

The Glory of God



David Wilkerson November 1, 1983

"...glorify thou me with thine own self..." (John 17:5).

No man can rightly define glory, any more than he can define God. Glory is the fullness of God, and that is a subject too high for our finite minds. Yet, we do know in part.

When God gives His glory, He gives Himself. He cannot parcel Himself out in pieces — no man receives a portion, but all. The one who receives His love also gets His mercy, His holiness, and His strength. The one who receives His mercy also gets His love and all else that is the fullness of God.

That is the glory of God — that He gives Himself in fullness and never partially. And those who seek the glory of God must learn that God truly desires to give Himself to us, which means He wants us to enjoy fullness.

Jesus, before He left the earth to return to His heavenly Father, prayed, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was..." (John 17:5).

Jesus was not seeking more power, or honor, or might, or majesty! He yearned for the Father Himself. It was as though He prayed, "My Father, I cannot exist without Your intimacy any longer. I hunger for oneness, closeness! That there be no distance, though You fill all."

Jesus was in the bosom of the Father before the world was. He was one with the Father, and that was glory. It was union with Him that was the delight and glory of His being. He had INTIMACY, UNION, and ONENESS.

We know so little of His glory. We think only in terms of cosmic power and splendor. We are such strangers to the real meaning of God's glory, we don't even understand what Jesus meant when He said, "I am glorified in them" (v. 10).

Did you not know that Jesus Christ is glorified in His saints — now? Meaning that He acknowledges He abides in us in all His divine fullness. We do not have but a slice of His fullness — we are complete in Him. We have in us all He is! When He comes to abide, He comes in all His glory, might, majesty, holiness, grace, and love. We have received the glory of a full and complete Christ. A Lord in all His glorious attributes.

Do We Want the Glory of Him?

How many of God's people today can pray such a prayer as our Savior prayed? Can we sincerely cry out to our blessed Lord, "Glorify me with Thyself! Bring me into oneness. I yearn to be closer, more intimate. Master, it is You that I want. More than love, or mercy, power, signs or wonders — I must have the glory of You. I must have Your presence!"

The glory Jesus is talking about has to do with a very intimate kind of love — a love that permits no distance or separation from the object of its affection. It desires a complete oneness, an eternal union. This divine love between our Lord and the Father was so all-important to Him, He eagerly longed for the day all His children could behold it with their own eyes.

Hear His exalted plea: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world..." (John 17:24).

Glory be to the hallowed name of Jesus Christ for such a glorious thought! Christ is so overjoyed with the glory of His intimate relationship with His Father, He yearns to bring all God's children to heaven to behold it.

Actually, our Lord was praying, "Father, they must see this glorious love We have. They must see for themselves how fully You give yourself to Me. I want them to know how greatly I am loved — from before the world was created."

Won't that be something when we, the redeemed, are brought into God's great banquet hall, to the heavenly feast, and we are permitted to behold the love of the Father for His dear Son and our blessed Savior? I see on that glorious day our Lord's prayer answered, when He looks to His blood. purchased children and joyfully proclaims, "See, children, is it not so? Did I not tell you the truth? Does He not love Me so? Have you ever beheld such great love? Is it not truly perfect love? You now see My glory, My Father's love for Me and My love for Him."

Do you not see, saints of God, that beholding the glory of Christ on that day will be the revealing to us of God's love for His Son? What a joy to know we serve a Savior who is loved. And is it not terrifying to contemplate that Lucifer cut himself off from such glory? He is without love. He has no father. Surely, this was his greatest loss. It is the great loss of all Satan's children, to exist without a witness or sense of a heavenly Father's love.

He Gives Us Glory by Giving Us Himself

I can scarce take it all in when I read these words — "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one..."(John 17:22). Think of it We have our Lord's word, confessed before His own Father, that He has given Himself to us as fully and completely as His Father gave Himself to Him. He has given us the same intimate love His Father gave Him, and that is His glory manifested in us. We have been brought into the same kind of special love relationship He shares with the Father. More than that, He opens up the circle of love between Him and His Father, and brings us into it. We are made partakers of a glory beyond comprehension. That Christ should bring us to the Father and plead, "That they may be one with us!" How incredible! We share completely in the fullness of God's love for His Son by being in Christ.

