

Introduction

Several years ago, I overheard two women talking in a beauty salon. One told the other about a friend of hers who was pregnant out of wedlock, bankrupt, alienated from her family, and more. After explaining the more, she summed it up and said: **"Her life is a mess. She needs to get it together."** We've all used that terminology haven't we? We've said that someone can't get it together or that someone needs to get it together. That's where Psalm 19:7 comes because David teaches us in it how to do just that, get it together.

Getting It Together

Let's begin with the word **"soul."** The soul is the most profound of our inner dimensions. It organizes and enlivens our other inner dimensions (thoughts, feelings, and will). It is, therefore, what is running our lives at any given moment.

The reason people don't have it together is their soul. For one reason or another, it's shriveled or even ruined. And it's unable to organize and enliven their thoughts, feelings, and will because it is. Those inner dimensions are then weakened and disconnected or wrongly connected as a result. They're in a **"helter-skelter"** state, functioning incoherently or in conflict with each other. That in turn produces a struggling and maybe even devastated life – like that of the woman's friend. So, when we say that people don't have it together, we're speaking literally not metaphorically about their inner dimensions.

That's the problem, but thankfully there's a solution, and David defines what it is. Look at the term **"Your servant"** in verse 11. It identifies for whom this psalm is written. It's servants of God, or in New Testament terms, disciples and friends of Jesus. That's the very first step we must take in order to get it together. We must apprentice ourselves to Jesus. We must make and carry out the decision to be with Him in order to learn and do all that He says. Doing so allows the Holy

Spirit to inject His presence generally and His power and grace particularly into our persons and lives.

Now, apprenticing ourselves to Jesus involves practicing certain central activities, one of which David reveals in verse 7.

The Bible Is a Picture of Reality

Notice a term in this verse, "**the law of the Lord.**" That term suggests written revelation from God and refers to the Bible.

Also notice an adjective in this verse that describes the Bible. It's "**perfect,**" which means flawless and complete. That adjective implies several things about the Bible, one of which is this. It's a picture of reality. Its contents, including its commandments, reflect the way things are in our world and life - spiritually, psychologically, relationally, financially, aesthetically, microbiologically, and and so on.

A commandment and statistic illustrate what I mean. Commandment - Be sexually pure (remain a virgin until marriage). Statistic - The Center for Disease Control and prevention reports: "**STDs are one of the most critical health care challenges facing the nation today. CDC estimates that there are 19 million new infections every year in the United States.**" Obey the commandment – don't get the disease. God's commandment to be sexually pure reflects the way things are microbiologically in our world.

That illustrates something about the Bible. It's a picture of reality, which obviously and primarily includes the dominant of all realities, God Himself. It's critical that we grasp that. His written word generally and its commandments particularly are expressions of His nature. They reflect all 18 of His attributes that we learned in our *Awesome God Ministry* last year.

1 Corinthians 13 is a simple example of what I mean. It describes in detail the love we're to have for others. Well, that description is an expression of God's nature. He wrote what He wrote there because He is what He is, love. He is love. His love is all-encompassing and never-

ending. The contents of 1 Corinthians 13 reflect that about Him.

It's true then. The Bible is perfect. It is among other things a picture of reality, including the dominant of all realities, God Himself.

Restores the Soul

Now, David reveals what it does because it is that. It "**restores**" our soul. That is a penetrating insight. There is an affinity between the Bible and our soul. The Bible, in other words, is good for our soul. You've all heard the term "**soul food.**" That's exactly what the Bible is. It's soul food. It's a spiritual power in its own right that restores or converts the soul.

But there's an obvious condition for it doing so. We have to engage it. It restores our soul only if we engage it. Engagement involves three activities, each of which I want to identify and briefly explain.

The first is repetition. We direct ourselves to the Bible routinely – over and over and over again. Studies show that 70% of Christians read the Bible nine minutes a day for two days or less a week. That isn't enough for it to restore our soul. We must direct ourselves to it frequently and for extended periods of time.

The second activity is concentration. To concentrate on the Bible means to focus our attention on it. It means to center our mind with a singleness of purpose on the text that's before us. As Christian psychiatrist Curt Thompson says it, concentration or attention is "**the ignition key of the mind**" and I would say of the soul as well.

The third activity is obedience. We intend to live consistently with the contents and commandments of the Bible and carry out our intention as best as we can. The sociological principle of praxis explains what happens when we do. Praxis says that what we do converts what we are, and that's true, especially when the reference point of our actions is the Bible. Trying to obey it, even when we do so imperfectly, impacts our soul for good.

Repetition, concentration, and obedience are how we engage the

Bible and something extraordinary happens when we do. It restores our soul. Remember that the Bible reflects the nature of God. Engaging it, therefore, infuses the very order and form of His nature into our soul. Our soul then organizes our thoughts, feelings, and will around that order and form. Those inner dimensions in turn begin working coherently, working together under God, to produce an abundant, flourishing life.

Take 1 Corinthians 13, for instance. This past Saturday, I turned right off of Main Street in Poland on to the street my house is on - Cover Drive. I did everything right, but the driver behind me, for some reason, laid on her horn and threw in a gesture for good measure. There was a time in my life that I would have gotten angry in return and blown my horn right back. But engaging 1 Corinthians 13 and other texts, including Matthew 5-7, has restored my soul. So I felt bad about the driver's inner condition and offered a flash prayer for her instead.

I know it by experience and so do many of you. Engaging the Bible, as I defined it, restores our soul.

Conclusion

I close this morning with a question. Are your thoughts, feelings, and will working coherently under God? Do you have it together in other words? Apprentice yourself to Jesus. Then engage the Bible as I defined it. It will restore your soul and you'll get it together if you do.