

**The Sensory Style – Enjoying the Works of God**  
**Ps 19:1-6, Is 28:23-29**

Well brothers and sisters, can you believe it? When we finish our 9 Ways to Grow Spiritually series next Sunday its already going to be the first week of March! So, we are in the home stretch now – with only two styles left to look at before we get into our TALK Show series.

This morning we will be looking at the Sensory style and next Sunday we'll finish off with the Rational style - which will have given us three weeks of learning about green styles of spirituality in preparation for our participation in the TALK Show.

But before we get into the Sensory style, there are some important points about this spiritual growth tool that I want to address.

So far we've done well in grasping the concept of discovering our natural spiritual style and understanding that pursuing growth in that style will be affirming and easy for us.

And I think we're starting to get the point that if we do not engage in our opposite style – even though it will feel awkward and weird and unpleasant – our strengths will become our weakness. *(Though we probably need to admit that while we may understand this mentally – we have not gained understanding of going through this experientially – yet...)*

So these are important spiritual growth principles to understand, and more importantly – to apply.

Because that's the point of learning about this tool brothers and sisters. When you have a tool and you understand it and know how it works... then you can use it and you can accomplish something with it.

So, I want to emphasize this morning that taking the survey and learning about your specific style isn't an end in itself. This isn't something to learn just for interest's sake...

It is meant to equip you and train you to be able take specific actions to pursue growth in your relationship with ALL three persons of the Trinity, in who they are and what they do as God – as one in three and three in one.

And it is meant to help us understand each other better and encourage and mentor each other in learning to grow in the different styles – working with each other in this way facilitates spiritual community.

So, your natural style is not a stopping point – it's a starting point from where you can begin to confidently engage in other spiritual activities in order to broaden your experience of the Triune God.

Now its also worth mentioning that we should not confuse our spiritual styles with worship styles. Spiritual styles are much broader in their experience of God in one's day to day life than however they may relate to the different varieties of music or approaches to preaching or inclusion of 'smells and bells' in any particular Sunday worship service.

A very helpful explanation of a spiritual style can be found in the survey report where it explains that your style is kind of like an antenna which receives what God is broadcasting.

I'd go a bit further with that analogy and say that your natural style is kind of like tuning in on a particular frequency that gets the clearest reception of what God is broadcasting – but... that doesn't mean you're not getting some reception across all the other frequencies.

If you are a Christian your antenna will be picking up across all the nine style to some degree or another because these three colors of spirituality as they represent the work of each person of the Trinity- also tell the story of the scripture and reflect what it means to be a Christian.

Let me explain. Being a Christian means that you understand "In the beginning God created"- so we automatically have to start with some Green because God is Creator.

And then its pretty obvious that being a Christian means that you believe that the Fall into sin required God to become a Saving God, which culminates the person and work of Jesus Christ revealed to us in the Scripture – so we obviously need to have Red.

And Christians believe that Jesus ascended into Heaven, returned to His Father and they sent the Holy Spirit to apply Christ's saving and redemptive work to us... otherwise we wouldn't be Christians... So, we gotta have some Blue, God as a transforming God

But we can't stop there brothers and sisters – the scriptures don't stop there...

The scriptures reveal to us that the goal of God's redemptive and transforming plan is to save the Creation and bring about the new heavens and earth – the NEW Creation... So, the story has us moving back into Green again and the purpose of God's transforming work in us is having us apply His transforming

work to the Creation. That's what being a Christian is all about – at least if you are going to be a biblical Christian.

So, you see how this isn't just about learning some interesting stuff about yourself... or even pursuing spiritual growth just for the sake of spiritual growth because you're stuck in rut... Its actually a helpful way to grasp the true story of the whole world and find your place in it and determine where you are located in travelling along with the plan of redemption and evaluating how well you are growing towards fully participating in Triune God's work of redeeming His Creation.

And your growing understanding of this story, and how God's Trinitarian nature and work is woven into it, and your own increasing participating in it is a very essential part of what it means to grow spiritually – as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

And so, what we are exploring this morning and next week Sunday in the Sensory and Rational styles will lay out THE context which shapes and directs the overall purpose for which we want to grow spiritually.

So, with this in mind let's take a closer look at the Sensory style this morning and use the analogy of the spiritual style antenna to help us understand how the Sensory style experiences God through His works.

