

# Restoration of a Damaged Soul

by Steve Gallagher

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*Steve Gallagher's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's Word in restoring damaged souls, particularly in the context of sexual immorality.*

**Duration:** 40:31

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:7

**Topics:** "Restoration"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of choosing the Word of God over the empty cisterns of the world. He warns that after graduating from a program, there will be a temptation to turn back to worldly distractions like television and the internet. The speaker shares his personal testimony of finding more joy in the Bible than anything else in life, even friendships. He also highlights biblical stories of Jonah, David, and Uzziah to illustrate the consequences of turning away from God's precepts and falling into sin. The sermon emphasizes the sureness and power of God's testimony and the blessing of having a reliable source of truth in a world filled with uncertainties.

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## Transcript

The following message is provided by Eternal Weight of Glory. For other sermons, teachings, and articles, please visit [EternalWeight.com](http://EternalWeight.com). As you can see, the title of my message is Restoration of a Damaged Soul. And, of course, I'm speaking to mostly, here, this morning, our men in our live-in program who have been terribly damaged inside by the ravages of sexual immorality.

And I don't know of much out there that can more quickly destroy an inner life than sexual sin. But, I want to say that this message is just as applicable to any person. I was thinking about the women in this room, here, this morning.

And I want to say that your souls have been damaged as well, because we have all gone astray. Turn to Psalm 19, if you would. I want to look at a few verses there in Psalm 19, verses 7 through 9. And, basically, what we have here are six clauses that all have the name of God associated in them.

Jehovah, Yahweh, however you pronounce it. And these are all to do with the Word of God, the Word of the Lord. And what I want to say is that I believe this is one of those passages of Scripture where the first phrase is really what it's all about.

And everything behind it is added in as a support to that phrase. It could have just been expressed in this first clause. The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.

That is what I believe David wanted to express to us. But then he follows that up with supporting statements, which we're going to get into. But I want to skip down to the last one.

The judgments of the Lord are true. They are righteous altogether. And, you know, what I want to say is that you'll notice these other phrases all have to do with the work that goes on inside the soul.

But this last phrase is just a statement about the Word of God. And so, you know, I'm not going to try to make that into a point in my message here today because it doesn't fit in that regard. What I'm going to do is I'm just going to add that into that first clause because that's what I believe it's saying.

The law of the Lord is perfect, true, and righteous altogether, restoring the soul. I believe that's really what it's saying. I mean, you know, it certainly isn't wrong to put it that way.

But that's the way I'm going to say it here just for the sake of our message, that the law of the Lord is perfect, true, and righteous altogether. And here's the effects on it. Your soul, if you allow it, if you apply it to your soul, if you allow the Holy Spirit to work it into you, it has the power, the efficacy to restore your damaged soul.

That's good news. That is good news. That we're not hopeless, we're not stuck adrift in a sea of going nowhere, floundering, as if things will never get any better.

No, it's not true. We do have hope, and we have hope because of the Word of God. And we have to decide if we believe the claims that the Word of God makes.

And I want to say to you this morning, unequivocally, that in spite of all the empty promises and shallow platitudes that come forth from psychology, I want to say as clearly as I know how to say no, that it's the Word of God that promises to restore my soul. How is that going to happen? It's going to bring wisdom to the simple person. It's going to bring a great deal of inward joy.

It's going to bring spiritual light. It's going to bring a person into the proper fear of the Lord. That's how it's going to happen.

Which just happens to work out pretty well for a preacher, you know, because you can lay out those nice little points for a sermon. But before I get to that, I want to just touch on one word briefly. The law.

The law of the Lord. Now, realistically, that term just encompasses all of the Word of God. It's not meant just for the Pentateuch, the Torah.

It's not just that. And it really does refer to the whole counsel of God. You know, the whole entire Word of God.

That's what it means. But I want to just look at that word just briefly from a different perspective. And that is law in the sense of there are just laws in life.

When we think of laws, we think of speed limits. We think of rules. We think of regulations.