In a true sense, it may be said that God so loved His Son, He gave Him the world. We know He gave Him those who are in the world, because the Lord said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me..." (v. 6).

Did you not know we are God's gift to His Son — a gift of love? "They were Yours; You gave them all to Me." Yet Christ was so in oneness with the Father, He brings the gift back to Him and says, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine..." (v. 10). This kind of love can take nothing to itself — but gives its all.

Is it not comforting to know we are the object of such a love between Father and Son? What honor, to have Christ place us in the palm of His great and loving hand, and present us to the Father and say — "Behold, Father! They are Ours! They all belong to Us! They are the object of Our love! I will love them, Father! You will love them! And We Will make Our abode in them and show them how much they are loved."

How can our minds grasp it all? Here is our Lord saying to His Father, "I am going to make known to them your love to me, that the love you have for me may be in them" (v.26).

Jesus, speaking to the Father, said, "...I am glorified in them..." (v.10). This is a great revelation, and, we need to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us into its full truth. This represents more than a prayer — it is a commitment the Lord told the Father He made to us. In other words, "I have given Myself to them completely! I have committed all that I am to them. As surely as Your fullness is in Me, I have given them all the fullness that is in Me. They have the right to appropriate Me as I have appropriated You! They can be as close to Me as I am to You!"

That is what it means to have Christ glorified in us. He is as much to us as the Father is to Him. As surely as God was glorified in the Son, Christ is glorified in us. That means fullness! That means we really are complete in Him.

Jesus told the Father, "In the same manner and glory you sent me into the world, I send them out into the world..."

(v.18). In this way, He "shows us plainly of the father." The thought is glorious, that we are to be as totally dependent on Christ, as He was dependent on the Father. We are to do nothing outside of Christ, as He did nothing but as led by the Father.

I find it to be one of the most comforting joys to know that God so loved me He sent His own Son as man to show me the glory of it in practical ways. God's love for us is not mystical. All you have to do is keep your eyes on Christ and witness how that great love works. You have before you a visible, practical example of what intimate love is all about. Depend on Christ in the same way He depended on His Father, and you will get the same results.

The Glory Must Be Appropriated

If Christ is glorified in the believer, what effect should it have? How is it demonstrated in everyday life? Surely, such glory in the soul will have an impact on lifestyle!

The outworkings of this glory has to do with living up to what Christ says He is to us. We are to live according to the power that worketh in us. Few of us who profess we love Christ ever appropriate the fullness of who He is in us. He tells us He is committed to us, with all the fullness of the Godhead that is in Him, so that we may have all we need to live joyfully and victoriously — and we go about our ways either ignorant of this truth or unwilling to use what we have been given.

It is as if our lord is saying to us, "You have seen how My dependence on My Father wrought such miracles and usefulness — you know He never failed me — you saw how My confidence in My Father's faithfulness to Me brought about constant victory — why will you not depend wholly upon Me and trust My faithfulness to meet your every need?"

The glory of God is more than His fullness — it is His fullness offered! It is His fullness placed at our disposal. It is an all-powerful God giving His fullness to His Son, who brought it to man as a Man, who in turn showed us how to appropriate it.

This is a very sacred thing, to enter into our Lord's private and intimate prayer to the Father. I will forever be grateful to the Lord that He permitted us to eavesdrop during this most intimate conversation with the Father in John 17. We hear the intense unburdening of a loving Son's heart to His loving Father. We hear Him remind His Father that He had given Him power to give eternal life to "as many as thou has given me." Then we hear these powerful words, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent..." (v. 3).

What is eternal life? IT IS KNOWING GOD — KNOWING JESUS CHRIST THE LORD! No wonder He strove so mightily to "show them plainly of the Father." It was the secret of eternal life. How simply this explains what eternal life is and how one enters into it. When we discover the glory of God's loving presence through Jesus Christ, we are given the very resurrection life that is in Him. We enter into eternal life, here and now, by way of glorious truth. Get hold of this truth, and you are in. You are possessor of resurrection life, while still in the flesh.

