

Glory by the Way of Shame

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[0 : 00] Well, as promised last Sunday, we're taking this morning's message to look at and consider the words that God the Father spoke to Jesus in John chapter 12.

If you have your Bible with you, you can open up to John chapter 12, verse 28. We'll also have it on the screen for you in a moment here. Here in John chapter 12, this is after the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

The Greeks have come to see Jesus. And now Jesus has told his disciples that he's deeply troubled in his soul. He's wrestling with his thoughts and emotions with the difficulty of this hour that has now come for him.

And at the end of this, here in verse 28, Jesus prays out loud to God in front of the whole group standing around.

And he says, Father, glorify your name. And something awesome happened. God the Father answered back to Jesus with an audible voice from heaven.

[1 : 08] Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it. And I will glorify it again.

This little exchange reminds me of other places in John's gospel where we seem to catch a glimpse of this special relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son.

There's a kind of strangeness to this. We feel almost like we're outsiders listening in on this conversation between Jesus and his Father. Or like the conversation started a long time ago. And maybe they know exactly what they mean by this. Glorify your name. I have and I will. But we're maybe not so sure. What exactly is Jesus asking God to do here?

He says, glorify your name. And we might paraphrase that with other words like magnify, exalt, lift high your name.

[2 : 06] But how? In what way does Jesus mean this? What is he asking God to do? To bring glory to his own name?

And then the Father responds by saying, I have glorified it. And I will glorify it again. What does that mean? What do you mean that you've magnified, you've exalted, you've lifted high your name? When? With Jesus? Before Jesus? And then I will glorify it again. Is God referring to something in particular that's about to happen?

Or is it that he will simply continue doing what he's always done? What the Son is asking? Let's look at a little more word for word translation of this little exchange.

The New King James Version does a great job. A voice came from heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.

[3 : 10] If you have this translation open in front of you or you have New American Standard, you'll notice that the *its* are in italics. And it's nothing to be worried about.

It just means that in the original Greek that the Bible was written in, those words are not there. But often, words were not put in when they were implied.

When it's obvious which words are implied. And we do this in English all the time too. Here's an example. The dead tell no tales. Well, we all know intuitively, even though the word is missing, that it's the dead people tell no tales.

Not the dead cats or the dead animals. It's the dead people. That's kind of like what's happening here. If you want the most literal translation. Father, glorify of you the name.

Came then a voice from heaven. Both I have glorified and again I will glorify. Now why are we drilling down so deeply into this?

[4 : 16] Because I want you to think about what the it is in this statement that God makes from heaven. Glorify what?

Glorify what again? And the only way to get the right answer here is to just read the whole thing in one go. Father, glorify your name. I have glorified it.

My name. And I will glorify it again. Whose name? His own. God's own name.

Who will God glorify again in the future? To this moment? His own name. Now I make a little deal of this because it's easy to get to this part of the story and just assume that God is talking about glorifying Jesus, his son.

And we've heard about that already in John's gospel. Jesus has talked about how the father will glorify him. But if we're reading this carefully, we'll notice that Jesus is praying and asking God, his father, to exalt and lift high his own name.

[5 : 31] And God the father is saying, I have been doing that and I will do it again. Does it sound strange to your ears to hear that?

To hear God say, I have glorified my name and I will glorify it again. It's as though God is saying, I have worked to bring honor and praise and attention to my own name.

And I will do it again. Is that what God is saying to Jesus here? That is what God is saying to Jesus. Now this may raise a little flag in your heart.

You may be thinking, well, wait a second. I thought we were never supposed to do anything to draw attention to ourselves. Isn't that the very definition of pride? Kind of goes against virtue, doesn't it? To seek glory for ourselves. We have an adjective for that. Self-centered. Someone who cares mainly about themselves, about their own reputation.

[6 : 35] Who's just looking for praise from other people. So how can it be that God says, I have glorified my name and I will glorify it again?

Well, this is a much neglected discussion in the Christian church today. So we're going to talk about it this morning. Does God act to bring glory to his own name? I'll give you the short answer first. Absolutely. God acts to bring glory to his own name. But in his case alone, he is absolutely right to do it. First of all, let's look at a couple places in the Bible where God makes it clear that he does this.

Exodus chapter 9 verse 16. We've been going through the story with the kids and alive. This is God telling Moses word for word what to say to Pharaoh on his behalf.

Say this to Pharaoh. I have raised you up, Pharaoh, for this very purpose. That I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

[7 : 45] In other words, God's reason for raising this man, this Pharaoh to power in Egypt was so that his power and his greatness would be known everywhere. In all the nations around.