Or if we apply it to the Christian realm, what we tend to think of is the dos and don'ts, the Ten Commandments and things like that. That's what we tend to think of with law. But what I want to talk about is more of the principles of life.

Like, for instance, the law of gravity. That's a law in the physical realm. And if we looked at our bodies, for instance, there are certain laws to do with our health.

You know, if we abuse our bodies, we're going to pay a price for it, right? That's just a law of life. That was the way that God created our bodies to operate was that we need certain nourishment coming into our bodies daily. And if we abuse that in some way, let's say we just go on a candy bar diet, well, you know, we're going to be sickly.

We're not going to be full of health and vigor and, you know, and all of that. We're just not going to operate the way that God created our bodies to operate. Or apply it to a farmer.

You know, if he operates with the laws of the land, land meaning earth, if he operates and treats his crops right, whatever that means, you know, watering them and doing whatever farmers do, then he's going to end up with a crop. But if he doesn't treat his land right, if he doesn't plow it and disk it and plant right and all that stuff, if he doesn't do things right, he may end up with a crop, but it's going to be a sickly crop, isn't it? There's not going to be anything worthwhile there. Well, it's the same thing for us spiritually.

There are spiritual laws. And this is one of these spiritual laws that we're talking about, that the word of God has the capacity, has the power to come into a damaged soul and restore spiritual health. That's one of the great needs that we all have, because we have started off from the very beginning.

We've started off in the negative, in trouble, spiritually. And you know what happens is unless we allow the law to get inside of our hearts, penetrate our hearts and restructure things and turn the tide around, unless we allow that to happen inside of us, we're going to go down a downward path. And we're going to get worse and worse and worse.

We're going to become increasingly more corrupted inside, more prideful, more self-centered. In fact, you can just let yourself go so far that you become literally insane. Because you will not allow God's word to take its proper place inside of you, to rule and reign in your heart and in your inside world, your inner man.

That's where you'll end up going. This passage is typical of Scripture. Listen, I heard someone say one time or I read it or something that the Apostle Paul is a terrible writer.

And I know what the guy was saying. The point he was making is as far as authors are concerned, the Apostle Paul just wasn't a good writer. And that's who he was referring to.

But I would just expand that out to the whole Bible. But there's a method in the madness. God didn't write out Scriptures to coincide with our logical thinking minds.

He didn't create the Bible to be that way, to be constructed that way. He purposely created it to be something that you have to dig into to get the truth out of it. He wanted it that way.

Why? Why? Because those who are sincere, those with sincere hearts will get past obstacles. You'll work your way past that and you will find the truth and you'll apply it to your heart. I'm going to just kind of rework these phrases in a different order.

And the reason is because, well, it's because that's the way I want to do it. Okay, so that's why I'm going to do it that way. Now, there is a method to my madness too.

Let's just look at these phrases. Number one, I'm going to begin with the fear of the Lord. Why am I going to begin with that? Because that's what the Bible says.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. And if the Bible says it, it must be true, right? So that's what we'll start with. The fear of the Lord is clean and enduring.

Let me read it in a couple other translations. Reverence for the Lord is a pure and lasting way of life. Another translation says, How sacred a thing is the fear of the Lord, which is binding forever.

Now, this phrase is an exceedingly important phrase in Scripture. The fear of the Lord. And, you know, it doesn't say the fear of the Lord does something.

Actually, it's implied that when you spend time in the Word, and I'll even show you here in a second, when you spend time in the Word, the fear of the Lord is one of the benefits of that. That it becomes established within you. The fear of the Lord.

You know, what I just read to you. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

That comes from Proverbs 1. And the entire first chapter of Proverbs is all about the Word of God and the fear of the Lord. And what it ends up with is the second half of that chapter is a terrifying warning. That if you will not allow me to come inside of you and straighten out your wayward thinking, terrible calamity is in store for you.

