

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
July 3, 2019

FESTIVAL OF FIREWORKS

Last year on the 4th of July Kay and I were up in Sarasota when a HUGE thunderstorm rolled through in the evening. For the better part of an hour the lightning and thunder were right on top of us, and the rain fell straight downward in a wall of water that flooded the streets in only a few minutes. We had just arrived at the home of a good friend for dinner before heading to the fireworks display down on the bay, and rode out this storm in the dry safety of our car, although that same car was shaking and rattling with every bolt of lightning and peal of thunder. That storm with its three plus inches of rain put a damper on our fireworks plans for the evening, but dinner was delicious. As we drove home later in the evening, coming down I-75, we did get to see fireworks displays (both professional and amateur) all along our homeward route. Fireworks have been an integral part of the Independence Day celebration from long before I began to roam this earth, and for most of us without them the holiday just isn't as special. They're the culmination of all of the activities that we try to pack into this summer day of fun and celebration. I've seen many a fireworks display in my time, but I have to admit, none of them can compare to the fireworks that I have witnessed in God's creation. The Psalmist David writes; *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork."* Psalm 19:1 Allow me to take you back to a time when I was 19 years old and riding a bus across the State of South Dakota in the middle of the night. Being one of slightly above average height...5 foot 18 at the time...buses have never been a comfortable mode of travel (I can say the same thing about airplanes) so I spent the entire night wide awake. What I witnessed was truly spectacular. As we traveled westbound along Interstate 90 there was a line of thunderstorms stretching across the southern part of South Dakota and northern Nebraska. In the upper reaches of the clouds a constant display of lightning flashed; arcing, branching, curling and literally dancing along the whole of the horizon. This went on nearly all night long, from Sioux Falls to past Rapid City, a wonder that went unnoticed by my slumbering traveling companions but left an indelible mark on my memory. *"The fool says in his heart, there is no God."* That's in the Psalms too...14:1...also written by David. I don't see how anyone who honestly looks at the world, the universe, around us can say that the splendor of it all came only by accident through chance and time; eons and eons of time. That's entirely impossible, and totally ridiculous. All of creation points us to the reality that God exists, that God is the reason for it, and this God reveals Himself to us in creation and in His Word; the revelation about Himself and His plan of salvation for us in the book we call the Bible. Any images of splendor and glory that we as humans can conjure up, including massive displays of fireworks, are but a brief and weak imitation of what we see around us every day, if we'll only stop to look and pay attention. The glory of God is all around us, and the glory of God is in us through His Spirit. I pray that 4th of July fireworks would be a reminder of that.