**Title**: **Symphony** (of God's creation) – Psalm 19:1-6
**Aim**: Help us see/hear the glory of God in creation.
**Intro**: I don't know how many of you enjoy symphonies. Generally speaking, a symphony is a "consonance of sounds." Musically, a symphony is "a musical composition, usually a long & complex sonata constructed for an orchestra," or the concert of that symphony orchestra. I recently listened to Johann Sebastion Bach's "Mass in B Minor" – 2 hours, 27 movements in 4 sections. More about that later. A symphony can also be defined as "something that in its harmonious complexity or variety suggests a symphonic composition – perhaps like creation. I apologize to the men who attended our last men's breakfast, when I spoke from this text, but I can explain. I also spoke from Psalm 19 at Vernon Hall several weeks ago, & it's been rolling over in my mind/heart ever since I 1st read it some time ago. Today I want to concentrate on verses 1-6 [READ]. I stand before you today as someone who is totally incapable to express what I would like you to hear/take in. And w/out the Holy Spirit's help you won't be able to fully grasp it, just as I can't, not because we're dummies, but because it's so much [Prayer: "O Holy Spirit, would you help us, w/our minds dulled by sin, to be able to see, grasp what You set before us today? In Jesus' holy name, amen]. David set out in Psalm 19 to express 2 ways God has revealed Himself to us. There are 3 but the 3rd had not yet been expressed when David wrote, except in prophesy. Here David focuses on creation & the word of God – Scripture. .We will focus primarily on creation. God has revealed Himself & wants us to know Him. If anyone wants to make their being/presence known, He might come thru the door & in a loud voice proclaim, "Here I am!" That's exactly what God has done in His creation. I) **The Heavens** – The "heavens" include all the visible universe

– certainly the sky we see every day & night, but also the expanded scope of the universe made visible only be science, as knowledge increases. We can see farther into space these days than ever before & it's a wonder to be seen. This 1st slide is the Milky Way, containing our solar system, w/all its stars, including our sun, all the planets, etc. It is said that the Milky Way contains 100-400 billion stars. The next slide is Messier 81 galaxy, approximately 11-12 light years away. It is the largest member of the M81 group of about 34 galaxies. It contains about 250 billion stars. The next is the Andromeda galaxy, "a barred spiral galaxy located approximately 2.5 million light-years from earth, containing an estimated 1 trillion stars! We could go on. Here is a satellite picture of numerous galaxies, each containing billions of stars. How many galaxies? [Next picture] How many stars? It's a very logical question to ask, "Why so many stars?" With innumerable galaxies there have to be more than trillions of stars – quadrillions, quintillions, sextillions, septillions, octillions, nonillions, decillions. I don't know the names of numbers beyond those. The logical speculative answer is that there has to be a purpose for all the stars & meteors & planets – perhaps there is life out there somewhere. Perhaps. But I can think of no better answer than the one David gave. II) **The heavens declare the glory of God, & the sky above proclaims His handiwork**. The universe shouts God's glory. It's as if God is saying to us, "Look! Here I am! See Me! Here's the proof that I am here!" David went on the write: "***Day to day pours out speech, & night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words whose voice is not heard.***" There are no sounds in space, because it is a vacuum, but scientists have recorded digital data – light & radio waves & have turned those "digital data sets into non-speech audio so people can experience cosmic imagery &

measurements thru hearing" (from "How Stuff Works). Remarkable! But you really don't need sound to be blown away by what you can see! The heavens are crying out, "God is! Glory to God in the Highest!" I think David's point is that all the decillions of galaxies & stars & planets are not enough to sufficiently declare God's glory. Even if they were multiplied a million times over, it wouldn't be enough. That phrase "pours out" expresses the idea of spewing forth, overflowing. "Reveals knowledge" carries the idea of "breathing out," again, not being able to contain what's inside. How long can you hold your breath? Eventually, you have to exhale. Creation can't hold back the declaration of God's glory. "***Their voice goes out through all the earth, & their words to the end of the world***." There's no verbal speech necessary, but there is a cacophony of expression – a virtual symphony! I think Bach might agree. The Lutheran mass (which I understand Bach wrote) contains 257 Latin words asking God for mercy, declaring His praise & glory, thanking Him for His saving grace, reciting the Nicene Creed & ending w/praise. Here is a copy of one page of music. My speculation is that Bach realized that words could not & 2 hrs of music could not nearly express sufficiently the thanks that God is due or the glory that is His. It could be 200 or 2000 hours of symphony & it still wouldn't be enough - just as the heavens' declaration of God's glory, while deafening, falls short in proclaiming the majesty of God to the full extent of it. But there's more:

III) **<u>The laws of nature (established by God) declare the glory of God</u>** – vs4c-6. From the internet: "Laws of nature are "universal statements describing the consistent patterns & behaviors of the physical world, governing everything from subatomic particles to galaxies. These laws are not mere suggestions – they describe patterns that have never been observed to fail w/in their defined scope." God has set all the laws of

nature in place, pointing to His existence & His glory. Newton "discovered gravity but it was already there. Physics, thermodynamics, the speed of life, mathematics, & all, have always been in place. 2 + 2 has always been & will always be 4, in any language. We know that the sun doesn't really "rise" & "set," but the earth spins on its axis as it orbits the sun. But to us it appears the sun rises in the morning & sets in the evening, & David expresses what we see. The sun is actually moving thru our galaxy as we move/spin around it. It is because of this movement & the tilt of the earth that we have our seasons. Unless the earth was tilted at just the right 23.5-degree angle we would either burn up or freeze. We are thankfully warmed by the heat of the sun, placed just in the right position to sustain life on earth, unlike any other planet. But by the laws of nature, the sun has "risen" & "set" every day & night from the beginning of time. Who doesn't enjoy the beauty of a sunrise/sunset? "***The heavens declare the glory of God, & the sky above proclaims His handiwork***." IV) **The rest of creation, w/all its beauty & wonder joins the heavens/sky in proclaiming God's glory**. Consider the beauty of the mountains (Mt. Hermon, on the border between Syria & Lebanon, w/its southern slope in Israel), or the ocean, or the Grand Canyon, or the Redwood forest, etc. And what about the colors of creation? And the sounds? You'll have to recall them in your mind: the song of the birds, the purr of a kitten, the laughter of a baby. And music! Music is God's creation, too (not sure about country)! As Mark Braskie will remind you, every piece of music sung or played are constructed using a combination of only 12 notes, C, C#/Db, D, D#/Eb, E, F, F#/Gb, G, G#/Ab, A, A#/Bb. B. Whether it is Mass in B Minor or Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star, The Star-Spangled Banner or How Great Thou Art, the same 12 notes are in play & declare the glory of God!

Romans 1:19-20 – "***For what can be known about God is plain to them (all mankind), because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely His eternal power & divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made***." God has said, in essence, "Do you want to know that I am, look at My creation." But there is more! God has also revealed Himself in His written Word. If you want to know who God is & what He is like, read/study His word. But there's more. If you want to know God personally, being His child, look at Jesus Christ His Son, our Savior, who took on our likeness, bore our sin & paid its penalty, & conquered sin/death on our behalf, in order to reconcile us to God as we believe/receive Him by faith. I challenge you to be mindful of God & His glory as you see the stars in their beauty, the wonder all around you & consider the absolute miracle of God's redemption. Give God the praise He deserves. Know Him thru faith in Christ & make Him known!