And here it is further expounded: "I have glorified thee on earth." Meaning, Christ has shown us God's great love and invited us to sit with Him in His heavenly place. That takes us right past the grave, without even a sting from death, and permits us to breathe divine, spiritual air right now.

If I am led by the Holy Spirit to pursue the knowledge of who Jesus Christ is, and have been given my heart's desire to know God in all His fullness — I become a heavenly man seated in high places in Christ Jesus. I am no more a man of this earth. I die to the world long before I leave it. I live by the glory of who my Lord is. I seek not His ways or His miracles; I seek only Him. He is glorified in me by giving Himself to me. He gives Himself to me, and since He is resurrection life — I already have it.

My spirit is already with Him, and this earth holds no attraction. I labor here to proclaim His love for all mankind, but my heart is with Him. I can go about witnessing to others of His everlasting love, but at the same time, I can stand outside of it all and say, "I AM NOT HERE — I AM RISEN! I am a heavenly man already enjoying my heavenly place." The old-timers called it "a taste of glory to go to glory in."

Praise God forever — if Christ is glorified in me, that means He has given Himself to me, and that includes resurrection life now. It can become painful to have such a treasure in an earthen vessel, but one day soon I'll gladly discard this corrupt one for an incorruptible one, made in His likeness. Still, it will be but a vessel to be filled

with what I already possess. It will be poured from a human vessel into a glorified vessel, without missing a single divine breath.

When you come into the fullness and beauty of the Lord, you become overwhelmed by His great love, and once you feel His mighty arm around you, the world loses its hold. You are gone to the world from that moment on. You have experienced true glory - ONENESS WITH CHRIST WHERE HE IS!

Our Glory Is in Zion

Saints of God — He is not here. He was rejected down here. Why should we hold so tenaciously to a place that cast Him out? Shouldn't we be yearning to claim our inheritance, which is a place in Zion, where He is? It is not, "Someday I hope to see Him face to face" but rather, "He has invited me to be with Him now where He is — I can stand no distance between us, I choose to see His face every day now, and be changed into His image, one glimpse of glory after another."

Did our Lord not say, "They are not of this world, even as I am not of this world" (v.14)? What does He mean? Simply this — Even as Christ walked this earth as a heavenly man, so may we. With Abraham, we have our citizenship in Zion, the city whose builder and maker is God. We are not eating from the fleshpots of Egypt, but are already feasting on heavenly bread. Day by day, we die a little more to everything down here, until like Paul, there is a greater pull in us to depart and be where He is, than to stay. By becoming attached to Him in glory, we become detached to the world. No wonder our forefathers' favorite song was, "Take this whole world, but give me Jesus."

If Christ is preparing me a mansion in heaven, I don't read anywhere that I am to seek that, rather than Himself. No, the glory is not a mansion, not gold-plated streets, not fellowship with redeemed patriarchs. The glory is that whether in heaven or on earth, He gives Himself to us as fully as the Father gives Himself to the Son. And the tragedy of all ages is that no one in earth's history but Christ has appropriated what was freely given. We will all die in some form of spiritual poverty, while all the while the fullness of His glory was available. Some will appropriate a bit of that glory, but sadly, the inheritance that was meant for us will still go unclaimed. Where we ought to be pulling down satanic strongholds, we merely cope. When we should be experiencing victory upon victory, as being more than conquerors through Him who loves us — we go on in our weariness and faithlessness. We are like the lepers of Samaria, who nearly died of hunger while wagonloads of provisions lay unclaimed within a stone's throw.

We must once and for all grasp the truth that Christ abides in us and He begs us to appropriate His fullness. Could He be saying to us, "Why am I here? Why am I needed — if you won't depend on My fullness? Use Me!"

May the Holy Spirit remind us constantly that "of his fullness have we all received" (John 1:16).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end...(Eph. 3:20–21).

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