So turn with me to Psalm 19 and as we look at it we notice that in the first 4 verses we find 5 words that describe how God is broadcasting about himself through what He has made.

It says that *"the heavens **declare** the glory of God; the skies **proclaim** the work of his hands... they **pour forth speech**... they **reveal** knowledge...their voice **goes out**..."*

So, the Creation is communicating about God brothers and sisters – and the Apostle Paul echoes this in Romans 1:20 where he says *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, **being understood from what has been made... so that people are without excuse.**"*

Now brothers and sisters – every human being has at least some capacity to recognize what the creation is saying – that's why Paul can say "so that people are without excuse for not knowing about God"

However, if your natural style is the sensory style then you are wired to be more sensitive to receive this communication than most other people, you are naturally tuned in to the Creation's broadcast frequency.

Because the Creation broadcasts about God on a different frequency than other forms of revelation do. Ps 19:3 describes it this way *"They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them."* So, we see here that this is a different kind of communication than we might experience in hearing God speak through his Word, or the Holy Spirit speaking through an inspired prophetic message.

If your natural style is Sensory then your antenna is especially tuned in to receive what we can know about God through

what we call General Revelation which comes from His creation.

And the reception of this broadcast might be as simple as being awestruck by the natural beauty of the mountains or the prairies, or whatever place it is that you would describe as “God’s country...”

Or it might be the feeling of being overwhelmed by the vastness of the ocean... the realization of how small and insignificant we are in a universe where distance is measured in billions of lightyears. As King David said in Ps 8:3-4 *“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?”*

So if you are of the Sensory style you will likely pick up on what the natural world and the universe is communicating about God very easily.

But brothers and sisters God’s works include more than the natural world – there is much more to creation than the *“rocks and trees, the skies and seas”* and this is implied by the references to a bridegroom and a warrior in Psalm 19:5.

And for the sake of time I’m not going to go into all the detailed explanation behind this – but the inclusion of marriage customs and traditions and the martial arts of battle in this Psalm about how creation broadcasts about God, means it is more than just the natural world that reveals God... what we typically consider to be “human works” are also part of God’s creation and they reveal God to us as well.

If you want to dig into why that is you can visit the sermon archives on the church website and look up the sermon [More than Nature](#) from October of 2015 and you’ll get the whole biblical exploration of that.

So, what this means is that things like agriculture, business, government, education, literature, music and arts and sports and any other field of human endeavor you can think of is part

of God's creation – and if you are of the Sensory style you will find it easy to receive what these parts of the creation are broadcasting about God as well.

And you will find that these parts of the Creation reveal God to you not only as you behold them, but more significantly as you engage in them, study them, take them apart and put them back together again, learn how they work or do not work, and use them in accordance with the purposes for which they were created and designed. That is what is implied in our second scripture passage from Isaiah 28.

Listen again to Isaiah 28:26-27 *“God instructs him [the farmer] and teaches him the right way. Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is the wheel of a cart rolled over cumin; caraway is beaten out with a rod, and cumin with a stick.”*

This is a very interesting take on learning by experience brothers and sisters. From the scripture's perspective its not really “experience” that is teaching the farmer the right way to deal with different crops – it is actually God.

And so what we learn about the “laws” of agriculture or medicine or mathematics or music or dance actually comes to us from God and is how these areas of the creation allow us to experience God as Creator – and as you know by now... If you are of the Sensory style this will come rather naturally to you.

Now the advantage or strength of the Sensory style is that you find it very easy to experience God in your day to day life though interacting with various parts of His creation.

Where other Christians struggle to bring their relationship with God into their Monday to Saturday routine, you have no problem experiencing Him as you appreciate the beauty of a sunrise, savor a delicious cup of coffee in the morning, find immense satisfaction in pursuing your work, feel the thrill of engaging in sports and competition, enjoy the pleasure of listening to music, watching a movie or contemplating a piece of art...

In all of this you have a sense that you are experiencing the Creator in and through His Creation and He is very real to you

in this way, and in fact – though you wouldn't tell this to anyone at church – your most profound experiences of God have come through some part of His creation and not in the bible reading and prayer and preaching of a regular worship service.

Now understanding how God's revelation in Creation is connected to God's specific revelation in the scriptures is very important for the Sensory style people to learn – so if you are Sensory style and you want pursue some growth – then I would suggest a great first step is learning about how Creation and the Scripture co-illuminate each other.

