

To Whom is Glory Due?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 November 2017

[0 : 00] Let's open with a word of prayer. Father, thank you, Lord, for the privilege that we have! to share your word once again. We ask, Lord, for your grace during this time. We ask, Father, that you would give to all of us what we need to hear your word. And we ask, Lord, that you would grant to me the gift of articulation and clarity today. All for your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The title of today's message is Living for God's Glory. Living for God's Glory.

The scripture that informs our message is Psalm 115, verse 1. Psalm 115, verse 1.

The title is Living for God's Glory. Psalm 115, verse 1 says, Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory for your sake, sorry, for the sake of your steadfast love and faithfulness. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory for the sake of your steadfast love and faithfulness.

By God's grace today, we will examine two questions as we respond to our title today. And the questions that we are going to seek to answer are, number one, how do we glorify God?

How do we glorify God? And number two, why do we glorify God?

[2 : 26] Why do we glorify God? If we are to live for God's glory, it seems fundamental that we know how to do so.

And it would also help if our pursuit is well informed. That is to say, if we understand the basis upon which we are seeking to glorify God, we are seeking to glorify God.

Before examining those questions very specifically, I want to offer a few background or contextual points. The first point deals with why the subject is important. Why is it important for us to consider the subject of living for God's glory?

Perhaps a strong response would be that sometime in the mid-1600s, a group of theologians who sought to provide new converts with, in particular, with a doctrinal basis for their faith, produced what is called the Westminster Shorter Catechism? It was a list of 127 doctrinal positions, each introduced with a question.

The very first of these was this question. What is the chief end of man? That was the question. What is the chief end of man?

[4 : 03] And the answer was man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

So these theologians, having studied the Bible, concluded that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Assuming that is true, and I believe it to be true, it would seem to me that the two questions which we will seek to answer are vital.

But what does this word glorify mean? It means to honor, to worship, and to praise.

Perhaps, though, the best word that we might use within the context of our message is honor. In that sense, it means a number of things, including not bringing the Lord's name into ill repute, not dishonoring His name.

The psalmist cried out to the Lord, emphasizing the point that He did not want the people to be glorified. The psalmist said, Lord, it's not us. It's not us. We don't want to receive the praise.

[5 : 36] The psalmist did this for what he hoped the Lord would do on their behalf. Because at that moment, they were in trouble. There were difficulties.

And the psalmist is asking the Lord for help. And the psalmist cries out to the Lord. And he says, Lord, help us. But do so in a way.

Not that we would be glorified. Not that we would be recognized for what is accomplished through us. But do it in a manner that you will reap praise, that you will be glorified.

The psalmist wanted the Lord Himself to be glorified. The final introductory point I wish to address is what might seem to some as a bit of a contradiction.

It is this. On the one hand, we say that we should glorify God, that we as believers should glorify God, and on the other hand, we ask God to glorify Himself through us and on our behalf.

[6 : 52] But there really is no contradiction, as I hope we will see as we go through the message. But at this point, I want us to be mindful of three things in this regard.

The first is separation of labor. Our work and the Lord's work as well. And what the Lord does on our behalf and in the universe generally.

And then secondly, let's have regard for His sovereign work shining through us, that people around us will see. And then thirdly, we don't seek as believers to take or assume to ourselves glory that is due to the Lord.

I want us to remember now that our message today is about living for God's glory. That is our title, living for God's glory.

And it's based on Psalm 115 and verse 1. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory, for the sake of Your steadfast love and faithfulness.

[8 : 09] We examine this topic by responding to two questions, as we said. And the first question is, how do we, as believers, glorify God?

I want us to notice in Psalm 115 and 1, that the psalmist makes an appeal for God to glorify His name.

And since we know that God does not advertise on TV or Facebook or WhatsApp, etc., could you imagine that if God were advertising that way?

Since God does not advertise, the question seems reasonable. How do we glorify God? God acts through human agents.

He acts through you and me. God is glorified through us. As we consider our primary question, and the psalmist's appeal, I wish for us to do so within the context of 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 31, where we find these words.

[9 : 27] So whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Now, though the Bible teaches us that the entire universe, its beauty, its complexity, its order, its size, it all speaks to the glory of God, The truth is, in a real way, we are agents of God's glory.

If we are to live as agents of God's glory, it makes sense that we know how to do it. I believe that you and I can readily agree in ways we do not glorify God.

Let's consider a few ways that we do not glorify God first. Broadly, sinfulness. When we sin, we don't glorify God.

In fact, Romans 3, 23 says, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. It is our sin that causes us to fall short of the glory of God.

[10 : 46] We see that our sin disorders God. Sin acts contrary to honoring God.

Sin promotes and showcases ungodliness. When you and I sin, what we are saying to ourselves and to the world is that we choose sin rather than obedience to God.

And so in that way, we are dishonoring God. When we are proud and arrogant, when it's all about us, not about God, remember what God says about the proud.

He resists the proud. Another way we don't bring glory to the Lord is when we are self-reliant. The notion that you and I do not need God, that we can do it on our own.

Who needs God? In fact, you know, this notion that I did it my way and I did it all on my own.

