

The glory of Jesus

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[0 : 00] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Well that's what I thought we would do to have a think about the glory of Jesus which seems to me to be a good activity in itself.

I don't think we have to justify it and say this leads to church growth or an increase in church funds and that's why we're doing it or something like that. We're just saying it's good to think about the glory of Jesus.

Just try and focus that a tiny bit. It's a good activity in itself. So we were, John 17 was what we looked at this morning.

I'd like to open up at John's Gospel. We'll take a few references as we go through. It was about glory, wasn't it? It was Jesus saying glorify your son that your son may glorify you.

[1 : 42] And then in verse 5, now Father glorify me in your presence. With the glory I had with you before the world was. A little bit of a question about, a bit of translation there.

And there was also a bit of question about the now in verse 3. Actually, I think it makes us think quite a bit about the glory of Jesus.

Is his glory always the same? Is his glory more shown in some things than others? Just as I was thinking about it, I think it's useful to make a distinction.

Theologians make this distinction between the person of Jesus and the work of Jesus. The person of Jesus is who Jesus was and is.

And his work is the things that he did and does. So he is always the eternal son of God. His person in that sense doesn't change. Although he hasn't always been human flesh, has he?

[2 : 53] The word became flesh. So there's some link up there. His person is, we're told that his person, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

There is no, there's now no change in the person of Jesus. The work, of course, is something that you can say has different stages. So there was a time when he became flesh.

There was a time when he did miracles. There was a time when he died on the cross. There was a time when he rose from the dead. There was a time when he was seated in the right hand and he will come again.

So that is all on a moving scale, if you see what I mean. And I think we might possibly have the idea that there's a glory that pertains to Jesus' person.

Which, of course, is sort of, that's who he is. And that there's a glory that pertains to his work, which we might say, you know, there is a particular glory in this or a particular way that he's glorified in that.

[3 : 54] Another thought that came to mind is that the New Testament often speaks of Jesus' glory. I'm not quite sure whether this is true, because I haven't done all the homework on this.

It often speaks of Jesus' glory. That's my, what I think is correct, as being something that follows that career, if you like, cross, resurrection, ascension, his seating in heaven, and indeed his future coming, and it tends to use the idea of his glory for this part.

His glorification. We sometimes speak about that the humiliation of Christ is coming down, and his lifting up, his glorification. And, of course, also the future glory is part of that.

Let's look at some texts and see whether they do speak in that way. So let's look in Luke's Gospel. 21, 27.

Luke's Gospel, 21, 27. Luke's Gospel, 21, 27, and 28.

[5 : 21] Luke, 21, 27, and 28. So, Maria, could you read that to us, please?

Luke's Gospel, 21, verses 27 and 28. Thank you very much.

At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. So glory there, attaching to the coming of Jesus.

At that time, talking of his coming, you'll see him coming with a cloud and great glory. So glory sort of at that end of the timeline. Luke 24, 26.

Luke 24, 26. Luke 24, 26. Or if we take 25 and 26.

[6:43] Luke 24, verses 25 and 26. Ray, please, could you read that for us? Thank you very much.

Luke 24, 26. So that seems to fit that pattern that he's saying. This is Jesus himself speaking of his death and saying this is his suffering. And this is like the gateway.

He goes through this and then enters his glory. So again, that sort of fits that pattern, doesn't it?

Whether we include resurrection, ascension, his seating in heaven.

That's the suffering, the cross, and then enters his glory. So that would fit that. And Hebrews 2.

Hebrews 2.

Hebrews 2. Now verse 7 is a quote from the psalm. I'll just temporarily escape my mind what number it is. It's Psalm 8, isn't it?

[8:13] And the quote is, the psalm is quoted as referring to Jesus. So this is Hebrews chapter 2.

And if we just go from inputting everything under him and read that in verse 9. Brenda, please could you read that to us.

In putting everything under him. And then verse 9 as well. Hebrews 2. Well, it's the latter part of verse 8. And then verse 9.

In putting everything under him. For there will be nothing which is not subject. Yet at present we do not see everything subject. But we see Jesus.

He was made a little lower than the angels. Now crowned for glory and honor as the Son of Death.

So that by the grace of God, he might taste death of anyone.

[9:13] Thank you very much. I think the same pattern is there, isn't it? That Jesus was made low.

A little lower than the angels. And he's now crowned with glory and honor.

He suffered death. And then was crowned with glory and honor. So I think it seems to put the glory at that end of things. So that's...