That's basically what the first chapter of Proverbs is all about. And then the second chapter of Proverbs, I'm just going to read these first few verses. My son, if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you.

That's not just talking about someone who reads their Bible. That's not referring to someone who memorizes Scripture. That's referring to someone when the Word of God comes at them and deals with them, confronts issues inside of them, they receive it.

They humble themselves before it. They acknowledge it. They say, yes, sir.

And they do what they've been told to do. They respond. And whenever you respond to the Word of God as it comes your way, you are receiving it inside of you to do its work inside.

And that is really what treasuring the Word of God is all about. It's not memorizing Scripture. That's a very shallow perspective.

Not that there's anything wrong with memorizing Scripture. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying. But that's head stuff.

For it to get down inside of you, you've got to embrace what it is saying and let it do its work inside of you. Make your ear attentive to wisdom. Incline your heart to understanding.

For if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding. If you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God. Then you will.

Then you will. I want to just read that verse. Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

For he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently or earnestly seek Him. It's really saying the same thing. There is a reward.

There is a reward to those who will cry out to God for discernment and understanding. That is describing the cry of a sincere heart. God, I want the truth! I don't care what it will cost me! Because my soul has been terribly marred by sin and rebellion! And I want Your truth! God, I invite Your truth to come inside of me and point out everything that has gone astray from Your narrow way.

The Word of God is prescribed for my life. When you have that kind of cry in your heart, and can I just share with you, I don't mean to boast or whatever with all the faults and failures I have had, but that is what this ministry was founded on many years ago. It was that earnest cry for God to come inside and straighten out this damaged soul.

And that cry has never quit. In all these many years of ministry, between my wife and I, both of us, that cry continues. God, come inside and heal my damaged soul.

No matter what. Well, the fear of the Lord is part of that process, dear ones. Let me just continue down this list.

We have this list here. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. There is a litmus test of where you're at, how much fear you have in your heart towards God.

That's a good barometer for you. It lets you know where you're at in this. The fear of the Lord prolongs life.

In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence. Why is that? Because when you fear God, you are allowing Him to do His work inside of you. And there is just a confidence that comes about.

I don't know how to explain that. Those of you who lack self-confidence, I don't even like that term, self-confidence. I don't want to have confidence in myself.

I don't have any confidence in myself. My confidence is in God. Those of you who lack confidence, though, here's your answer, the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord. And how do you get that fear? You cry out for it. You cry out for it and you treasure God's Word inside of you.

I'm telling you, it just happens. The fear of the Lord just happens. The more time that you soak in Scripture and the more that you allow God to go inside of you, the depths of your heart, and do His work inside of you through His Word, the more the fear of the Lord becomes established within you.

And the Word of God has the power to do that. You know why that is? It's because by spending time in God's Word, you are seeing everything as God sees it, and God is huge in the Bible. In your thinking, you are huge.

We're all that way. That's part of the fallen nature, is we are so huge in our own thinking. But in the Bible, God is huge.

So when we spend time in the Word of God, there is a change that goes on. You start taking on that perspective where God becomes bigger and you become smaller. And everything you see in life just changes.

Your perspectives of it. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. And here's the last one.

By the fear of the Lord, one keeps away from evil. It's like a wall built around you in life. When you have the fear of the Lord established within you and evil comes your way, there's just something, a hesitation.

There's just a hesitation because you know the price that's involved. You understand the consequences because you have sat long in the Word of God and have allowed the Word of God to reshape your thinking and perspectives. So you understand the consequences when that temptation comes your way.

All right, number two. God's testimony about Himself is sure. It has the power to make wise the simple.

The Bible is the history of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. The Bible is the history of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. It's the history of God's dealings with man.

What a blessing. With all the faulty information out there, especially you go on the Internet, yeah, you can learn about anything, but you can trust none of it. That's pretty good, wasn't it? It came to me that way.

You can quote me on that, Mike. But I'll go back 100 years ago and get a different quote. C.H. Spurgeon said, What a blessing that in a world of uncertainties, we have something sure to rest upon.

