

## ***A Psalm for the Summer***

Psalm 19

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As the construction of cityscapes presses on, the growth of urban areas expands their depth, and concrete jungles take the place of where nature once stood, the chance to see the beauty of the night sky decreases. Artificial light acts as a barrier for our human eyes to see the twinkling of stars, galaxies, and much more. Trees, plants, flowers, and wild animals are replaced by apartment buildings, shopping malls, airports, industrial warehouses. While the beauty of God's creation is everywhere, these days we are having to look a bit more intently.

Camp Ponderosa Ranch is the summer camp for the Southwest Division. It is nestled in the White Mountains, allowing for cooler weather in the hotter months. One of my favorite activities to do in the summer is star gaze. As soon as the sun sets and the blanket of the darkness wash over all it touches, the sky starts to light up. The Milky Way displays its beauty in all its regal glory. Purples, blues, pinks, and whites form the signature silhouette that demands the attention of all insight. Constellations sweep across the night sky in such a fashion that reminds the viewer of a bottle of spilled glitter. This is a view that cannot be attained in the city.

There is no doubt that the greatness of God is reflected in the very nature he has created. His handiwork is proclaimed everywhere canyon, tree, valley, flower, plant, and animal. David wrote this song to document the exquisiteness of God's creation, and to reveal his greatness.

### **Read Psalm 19:1-6**

In this portion of the Psalm, God reveals himself through nature and we learn about his power and our restrictions.

1. Rewrite verses 1-6 in your own words.
2. When was the last time you went out in nature and marveled at God's greatness?
3. Where is your favorite place in nature to commune with God?

### **Read Psalm 19:7-11**

In this portion of the Psalm God reveals himself through scripture. Through scripture, we learn about God's holiness and our sinful nature.

1. Look at verses 7-8. In what ways does the perfect law of the Lord revive your soul?
2. How do verses 9-11 encourage you to know God's word more?
3. What are some things in your life that take priority over studying scripture?

### **Read Psalm 19:12-14**

In this portion of the Psalm, God reveals himself through daily experiences and we learn about his gracious forgiveness and our salvation.

1. Feelings of guilt from our choices can often prohibit us from growing closer to God. What are some sins that are stopping you from fully embracing a complete relationship with God?
2. What are some practical actions that you can put into practice to help make sure "the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart are pleasing to God"?
3. How have you witnessed God's grace in your life recently?

*Dear God,*

*Thank you for the beauty of your creation. Sometimes we can get so busy checking off the tasks of our to-do list that we lose focus. I pray that in those busy seasons of life you would point us to your greatness. Forgive us for allowing guilt and fear to stop us from pursuing a complete and whole relationship with you. Give us the strength to go on from day to day, wisdom to make the right choices, and courage to follow through with the plans you have for us.*

*Amen.*