The Bible does speak in those terms. I'm not sure that I've got the very best texts to show that. But I think those texts do show us that sort of thing. But you see, John...

I don't know whether you noticed this. That John was speaking in a different way this morning. At least that's what I was trying to... That was my understanding of it. He was being...

I don't know what we would say. I don't know whether we could say John's being subversive. He's... He's telling... He's putting it in a light that we would not perhaps have thought of.

[10:11] Do you see? Because... Turning to John 17... The point that seemed to me to be made...

Was this matter of being time critical. So Jesus prays this prayer at a certain time. John 17...

After Jesus said this... He looked towards heaven and prayed... Father, the time has come. And you remember I said that throughout John's Gospel...

The time doesn't come. The time isn't yet. And now the time is here. And what time is it? It's the time that he's going to go to the cross. Now...

There's lots of events associated with the cross. But that's the particular focus of it. And it's at this point that Jesus says... Glorify your son.

[11:07] And John... This isn't in contradiction to what the rest of the scripture says... But it's a particular John type of way of looking at things. That in his death on the cross...

There is glory. And see verse 5... And now, Father... I'm sure that is time critical.

The use of the word now in John's Gospel is actually quite precise. Now glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world was.

Now is the time. As we view the cross... This is the time that I'm asking and praying this prayer...

That there will be the glory of the presence of the Father...

As we consider the cross. That was what struck me as being the remarkable thing. The in your presence... You might think...

[12:07] Well, he's talking about the ascension. And I did do homework on that. And it is not clear that in your presence means in heaven. Because the word that says in couldn't be by or with.

It's much looser than that. So glorify me with your presence. Glorify me with the glory that comes from your presence. But you see, it's the now that I can't get away from.

Now do it. Not in... No, no. Several steps down the line. But now, as we view the cross. So I thought we would just have a little look at some other verses.

And then we're done. Let's look at what John says about glory in John 2.11. So we're thinking about the glory of Jesus.

And there's lots of... It's not a simple and straightforward subject, actually. There's quite a lot to it. I don't want to mystify you or bore you. But I would like to try and show something of the angles on it.

[13:12] John has several angles on Jesus' glory. John 2.11. John 2.11. Mike, please could you read us?

John chapter 2, verse 11. Thank you.

This is the story of the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee, where Jesus turns water into wine. And the more you think about it, the more... What shall I say?

The more interesting, the more wonderful it is. What does the story say? The story says that there was this wedding feast. They ran out of wine. Jesus miraculously produced wine out of water.

It was served to the guests. And their response was, This is amazing catering. We don't usually do catering like this. Usually the caterers... What do they say?

[14:14] Usually bring out the best wine at the beginning. When everybody's a little bit tipsy, then it becomes, you know, the Asda's bulk buy wine. And he says, you're doing it the other way around.

You've saved the best till last. Just amazing catering. And many people at that wedding, that was what they thought. Ah, the catering that they did.

The Jacobsons got to hand it to them. But do you see what John says? He says, actually what was happening was Jesus was revealing his glory.

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory. And his disciples put their faith in him.

That's an interesting comment, isn't it? Because half the people there saw nothing apart from a bizarre catering strategy. But the disciples said, hold on a minute.

[15:21] Hold on a minute. There was something going on there. That wasn't just to do with catering. There was something going on there that was glory.

I'm not going to try and go into it all. But do you see this? There's something about Jesus' glory. That it is simultaneously revealed and hidden.

Some people saw it and other people saw nothing at all. That's the way his glory is. I think in John's gospel, I think he gives us this story as really a pattern, a template of the way Jesus is operating all the way through.

He does things. Some people say, you know, great catering. The woman at the well says, this is going to be a great way to get water. I won't have to keep on coming to this well to get water.

The people say, when he feeds the 5,000, ever give us this bread. This is a great way to get bread. And they don't see the glory at all. Well, the woman at the well does in a minute. But it's hidden, you see.

[16:28] But to other people, they say, wait a minute. That's glory. That's the way it is with the Lord Jesus, isn't it? That you can witness to people.

You can, I suppose, you can preach. You can hand out leaflets. Many people just see a bunch of idiots, fanatics.

Something that you put into the bin straight away. But other people, hold on. This is glory. So Jesus' glory is revealed and hidden.

So I'll just offer that as a thought. That John would bring to us. John chapter 1, verse 14. John chapter 1, verse 14.

I put here as a summary, to see who he really is, to see his glory, is no small part of eternal life. So John chapter 1, verse 14.