We hasten from the quicksands of human speculation to the terra firma of divine revelation. That's what I would like to say to the fool editors of that magazine that Pastor Jeff referred to that devoted an entire magazine that goes out to 50,000... I just lost it. How many pastors? Is it 10,000? 50,000 pastors in that denomination that magazine goes to? And this is what the leadership of that denomination says is the way to deal with sexual sin? Must have been 15 different articles in there and every one of them pointing man to psychology as the answer instead of to the Word of God.

Woe is you! As Pastor Jeff said earlier. God help us. But anyway, the Word of God is a revelation of Himself and how He deals with people.

You know, there's two things I love about it. Number one is it tells the story with complete honesty. That's one reason you can know this Bible is true.

That it really is true. Because no one would tell the story of its leading advocates and champions and purposely mar their character. What fool would do that? God would.

I say that very reverently, Lord. Watch what you say around here. Because God has nothing to hide.

He's not trying to position Himself or whatever. He just throws it out there. This is the way man is.

You know, so we get the story of Jonah. His prejudice against the Assyrians and the fact that he would rather run from his call of duty than to have to go and minister to people he really didn't care about. That's the truth of Jonah's story.

We get the story of David. One of the great champions of God who became so burned out, hard-hearted, backslidden, however you want to say it, that he caved into sexual sin, had one of his best men murdered. Just totally went into selfishness.

And God painted that story for everyone to see. We get the story of Uzziah just rising up in pride. The Bible says it.

He became proud. Why did he become proud? Because God blessed his kingdom. He started off well.

He was doing good. God's blessings came upon him and the kingdom of Judah. And then what happens? He rose up in pride and he became so presumptuous he went into the temple and tried to put himself off as a priest.

Got struck down instantly with leprosy. Peter. New Testament story.

Peter's failure. Making all his big boasts about I'll be with you to the end, Lord. And just wimped out when Jesus needed him.

So you know, I love that about the Bible. It tells the complete truth. But also, not only that, it tells the whole story.

I love reading biographies. I'm reading right now Jonathan Goforth's story. And it's nice.

I love to read how God has used people. But you're only getting man's perspective. What I love about the Bible is it gives you the whole story.

Job, for instance. Think if Job's wife would have wrote the story. You know, it would have been this dumb fool.

I don't know what in the world he did to get God mad. But all of a sudden, everything was taken from us and our lives were ruined. And then all of a sudden, everything turned around.

Whatever! That's about how that would have read. But no, we get the whole story. We get to see in what actually happened in heaven.

This interchange between God and the devil and how the devil challenged God. Let me at him! So we get to see the whole picture of what happened. Or King Saul.

If we only had the human perspective, all we would see is a madman. But no, we get the biblical, God's perspective. And we see that God sent an evil spirit to torment him because he had turned away from God.

We get the whole picture. And we even get to see inside man's heart. Like Jeroboam.

God made him the first king of the northern tribes. And it says, King Jeroboam said in his heart, okay, so whatever is going to transpire... I had transcribe in my mind for some reason. What in the world? Transpire.

Whatever is going to transpire after that is going on in his heart. And the Bible takes us right into his heart and shows us what his thinking was. He said in his heart, you know, if I don't do something, all the people from my kingdom are going to go down to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

So I better set up my own worship centers up here. And he brought in idolatry. Shows us right exactly what was going on inside of him.

Praise the Lord. Only the Bible can do that. Alright, now let me just shift gears for a second.

Just keep all that in mind. Because this is all for someone. It's for the simple.

It's for the simple. A lot of times, at least in the NAS, that's translated as naive. But it really refers to open.

That's really the word that describes this person. Open. They are open to whatever comes along.

We had a guy who used to work here. And I said this to him. I used this term to describe him one time because he was always on a mad hunt for a wife.

And he fell in love every time we would travel out there and he'd see some pretty girl, he fell in love with her. And I'm telling you, I went through 10 different relationships with him. Just turned my hair white dealing with him.