I brought you to power. I did it on purpose so the world would see the greatness of my name. Of who I am. Fast forward to the Ten Commandments.

What does God say to the Israelites there? You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

And he basically commands the Israelites to worship him and him only. He says, I am a jealous God. Don't glorify anything you see in heaven above.

Not the sun. Not the moon. Not the stars. Don't glorify anything on earth. Not idols. Not things made by human hands. Or things in the created world. You're to glorify and worship me.

[8 : 53] Says the Lord. I am a jealous God. It's a very strong word. And it speaks of God's strong, intense desire for our worship.

It speaks of how God feels cheated when what belongs to him, worship, goes to something else. To others. To the gods. He deserves the credit for the good things that we have. Not something or someone else. Exodus chapter 20 verse 24.

Still kind of nearby that. Where there's some instructions that God is giving to Moses. Says this. Make an altar of earth for me.

Sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. And then there's this statement. Wherever I cause my name to be honored. Says the Lord. I will come to you.

[9 : 52] And bless you. Notice the language here. God says. Wherever I cause my name. To be honored. So God doesn't just sit around and wait for people to notice him.

To give him the praise that he's due. He regularly causes his name to be honored in various places. Causes. He intentionally works to bring it about.

That his name is honored. Leviticus 19 verse 12. This is another list of commands that God gave Moses. To give to the people of Israel.

Do not swear falsely by my name. And so profane the name of the Lord. The name of your God. I am the Lord. Or Yahweh. In other words.

When you swear falsely. And invoke my name. As you do it. You profane my name. It's like you're dragging it into the mud.

[10:51] Don't invoke my name. Just to get someone to believe you. Even though you know very well. In the moment that you're telling a lie. God has great concern. For his own name.

Another example. Psalm 46 verse 8 to 10. I was reading this earlier this week. In my devotions. Come and see what the Lord has done.

The desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear. He burns the shields with fire.

He says be still. And know that I am God. I will be exalted. Among the nations. I will be exalted. In the earth. What a thing to say. There's a whole context to this psalm. We're not going to dig into all of that this morning. But listen to how God speaks. Be still.

[11:50] He says. Stop what you're doing. And in this moment. Know that I am God. God. And then he declares that he will be glorified.

Among the nations. It's more than a prediction. It's a resolution. It's an I will see to it. That this happens.

So again. Very clearly. God acts to bring glory to his own name. Probably the most explicit statement of this in the whole Bible is Isaiah chapter 42 verse 8.

The Lord says there. I am the Lord or Yahweh. That is my name. I will not yield my glory to another. Or my praise to idols. What a powerful statement. And again. Notice the language God uses. I will not yield. I will not give up my glory.

[12:52] My praise. To idols. So God claims that the glory and the praise of people. Belongs to him. It's his. It's his due.

It's his right. My glory. My praise. And he's not going to let idols or other so-called gods. Take the credit.

That belongs to him. A little further down. In Isaiah 43 verses 6 and 7. There's a whole prophecy here about how God will redeem his people.

But in the midst of it. He gives us a little glimpse about why he has done all this with his people. Why has he created his people and formed them and made them. He says bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.

Everyone who is called by my name. Whom I created for my glory. Whom I formed and made. I did it deliberately for my glory.

[13:55] Says God. God acts. He creates. To bring glory. To his own name. Ezekiel chapter 20 verse 9.

But for the sake of my name. I brought them out of Egypt. I did it to keep my name from being profaned in the eyes of the nations. Among whom they lived.

God is here giving Ezekiel words to say to the elders of Israel. Three times he uses the same sort of statement in this passage. The reason I brought them out of Egypt.

That I didn't give them what they deserve there. Because he mentions. Actually they turned away from me in Egypt. They started worshiping the gods of the Egyptians and idols. It wasn't for their righteousness or goodness.

That I saved them from Egypt. It was for the sake of my own name. I had made a promise to Abraham. To Isaac. To Jacob. And my name was on the line.

[15:02] And so. I acted. I brought them out. I brought them into the promised land. I did it to keep my own name. From being profaned.

Same thing in the wilderness. One more example from the New Testament. Ephesians chapter 1. Paul is here listing out some of the major blessings that we have in Christ. It's a wonderful passage. You probably know it well. I'll just read a little bit here from verse 6.

He predestined us for adoption to sonship. Through Jesus Christ. In accordance with his pleasure and will. To the praise of his glorious grace.

Which he's freely given us in the one he loves. So the reason he gives us these blessings. Is so that we might praise. His glorious grace. So that we might see it. Know it.