[17:30] Mark, could you read that to us, please? The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Okay. So this is the beginning, thank you Mark. This is at the beginning of John's Gospel, and he's almost saying, this is where we've got to with this. This is where we're at with it. Jesus sort of summarised the whole thing.

Bottom line, the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And this is our mature conclusion. We have seen his glory.

The glory of the one and only. The glory of the only begotten. The glory of God's only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

What am I trying to say? I'm trying to say that, I think he's saying, this isn't sort of a means to an end. This is a terminus. You know, we've arrived.

[18:34] When we've seen, when we've looked into the face of Jesus and seen the glory of God, we've arrived at something. It's no small part of eternal life to see who he really is and to see his glory.

And they're saying, he came. And you know what? We looked at him and we saw his glory. We saw the glory of the only Son of the Father.

And we saw him. And that's who he is. And praise his name. And isn't he wonderful. And isn't that amazing. There he is, the Lord Jesus, as Paul would put it, I think, to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And what I'm, I'm just sort of throwing out thoughts on this, but, it's no small part of eternal life to see that.

You know, if your eyes have been opened, that's what you see. If you've been given a new heart, that's what your heart responds to. To see, once I looked at Jesus and I thought, bah, but now I look at him and I say, there's the glory of God.

[19:55] Let's have another, look at this from another John point of view in chapter 8. Now, we might have an issue with translation here.

Let's just see. Yeah. Okay, John chapter 8. Middle of controversy. Lots of different things that are contradictory to Jesus.

Lots of opposition going on. So, you get it in chapter 8, verse 48. The Jews answered him, aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?

You're a, you're a, you're a, you're a disreputable evildoer, actually. And Jesus says in verse 49, I am not possessed by a demon.

But, now then. the NIV says, I honour my father and you dishonour me. I am not seeking glory for myself.

[21:03] But there is one who seeks it and he is the judge. That'll do. I am not seeking glory for myself. Interesting, isn't it?

It seems to be Jesus expressing a statement of principle. I honour my father and give glory to him. I am not seeking glory for myself.

And you might say, well, hold on, because this morning you said Jesus prayed for glory for himself. And he did, didn't he? Isn't that what it says in John 17?

Glorify your son that your son may glorify you. John 17, verse 5, and now, Father, glorify me. Isn't that Jesus seeking glory for himself?

Let's look at chapter 8, verse 54. Jesus saying, If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.

[22:05] Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and keep his word.

It's not the verse I thought it was. If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.

I think Jesus is on that same line. There's a sense in which he isn't self-centered. His motive is not to seek glory for himself.

and there is a verse and I thought that was the one I'd written down but it obviously isn't where he says, you know, your problem as Pharisees is you seek glory from one another but I seek, I'm not trying to get glory for myself.

So the way I've put it, now see what you think about this. Jesus' desire is for his father's glory and for his own glory in a way which is dependent and mutual.

[23:13] So I've put it in an awkward sentence. Jesus' desire is for his father's glory and his own glory dependently and mutually. Do you think that's right? How would you square those two verses?

I don't seek glory for myself and father glorify me so that your son may glorify you. How would you square those two verses? It's not a rhetorical question, it's a real question.

Any thoughts? Steve? I don't know, I can answer it, I'm just saying perhaps if you could define exactly what glory is would help to understand that.

You can get the definition of glory. Oh, well. If we said honour, acclaim, recognition, praise, praise, would that help?

Something like that, isn't it? To us it means shame, doesn't it? Yes, Hebrew is to do with weightiness, yes, kabod, weightiness.

[24 : 21] Yeah, does that help us? do you want to himself to be glorified so that the Father can then be glorified?

Yeah, I think there's some, I think there's, that's an important point. Jesus doesn't ask for himself to be glorified independently. He doesn't say, I want to be glorified no matter what happens to the Father.

He says, he's always linking it together, isn't he? He's saying, so if we go to John 17, glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you.

Do something for me so that it will actually turn to the glory of the Father. And John 17 verses 4 and 5 are not a million miles from that.

I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do and now Father glorify me with your own presence. with the glory that I had with you before the world war.

[25 : 24] It's not an independent thing, is it? It's the sort of mutuality about it. And Jesus isn't sort of grabbing at glory. He's saying, Father, will you, will you grant this to me that I may in turn reflect it back to you?

That seems to be the sort of way it's doing, isn't it? Does that make any sort of sense? I do, it is. As in the return of what is.