And every time I'd have to coax him through and try to bring his mind into reality and somehow I managed to get him through the first 9 and the 10th one was the final straw. Go ahead! No, I really was the Lord's will the last one. Praise the Lord.

But, you know, this idea of just being open inside. And I was thinking about that. I said this to him.

I said, you know, now I'm a married man. And so, you know, I'm not trying to put that on him. But still, there is a principle here.

I said, you could put me in a room with 25 beautiful, single, Christian girls looking for a husband. And you know what? There is something inside me. There is a wall that comes up between me and women.

You know? I can talk to women and stuff. But if I feel like since anything isn't right, there is an immediate wall. The door is shut.

There's a stop sign all around me. You know? And I am that way. I am not interested.

That's the message that comes out in my, I don't know how, my countenance or something. It just comes across around women. I am not available.

I'm not interested. I'm a happily married man. You know? Not that I've got women flocking all over me.

That's not. More delusional thinking, right? The point I'm trying to make is that I am, there are no open avenues into my heart. Thirty years ago, yeah, that's very much how I was.

But something has happened inside me. You know? And only the word of God. Not a great marriage.

Only the word of God could do that. And that change in me is what helped to create a great marriage. But it was God's word getting into me and doing what? Putting wisdom inside of me.

So that I could see the long term. So I could look beyond the immediate gratification or whatever. I could see the big picture.

I could see God's perspective. That's what the word of God has done for me over the years. It's changed the way that I think.

It's changed my perspectives. It's brought wisdom where there was just the simple minded naivety in that sense. All right.

And number three. God's commandments enlighten the eyes of the heart. Well, we know that it's not just saying our physical eyes, right? I mean, we understand that's not the point.

It's the eyes of our heart. The way our heart sees things. Something happens to change things.

You know, obviously, if an enlightening process is needed, it's because there's darkness there. And going back to the opening of the message, where we were talking about our souls being diseased, our souls being corrupted, our souls being damaged. Well, our souls have become that way because of the darkness in this world.

You know, the fallen nature is part of that darkness. But the word of God goes inside. I'm going to use the term darkness in a different way.

But just down inside that dark cavern of our heart and turns the light on. Probably the best commentary on this phrase is Hebrews 4.12 and 13, for that matter. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And there's no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Alright, so there's that verse. And it's just loaded with very powerful and profound insights into what the word of God does and how it operates.

It says it's living and active. In other words, there's a mysterious energy that the Holy Spirit uses the word of God when it goes inside of us, and it has the efficacy, the power to go inside and alter the structure of our inner being. The word of God has that power.

When it says it's a two-edged sword, what that means is the word of God, I'll put it to you this way, it depends on the soil of the heart. For a sincere person, the word of God has the power to bring conviction. To the insincere person, the word of God brings a word of condemnation.

Maybe warning, but definitely condemnation before it's over with. And dividing the soul and spirit, that's just referring to the difference between the soulish realm and the spiritual. We have the capacity for both inside of us.

We have our fallen nature, which is the soulish realm. It's the mind of the flesh. It's the way we think outside of God and outside of the Spirit of God.

But then we also have the spiritual womb. If we have been born again, God has deposited His Spirit, His seed inside of us. And that spiritual womb becomes connected with the Holy Spirit.

And when we allow the word of God to have its way within us, that becomes greater and greater inside of us. I mean, it's just another way of saying that Jesus Christ has His way within us, or that we become full of the Holy Spirit. They're all expressing the same exact thought.

It has the power to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. It establishes a structure of righteousness within us that does something. When we encounter different things, like Pastor Jeff gave a perfect, or maybe it was Rose, no, it was Rose, gave a perfect example of it, what I'm talking about.

In fact, I think you said it. Where are you? I think you said because she has spent so much time in the Word of God over the years that when she comes across something like all the falsehood in that magazine, there's discernment to tell that it's false. It's almost like a judge sets up a throne inside your mind.