[15:59] And give him glory for who he is. Same thing again in verse 12. In order that we who are the first to put our hope in Christ. Might be for the praise.

Of his glory. God acts. He chose.

He predestined. We're not going to get into all of the details on that. So that. His. Name might be glorified. And honored. And praised.

So it's an undeniable fact throughout the Bible. From these passages and many more. That God acts to bring glory. And praise. And honor. To his own name. But in God's case.

It's not inappropriate. It's not selfish. It's not prideful. For him to have our praise. And honor. And worship.

[16 : 56] Is actually what's right. It's what's good. It's his due. It's what belongs to him. I mean think about it. He is the creator.

We are his creatures. He's the designer. He's the mind behind all of the blueprints. Which made our world. And which made us. And we are the products of his creative design.

He is the constant sustainer of all life on earth. And we are the sustained. He is the utterly self-sufficient.

It's one of the most glorious things about him. It's why he is worthy of our praise. For us. We're utterly dependent on him.

For everything. These are just a few of the ways that God is worthy of our worship. Of glory. In a way that we are not. We have some similarities to our creator.

[17 : 56] We are personal. He is personal. We think. He thinks. We speak. And have relationship. He speaks.

And has relationship. We work. He works. But there are many things. In which we are very different from God. We need sleep.

He never does. We need air to breathe. Food to eat. Water to drink. He does not. We have such limited strength. And power.

He does not. We are each singular persons. He is a tri-personal being. We have limited knowledge. His knowledge and wisdom is immeasurable.

He knows what the future holds. We can only guess at it. We do right when we humble ourselves before him.

[18 : 58] He does right when he exalts himself before us. We do right when we worship him. He does right when he receives that worship.

It's his right. It belongs to him. Think about it like this. For us to live any kind of a good life here on earth.

We need the sun. I'm talking about the blazing ball of fire sun in space. Without that we would all soon die. It keeps all the plants alive and growing for our food.

And it keeps us from instantly freezing to death. We orbit the sun and we receive its life-giving benefits. Not only that but we also get light from the sun.

So that we can see the world in all its beauty. Our very existence is dependent on the sun. We would not be what we are. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without it.

[20 : 03] But the flip side of that is not true. The sun doesn't need us at all. It is what it is and it does what it does without our help. And so we're right to cherish the sun and all the benefits of life that it gives and sustains.

We're right to give the sun some major credit for how things go on earth. But the sun doesn't owe us any credit. And really we don't expect it to give us any.

We just all know that we should appreciate the sun for all that it gives to us. It's the same way with God. It doesn't even make sense for him to praise or honor or exalt us.

Because we're not worthy of it. We should cherish him. We should love him. We should worship him and fear him and serve him and listen to him.

And for his part, he should receive that love and worship. That fear, that service, that obedience. It's his due.

[21 : 09] It belongs to him. It's just the reality between him and us. Take another analogy. Imagine for a moment that you love painting.

And with your brush on the canvas, you express something that you saw one day that really grabbed at your heart.

And the painting turns out wonderful. In fact, everybody that you show it to loves it. What a masterpiece. And a world-famous museum calls you up and asks if you'd be willing to put it on display there.

Wow. Sure. I'm honored. But imagine now that somewhere in the transition to the museum, somebody else at the museum gets this painting, gets it into the museum, changes the name of the painting, and changes the attribution to say that they painted it.

And then they stand there with it, day after day, showing it off proudly as their own work to the delight of the world. How do you, as the one who painted it, feel about that?

[22 : 21] You are right in this case to be upset about it. It is wrong for him to do that. It's stealing the credit. It's stealing the glory, the fame that is rightfully yours.

The painting is yours, not his. And what's special about this painting is the explanation that you give to it, the true story behind it, not the lies that he's making up about it and telling people at the museum.

And then comes the award. Your painting is selected and chosen winner of a prestigious award and with it \$10 million. And that man is quite happy to receive that money for himself.

And you are quite right to be indignant, angry, upset about his stealing what rightfully belongs to you.

You might even say jealous. And it's not a bad jealousy. It's a righteous jealousy. That's kind of how it is with God. He is the grand designer.

[23 : 31] This universe and everything in it. Us. We are his masterpiece. We are the product of his creative strokes.

And yet we have the audacity to shut him out again and again and to give the credit for everything good that we are and that we have to something or someone else.

We would sooner make up a bunch of lies than give him the glory that he deserves for his masterpiece. This, according to Paul, in Romans chapter 1, is wicked.