In fact, I have another sermon on that exact topic which you can download off the Church website and read – look under the sermon archives in Oct 2015 for the message called Two Books.

Now – this is important because as we know, our strengths become our weaknesses and if the Sensory style does not engage in the discipline of learning about how creation and

scripture work to reveal God – the experience of God in the creation can lead to idolatry and the confusing the creation with the Creator.

Our one-sided emphasis on experiencing God in the good things that He provides to us can easily cause us to turn those good things into god things - and we begin to indulge in them and pursue them and put them first instead of the Triune God.

That is why the discipline, simplicity and austerity of the opposite Ascetic style is helpful for the Sensory people to engage in from time to time.

Now in spite of the fact that Sensory people might not experience God in the church the way they do in the creation, the church needs its Sensory style people to be involved - and we need to be careful that we don't look down on them and view them as "worldly" because they don't experience God in the traditional "spiritual" disciplines.

We need to realize that our Sensory style people remind us that God's ultimate purpose for revealing Himself to us more clearly and specifically in the scripture, and sending the Holy Spirit in power to transform us, is so that we can participate with God in the restoration of the Creation.

Listen to what Paul says in Romans 8:19-21 *"For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope [anticipation] that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God."*

So, brothers and sisters – as I mentioned at the beginning of this message, this is not just about discovering your particular style for curiosity's sake – this is about finding our place in God's plan to save His Creation and growing in our ability to understand and participate in that. To identify and pursue not just our spiritual growth – but our Kingdom calling!

So, while we may not all be naturally wired for the Sensory style – we can all benefit from learning more about how to experience God through His creation - because that helps to equip us for our task of bringing the Creation into the freedom and glory of the Children of God.

So, ask yourself brothers and sisters - what part of God's creation are you passionate about?

You may not be Sensory style but I have yet to meet a human being who does not have at least one particular area of the creation that they are attracted to, which they find appealing and enjoyable and fascinating. So, what is it for you?

Music, art, dance, sports, cars, coffee, computers, engineering or stamp collecting? Whatever it is big or small – know this... God finds it just as interesting and fascinating as you do and He is even more passionate about than you are because it's a part of His Creation!



And you know what else I've discovered brothers and sisters? If you are passionate about some part of God's creation you also know what's wrong with it.

You know bad music from good music, sportsmanship and honest competition from cheating, careful precise engineering vs. careless disregard for design and function - you know that which plagues what you are passionate about... and so does God.

But what you may not know or realize is that this is an example of how the creation is subject to frustration, a concrete example of how the FALL into sin can warp and twist or skew God's created intentions for that particular part of His creation.

And your passion for this part of the Creation is your motivation to act, as a saved and sanctified new creation in Christ, an ambassador of the Kingdom of God – to claim that part of the Creation for the Kingdom and work to in partnership with Christ and the Holy Spirit to discover what

that looks like to redeem it and allow it to bring glory to God – as an act of worship!

Brothers and sisters, you may know that I was born and raised in a Christian family, my father is a minister as well, and I've previously shared with you how the Lord worked through a motorbike accident when I was a teenager to convict me of my need for salvation in Jesus Christ and the importance of sharing that good news of salvation in Jesus with everyone. And once that conviction settled in my heart it has never left...

But I distinctly remember a moment in theology class in Christian University when I realized that the full implications of God's redemption of His creation, this creation, meant that snowboarding and skateboarding and hip-hop music – everything that I was very passionate about at the time – was going to be included in the New Creation...

And in that moment, I remember saying to myself – wow, this is true - I'm all in. I was on board before – but now I'm all in!

Because in that moment I not only knew what I had been saved from – the Holy Spirit showed me what I had been saved for.

And brothers and sisters – if there is one thing that engaging these Green styles can offer to us – it’s the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to give us this kind of life changing vision of what we are saved for.

Working with God to redeem His Creation! That’s amazing!

And that is my driving passion for being a minister brothers and sisters - and its my hearts desire for each of you as a part of this congregation, that you would come to know what you have been saved **for** – and you would be all in for that.

Because – as the scriptures remind us that *“All this also comes from the Lord Almighty, whose plan is wonderful, whose wisdom is magnificent.” (Isaiah 28:29)*

May you experience God in the salvation of His Creation

Amen.