And when things come across, it divides. That's what the word krino, the word for judge, means. It's a separation.

And it separates things true. There's a category over here. What you're getting here is truth.

When you allow the Word of God to do its work inside you, your conscience becomes empowered by the Word of God to discern between truth and falsehood, and right and wrong, and so on. But the bottom line really is allowing it to do its work inside of you. It's one thing to read the Bible.

You can read the Bible. Many of you know the Bible inside and out before you came here. You know all the Scriptures.

But what about your life? What does your life tell us by the way you were living your life? Something wasn't right. So we know that just knowing the Bible, there's got to be more to it than that, right? There's got to be something more. And it's really what I referred to earlier, that you have opened your heart to the Word of God to come in and deal with you inside.

It's not Scripture memorization, although that's good. It's not knowing your Bible, although that's good. And spending time in your Bible, that's good.

And all those things lead to what I'm describing. You need those things. Because you've got to have the Word of God coming into your mind, that constant nourishment, spiritual nourishment.

You've got to have that coming into your soul. But if it stops right there, all it will do is make you a Pharisee. That's all it will do.

It will just make you a Pharisee, a hypocrite. That knows the Word of God inside and out, but hasn't allowed it to do its work inside. That is the key.

It really is the key. There's two things I want to leave you with. First of all, a testimony.

Because it says here, the fourth clause, is that the Lord's precepts rejoice the heart. And I just want to say to you that it's my testimony, that not just the Bible in and of itself, but my time in the Bible. What this means to me is a cause of more joy than anything else I can think of in life.

I have dear friends. But if I lost all my friends, if it was a choice between losing my friends and losing the Word of God, guys, it's been nice. It's been a great run.

We've been good friends, and it's been a blessing. But I'll see you later. I don't say that flippantly.

But when it comes to the Word of God, my home, which is a dream home, I don't even know how we ended up with it. God just did it. As much as I love my home, I would rather go live in an apartment in some city than to do without the Word of God.

And my greatest possession on this earth is my wife. If I lost my wife, I would be devastated. I wouldn't know how to even go forward in life.

I couldn't imagine life without her. I wouldn't even know how to think. How could I do life without my wife who's been along my side for all these years? But it would be worse if I lost this.

The other thing I want to say, it's Psalm 1 and 2. And I'm going to read it again. I'm going to ask you a question. And then I'm going to close in prayer.

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. But his delight, his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in His law, he meditates day and night.

He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. And in whatever he does, he prospers. So again, we're shown these two different lifestyles, if I could put it that way.

But here's how I want to put it. Atmospheres. Because both create an atmosphere.

Bear with me for a minute. I want you to see yourself three months after you graduate from the program. When you get out there, you're going to be faced with an enormous temptation to turn back to the empty cisterns of the world.

It's going to be an enormous temptation to have television in your home so you can sit in front of it, to spend time in the Internet, to do those kinds of things, to put yourself in those kinds of environments, your mind, your heart, your heart. The other option is the Word of God. It has an atmosphere too.

If you allow the world to be the dominant influencer in your life, it's going to be only a matter of time. Before you end up back in the pig pen that you crawled out of before you came to Pure Life Ministries. Trust me on that, man.

Trust me. I've been doing this longer than some of you have been alive. Do I know what I'm talking about? And even before that, I had to learn these things on my own.

I forget what I was talking about. Got all wrapped up in who I am, see? 25 years doing this. Don't forget it.

What was I saying? Atmosphere. I knew that. So old I can't remember what in the world I'm doing, where I'm at.

Wife has to lead me out to the car when we're done. What's your atmosphere going to be like? What's the reality of it going to be, man? And please, guys, please, make a commitment in your heart. Let it do its work.

Don't just be shallow. Let God's Word get inside you and search you out. He's trying to get the poison out of you that has destroyed your inner man, that has diseased your soul.

Let the Word of God bring health inside of you.

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