You know the passage, Romans chapter 1. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. He goes on in verse 23. He says, For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

[24 : 41] But then verse 23. Although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God, which would be the right thing to do, nor gave thanks to him.

But their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal men, birds, animals, and reptiles.

Do you hear what Paul is saying? Giving glory, giving praise, giving honor to the created things rather than to our creator, it's wicked. It's wrong. It's like giving the credit for all the good in our world to something or to someone that just doesn't deserve it.

Is it not right for God to uphold his own authorship? Is it not right for him to assert himself as the true and loving artist and architect?

Is he not worthy of great glory for all he has made and all he has done with what he has made? God is absolutely justified and good and righteous in acting to bring glory to his own name.

[26 : 04] It's his due. To yield it to us or to anyone else would be like the ultimate sin, the ultimate injustice, the ultimate wrong, the very definition of corruption and perversity.

It would be like allowing the ultimate lie to go unanswered and truth to perish. That's why God acts. That's why God works to bring glory and praise and honor for his own name. He always has and he always will. But now let's think for a moment where Jesus fits into all of this.

We've seen some snippets of how God has been working to bring glory to his own name through the Bible, through the Old Testament. But now we come to Jesus. Where does he fit in this greater story?

How does he bring glory to the name of God? This is a big question. A deep one. One worthy of careful study and meditation.

[27 : 08] I don't even think I could give a comprehensive answer to that this morning. But let's look at a couple ways that we can see how Jesus fits into this. How Jesus brings glory to God.

Let's begin with John 11 verse 4. You remember when Lazarus got sick? And news came to Jesus that he was ill. What did Jesus say?

John 11 verse 4. When Jesus heard this, he said, This sickness will not end in death. No. It is for God's glory.

So that God's son may be glorified through it. Such an interesting statement of Jesus. He already knows what's coming for Lazarus. He knows that Lazarus is going to die.

He knows that he's going to go down there and raise Lazarus from the dead. And so the sickness, Jesus says, It's an opportunity for God to be glorified.

[28 : 08] And the son as well. How does Lazarus being raised from the dead bring glory to God? It shows God's power. It shows how he can give life.

How he can do what we can't do. And the very same act also brings glory to the son. The son is the one who raises Lazarus from the dead. And it's here we see this sort of union or togetherness of father and son.

They work together. God is at work to bring glory to his own name. And he's doing it through the son. Right here in this miracle, raising Lazarus from the dead.

It causes God's name to be exalted. We don't have time to look at a whole bunch of examples of this. But Acts chapter 2 verse 22. We see the same sort of principle coming out.

Not just with the resurrection of Lazarus. It undergirds all the miracles. All the signs and wonders that Jesus did. They are for the glory of God. And so that God's son may be glorified through them.

[29 : 21] We could take a quick peek back to John chapter 9 verse 3. The healing of the man born blind. What did Jesus say? It wasn't because this man sinned or his parents sinned.

No, this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. And then Jesus gives sight to the man who had never seen. In God's great plan, this man was born blind.

It was so that God could work. God could act with his power. And that his power might be seen. Bringing glory to his name.

As the man was healed. In fact, we can broaden this principle out even further. God isn't just working to bring glory to his own name. Through the miracles and signs and wonders that Jesus does.

He's working to bring glory to his own name through everything that Jesus does. Through Jesus' whole ministry. Everything he does. Everything he says.

[30 : 26] As Jesus has made crystal clear in this gospel. He's not here on his own authority or his own initiative. He has been sent by the Father. And he's not here to teach people his own stuff.

He says, John 7 verse 16. My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. And what is Jesus teaching people to do? To love the Lord your God.

With all your heart. Soul, mind and strength. To worship him. To serve him. To give glory to him. God is speaking through Jesus.

To get glory for himself. The glory that he is due. And then we can take even one more step back. Because it's even bigger than that.

We've heard about it a little bit through John. And how he started this gospel. Who is this Jesus? I love the way that the author of Hebrews says it. Hebrews chapter 1 verse 3.

[31 : 27] The son is the radiance of God's glory. And the exact representation of his being. Sustaining all things by his powerful word.

So God brings glory to his own name. Not just by the works of Jesus. Or the words of Jesus. It's even deeper than that.

The son Jesus himself. Is the radiance of God's glory. The exact representation of his being. What's glorious about God. Is shining forth visibly.

Visibly to us. In the very person of Jesus. He is. The glorious God. The fullness of deity in human form.

Human flesh and blood. Which means that simply by looking at Jesus. We are seeing. The glory. Of God. Up close and personal.

[32 : 27] We're getting the opportunity to see what is praiseworthy. About him. His character. The love. The friendship. The goodness.