Yeah, yeah. I think that's actually quite a profound thing, that, you know, if you say, what's the truth behind this universe? It's relationship, it's God, it's a God who, as we were saying this morning, gives, and a God who in Father and Son seeks glory for the other, as it were.

I think there's relationship. Yeah. Yeah. Yes. comes on down to us as children so we should call it God Jesus Jesus yes yes yes that's right yeah yeah to live lives to the glory of God is profoundly the way the Bible puts it yeah Steve was going to say I was just thinking I mean the Catechism says man's she's going to do for the glory of God and to enjoy him forever I think what you're saying in John chapter 8 is that in a sense it's impossible to go and try yourself isn't it you're saying that in a sense glory must be relational um of course in a sense it has to be given

I think in a sense nothing can do yourself in one sense except I mean God does glory by himself in one sense but he does it to relationships he doesn't say even God doesn't say look at me I'm the supreme being of the universe although he is he says look at what I do for people then you see what my glory is but I guess again the Catechism seems to be getting at that it's in the relationship that God shows his own glory yes I mean even the Catechism way of putting it it isn't that humankind well what it is is that humankind glorifies God and enjoys him so there's something going on in two directions in the relationship way well let's leave that thought perhaps that's getting us into deep water

[28 : 28] I think John's gospel does speak in the way that we talked about before of Jesus' future glory now then have I got these verses right 12-16 I think this one will stand up 12-16 John 12-16 this is about the triumphal entry and it says you know that Jesus is coming in on the donkey and in John 12-16 it says at first his disciples did not understand all this so they saw what Jesus did and they thought oh not really quite sure what was going on what was all that about and then it says only after Jesus was glorified did they realise that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him so I think that most natural way of understanding that is where we had you know after his resurrection ascension the pouring out of the spirit they said now we understand after Jesus is glorified we look back and we see what was going on there after he was glorified and chapter 7 verse 39

I think works in much the same way John 7 this is Jesus on the feast of tabernacles on the last and greatest day of the feast there was lights and water pouring at that that Jewish festival so I understand and Jesus stands and says in a loud voice be interesting to imagine him addressing a whole crowd of people in this loud voice if anyone is thirsty let him come to me and drink whoever believes in me as the scripture has said streams of living water will flow from within him he says that by this he meant the spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive up to that time the spirit had not been given since Jesus had not yet been glorified so it talks about Jesus being glorified and I think it would fit with the idea of his glorification being his resurrection his ascension and his seating at the right hand of the throne of God and after all that then the spirit is given on the

day of Pentecost having seated at the right hand of God he has received this the gift of the father and poured out what you now see and hear so that

Jesus glorification and yet and yet come back to what we said this morning there is I think this quite subversive and surprising emphasis on the cross as the particular place of God's glory John 12 verse 20 John 12 verse 20 now there were some Greeks among them who had come up to worship at the feast and they came to Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee with a request sir they said we would like to see Jesus we would like to see him we're Greeks we would like to see Jesus Philip went to tell Andrew Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus and Jesus observes there's somebody wanting to try and see the Lord not a

Jew a Greek and strangely Jesus seems to pick up on this and say aha I detect a change in the tide here I detect a sign of the times here all the way through Jesus has been saying the hour hasn't yet come the hour hasn't yet come and then he suddenly says these Greeks are inquiring this is it the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified I tell you the truth unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains only a single seed but if it dies it produces many seeds the man who loves his life will lose it while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it eternal life whoever serves me must follow me and where I am my servant also will be my father will honor the one who serves me now is my heart troubled and what shall I say father save me from this hour no it was for this very reason

I came to this hour father glorify your name and a voice came from heaven I have glorified it and will glorify it and the crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered and others said an angel had spoken to him and Jesus said this world now is the prince of this world cast out I when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to myself he said this to show the kind of death he was going to die it's all about his death isn't it and it's at this point amazingly that the vocabulary of glory is used this is the point at which in a particular way not the only way but in a particular way God is glorified as Jesus dies on the cross as he wears the crown of thorns as he is impaled on the wood as he cries out my God my God why have you forsaken me as the sun refuses to shine as it seems that

[34 : 21] God has forsaken him and God is completely absent yet at this point God is most glorified the most God like thing that God can do he is doing by showing his grace by sending his son by redeeming his people I will glorify it I will glorify it again now is what does it say lost my place now the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified the cross there is a particular emphasis on the cross as the place of God's glory let's close with that thought and let's sing together to go to to to to to!