Dobson would have been a prime Christian example.)

C. The Case of Grace Community Church

1. Do churches have the legal right to counsel people biblically?
2. "Unfortunately, the privilege of counseling people with biblical truth may be in jeopardy anyway-not because of any legal barrier imposed from the outside

the church, but because of the attitude toward the Scripture within the church.”

3. “During the trial a number of experts were called to testify. Many were Christian psychologists and Christian psychiatrists who said the Bible alone does not contain sufficient help to meet people’s deepest personal and emotional needs.” John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ*

I. Psalm 19 Overview

A. King David, the author of Psalm 19 certainly understood the trials and tribulations of daily living. He personally experienced..

1. Where did David find hope? (Psa 42:5)

B. Vss 1-6 The Glory of Natural Revelation

1. General Revelation
2. All is set in place to reveal the Glory of God

C. The Bible is Special Revelation

1. The Bible is God's revealed Word communicating in a specific way
2. Psalm 19:7-9
 - a. Word of God-complete and comprehensive
 - b. In vss 7-9 we see six lines of thought...
 - c. Each line has three identifiable elements...
 - 1) A Title for the Word of God
 - 2) A Characteristic of the Word of God
 - 3) A Benefit (or result) of the Word of God
3. The 6 Titles are...law, testimony, statute, commandment, fear, judgment...
 - a. All are used as synonyms for Scripture
4. The 6 Characteristics are...perfect, sure, right, clear, clean and true
5. The 6 Benefits are...converts the soul, makes the wise simple, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eyes, endures forever, all together righteous
6. Notice that in 3 verses we see six times “of the Lord.”
 - a. David is invoking God’s personal name.
 - b. Not a title or descriptive name, like El or Elohim. Lord is His

personal name

- c. It speaks of God's covenant and His faithfulness to His promises—promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- d. It is the name of the one true God who delivered Israel from bondage.
- e. And here, David is saying, this is the LORD's Word and it does wonderful things.

II. Vss 7-9 Verse by Verse

A. Vs 7

The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

1. Title-Law

- a. Torah-meaning divine teaching
- b. God instructing man.
- c. 2 Tim 3:16-17

2. Characteristic-Perfect

- a. Teaching that comes through Scripture is perfect
 - 1) It means unblemished and full of integrity
 - 2) It means that it covers all things -whole, complete, sufficient, not lacking in any way"
 - 3) A person can come to the Bible with a confidence that cannot be found anywhere else.
- b. Set this in contrast to the imperfect, fallen and flawed reasoning of men
 - 1) "all sided so as to cover all aspects of a thing"
 - 2) Comprehensive is the word we would use

3. Benefit-Converts the Soul

- a. Hebrew can mean reviving, restoring, refreshing or best-transforming
- b. The doctrine of sin and the fall of man
- c. The counselor\discipler must be fully settled upon the Bible

4. Title-Testimony

a. Scripture as Divine Witness

- 1) God giving testimony to who He is and what He requires of us

5. Characteristic of the testimony-the testimony is sure!

6. Benefit-Making wise the simple

a. Hebrew word that means open door...open minded

b. Not opened minded in a positive sense but negative

- 1) Letting everything in; no discernment

c. Taking the Word seriously slams the door!

- 1) We become wise

- 2) Wise means skillful not necessarily smarter

a) Skilled in life in the matters of practical living

b) The Bible becomes so much a part of a person's thinking that it defines and informs us in all that we do

c) NT context-1 Cor. 1:30

B. Vs. 8

The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

1. Title-Statutes

a. Principles, precepts, guidelines, direction, shepherding

b. We can look to the Word and see where we ought to go

2. Characteristic-Right

a. God does not leave us to wander about in a wilderness of human opinion.

3. Benefit-Rejoicing the Heart

a. Jer. 15:16

b. There is a promise that as the Word becomes our guide joy will follow

4. Title-Commandment

- a. Decrees-thus saith the Lord

5. Title-Pure (or clear)

- a. The commands of the Lord are pure, meaning clear and unobstructed.
- b. Pro. 15:19
- c. Deut. 11:26-28

6. Benefit-enlighten the eyes

- a. Psa. 119:105
- b. Matt. 15:14
 - 1) "Patients force the psychotherapist into the role of priest, and expect and demand that he shall free them from distress. That is why we psychotherapists must occupy ourselves with problems which strictly speaking belong to the Theologian.
Carl Jung
- c. The word opens our eyes to see things clearly and focus on what is true and right, even in times of great trial and affliction.
 - 1) The Word gives hope.

C. Vs 9

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

1. Title-Fear

- a. The use of "fear" is interesting because it is applied to the bible. Why? the bible is designed to open our eyes to the glory and awesomeness of God. It is to cause us to see Him as He is and cry out with Isaiah, "Woe is me! I am undone.!" It is to smash our hearts of pride and bring us to our knees in holy worship. Matt Henry

2. Characteristic-Clean

- a. No uncleanness, no impurity, no tainting of lies

3. Benefit-Enduring Forever

- a. Psa. 119:89

- b. Psa. 119:160
 - c. We cannot always trust the words of men but we can trust God's Word
4. Title-Judgments
- a. Verdicts from the Supreme Judge
 - b. It's God opinion that matters!
5. Characteristic-Truth
- a. John 17:17
6. Benefit-Righteous all together
- a. Comprehensive-we do not need additions or modifications

D. Vss 10-11

1. Vs 10: They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
 - a. Is God's Word more desirable to you than gold? Or, sweeter than honey?
2. Vs 11: Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

III. God's Servants Desire to Glorify Him (13-14).

Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins;
 Let them not rule over me;
 Then I will be [e]blameless,
 And I shall be acquitted of great transgression. (vs 13)

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
 Be acceptable in Your sight,
 O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer. (vs14)

- A. Having contemplated the endless praise to God in creation and the soul-satisfying, soul-restoring power of God's word, David now declares his desire to glorify God.
- B. His soul is awakened again that he is a sinner. His heart produces sin with great ease and he can be found guilty of seeking to exalt himself.
- C. Therefore he asks that God keep him from presumptuous sins.
 1. That word carries the idea of being insolent and arrogant.

2. In Psalm 119:21 it is described of those who wander from the commandments
 3. It is a sin of pride—a highhanded sin where we exalt ourselves over the ways of God.
- D. David desires to found blameless before God, not man
- E. David needs God's work in his heart so that God would preserve him and allow him to be a mouthpiece of praise to God
1. David's desire is that the words that he speaks and the thoughts that he thinks would be of God
 2. That God would accept them as true and proper aspects of worship and praise

“Listen, beloved, if the Word of God is sufficient for salvation, if it is sufficient to perfectly transform the soul of a person, if it is sufficient for the all skills of spiritual living, if it is sufficient to bring full joy to overcome the sorrows and struggles of life, if it sufficient to bring understanding to the dark things hard to see, if it is sufficient to purify all sin and if in all of this it's always true, then it's got to be the source of everything in spiritual living. And I believe that with all my heart because that's the testimony of God Himself. And that the Word in the life of an individual energized by the spirit of God brings about consummate sufficiency. To believe anything less is to strike a blow against the integrity of the living God.” P. John MacArthur

Questions for CGs:

1. Share with your group one of the notes you took and why you took it? (CGL-always remind your group about taking notes)
2. Read Psalm 119 (or at least portions) and note similar or others titles for the Word, characteristics of the Word and benefits of the Word.
3. Are you convinced that the Bible is sufficient for giving counsel and that it addresses the full range of human problems that are common to man? If not what not?

Recommended reading: Scripture and Counseling-God's Word for Life in a Broken World, Bob Kellemen, General Editor