The kindness. The compassion. The purity. The righteousness. The patience. The refusal to do what is wrong or sinful.

His obedience to God's commands. Since he is also a man. And the love for God. God. This is getting into the realm of what goes beyond our understanding.

And our appreciation. God is bringing glory to his own name. Just by Jesus. Coming and being here on earth. Being present.

Being seen. And known by us. Something that we'll meditate on for the rest of our lives. How God has been glorifying. His own name through Jesus the son.

[33 : 26] But now we come to that other half of the statement. I have glorified my name. Says the father. He's been doing that all along.

Through Jesus. And everything that's happened with him. And I will glorify my name again. Now we could simply say here.

Well God is promising to do what he's always done. To bring glory to his own name. But I think we can go just a little bit further. Than that here.

There's something very special about this hour. To which Jesus has come. It's unlike anything that has ever happened. It represents a great pinnacle moment.

The son. And let's remember who he is. The God man. The son is about to go through. With something that he is utterly.

[34 : 24] Unworthy of. Peek ahead to John 17 verse 5. Where Jesus prays to his father. He says father glorify me.

In your presence. With the glory I had with you. Before the world began. Just before his arrest. Who is this Jesus?

He is the one. Who was glorious. With God. Before the world began. The one. Who. With God. Back then. Was worthy of all praise.

All honor. All worship. And now here. In the already very humble form. Of a man. He's about to go through. The most shameful. Dishonoring.

And despicable treatment. The universe will ever know. And not just at the hands of men. Who will dishonor him. Seek to discredit him.

[35 : 21] Tell all kinds of lies about him. Falsely accuse him. Beat him. Mock him. Insult him. Deal unjustly with him. And murder him. But he is about to be treated by God.

The father. As if he had done all the wickedness. Of the world. Himself. Is it possible.

That God's glory. And majesty. And beauty. And goodness. And greatness. Can be magnified. Through that.

Through Jesus. Going to the cross. Can glory come. Through undeserved suffering. Shame. Pain. Injustice. Evil. Amazingly. It can. It will.

[36 : 25] It does. It will. That is what I think. The father. Is telling his son. In this audible voice. From heaven. The son. Trembles. In this moment. Like a lamb.

Before. It's shearers. The weight. Of this hour. Is crushing. To Jesus. And the father. Assures his son. That yes. Glory.

Will come. To me. Even through. This hour. And the horrors. It contains. God will glorify his name. He will magnify. And exalt. Through this hour. His mercy. His love. His kindness.

And compassion. We. The people of the world. Will be the recipients. Of all of it. This incredible gift. And even though.

[37 : 21] It's not stated here. I think Jesus knows. He will be glorified. He will receive his due. From the father. Through all of this too. God will glorify his son.

Lift him up. To the highest place. Of honor and praise. Even. Through this moment. Where he is lifted up. To the position.

Of utmost shame. Do you see why I say. We could meditate on this. For the rest of our lives. We're barely catching the contours. We're barely seeing the tip.

Of the iceberg here. God acts to bring glory.

To his own name. He always has. It's absolutely. Right for him to do. And he always will. Because he is the glorious one. He's been doing it through.

[38 : 20] The whole story of Jesus. From his miraculous conception. Until now. And he will again. Bring glory to his son's name. Even through Jesus.

Shameful death. This too. Is for God's glory. So that the son might be glorified. Through it. And we could end right here.

And have enough to think about. And chew on. And to worship God for. To ponder. But I can't help but take it. Just one step further. Father. I don't know what you guys are going through.

All the details of your lives. I don't know. The inner struggles of your hearts. But I know that some of you may be going through. Some really hard things.

Some really deep struggles. Not hard compared to what Jesus went through. Of course. But still really tough. Really difficult. Maybe it has to do with relationships.

[39 : 19] That have gone off the rails. Maybe it has to do with. What's going on in our world today. Maybe it has to do with. Health troubles. Whatever it is for you today.

Can this too. Be for God's glory. So that God's son. Be glorified through it. If the cross of Jesus can. Anything can. God's glory. Can come. By the way of suffering. Struggle. Pain. Shame. Sickness. And sorrow. That's one of the most amazing things. About our God. He works all things together.

For the good. Of those who love him. And for his. Glory. And our enjoyment of it. I want to invite you to pray with me now.

[40 : 22] Pray with me these words of Jesus. Think about your own struggles. And pray. Pray about them with me. Father. In my life.

Glorify your name. And now hear God's declaration. From heaven over you. I have. And I will. Again. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.