

In this morning's text, the Psalmist reminds us that nature needs no instruction in modeling God's benevolence and generosity. Can you picture the hospitality of a sunrise? Is there any limit to its creativity? Is there any end to its consistency? And even when it's right before us, are there adequate words to express its wonder? The sun, the waters, the sands, the winds, the flying things, and creeping things, and swimming things – they tell of God's glory, they share God's glory, they invite us into God's glory.

We humans, we have all the senses to express God's glory, and yet we need a little help. The Psalmist tells us that God, through the saints before us, gifted us the scriptures, which include the laws and ordinances for living into covenant with our Creator: doing justice, loving mercy, walking humbly with our God.

Now admittedly, there are large portions, maybe even entire chapters and books of scripture where it's hard to draw out a sense of justice and compassion that meets our modern standards. And in so many places, we find words that seem to contradict the nature and character of the hospitable God we've come to know and understand. But to be fair, there is also a lot to admire. A lot. And when we read scripture, and especially God's covenantal language through the lens of justice, we discover, in many verses, a calling to love our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable ones.

Jesus is valuable to us in many ways, but today, I think he's especially valuable for his conciseness. He sums up the whole of Torah into a pithy phrase: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your mind, and all your strength, and all your soul. And love your neighbor as you love yourself.

But Jesus wasn't just someone who was good at writing executive summaries. Jesus had the uncanny ability to both express the word of God, and live out the purpose of God.

I can't say for sure what prompted Jesus to ideate our table ritual. But I do know that he was well-versed in the faith story of his people. God offered manna in the wilderness, a provision more generous than sunlight, and yet more efficient than FIFO and Just-in-Time inventory accounting procedures. God purposed Jubilee, an

WORDS FOR THE TABLE
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Psalm 19



a spiritually
progressive
community
of faith

ongoing sense of restoration and renewal. God commanded justice: empathy for the orphan, the widow, and the stranger.

Jesus told us to love God and neighbor. And then he offered a tangible way to realize this love. He made every conversation a table. He gave what he had: his time, his attention, his respect, his bread, his wine...himself. To all he encountered. And he said that when we meet at the table in a similar manner, he will always be there.

Friends, we may not ever be able to match the mystery and awe of a sunrise; but when we gather at God's table, we have before us the opportunity to emulate its consistent generosity.

Friends, may we become table people, in order that the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, would be acceptable to you, O LORD, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.