[12 : 05] Selfishness. When we are selfish, when it's all about us, not about our brothers, and not about God, and not about advancing His kingdom, but it's all and it's entirely about us, it's dishonoring to God.

When we are seeking to build a name for ourselves, rather than building a name for God, rather than promoting His kingdom, when we consider the ways that we do not glorify God, those ways that we've mentioned, and those, by the way, would not be exhaustive, I think we can identify their opposites.

When we consider all of those things that I mentioned, sinfulness, arrogance, self-reliance, self-centeredness, so you can build a name for oneself, I think we can come to a conclusion that there are some opposites there.

The opposites would be humility. It would be the first word that comes to mind. Humility and evangelistic. So I want to suggest to us today that we glorify God by being humble and evangelistic. I think it's easy to see that it's impossible to give God honor if you and I are not humble.

[13 : 41] That is because we would want to reap or heap it all to ourselves. In Psalm 149, verse 4, the psalmist says, for the Lord takes pleasure in his people.

He adorns the humble with salvation. He takes pleasure in the humble. Humility is a recognition of our dependency on God for everything.

Our salvation, maintaining our salvation, our holiness, our health, our relationships, everything. Humility says that we can't do it all alone.

In fact, humility says we can do nothing without the Lord. High-mindedness and entitlement disappear when humility steps in. We know that apart from the Holy Spirit, no good thing dwells in us.

We have to have a sense of humility. Humility. We cannot glorify God if we are not humble, if we don't recognize who we are as believers.

[14:53] Humility says, all that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it all to you, Lord. A humble person grows in wisdom and as he grows in wisdom, his humility increases.

You ever hear that? A humble person grows in wisdom and as he grows in wisdom, he becomes even more humble. That's because humility and wisdom feed off of each other.

A humble person is able to withstand maltreatment and abuse for the glory of God. He's able to withstand disappointment.

He's able to withstand people saying things and doing things about him or her rather than lashing out because he would rather the name of the Lord be promoted than his own interest.

The attitude of a humble person is I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, not on my own. When we say things like this, I want to give you a few things that you and I might say and that we do say as believers quite often that demonstrate our humility and our reliance on the Lord.

[16:22] We say things like, by God's grace, by God's grace, I'm going to do such and such. If the Lord permits, the Lord allows, I am well.

Somebody asks, how are you doing? I am well, thank God. Thank God for enabling me to be what I am. God is good. God, what about this one?

God has allowed me to endure. God's allowed me to endure. Somebody, you've gone through something and people know it and they wonder how you've done it and they ask how you did it.

You say, God has allowed me to endure. It was not because of me but it was because of him and we give God the glory for what he has done in and through us.

He allowed us to endure. What about this one? He brought me through. He brought me through.

When I thought I would faint, he is the one who brought me through.

[17:25] There were days I didn't know what was going to happen when the question is posed to you. But he brought me through. All of us can testify of the goodness of the Lord.

We can bring him glory even in our suffering, even in our difficult moments. He made a way where there seemed to be no way.

We can be, we can give God glory by being evangelistic. ultimately, the psalmist was seeking to promote the name of the Lord.

You see that? The psalmist was seeking to promote the name of the Lord. He said, not to us, not to us, O Lord, not to us.

Very emphatically, he repeats himself, Lord, it's not to me. It's not for me. But to your name, O Lord. I want your name to be praised. I want your name to be known.

[18:28] among the people, among our enemies. I want them to know you. The psalmist was seeking to promote the name of the Lord as you and I should do.

When it boils right down to it, giving God the glory is spreading to the world who he is. It's evangelistic in nature. It's evangelistic because when people observe the believer's life, they should see something different that causes them to ask questions, to inquire.

Why am I forgiving, patient, and kind? It's because of the Lord, because of his enablement. It's not because of me, but the spirit of Christ that dwells in me.

all the bad things, me, they're mine, but the good, it's all due to him. Why do I rejoice in all circumstances?

Because of him. When others around me are terrified, we celebrate, I celebrate Jesus Christ because of who he is and what he has done and will do for me.

[19:48] even when success comes to us, we celebrate Jesus Christ. We promote him. It's not only in difficult times.

When success comes, it's because of his enablement. We glorify Christ. We should have words of hope on the tip of our tongues as Peter instructs us in 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 15.

This is what Peter says, But in your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with

gentleness and respect.

Peter is saying to us that you and I will always be prepared to promote Jesus Christ to give a response to anyone who asks.

And we ought not to do it in a haughty manner, but we ought to do it with gentleness. We ought to do it with gentleness. How else might we be evangelistic from a practical perspective?

[21 : 06] I want to say to you and to me that, you know, there are opportunities, whether it's when you're having lunch with someone or perhaps colleagues from work, you go out to lunch or maybe there is an office meeting and you call the pot or someone is called upon to pray.

They might say, you know, who wants to pray? What an opportunity we have to pray, to pray for the meal and to pray for others. You and I should embrace those opportunities and to the extent that we are uncomfortable.

We ought to work on it. It takes effort. It takes time. We ought to be deliberate about it. Our lives, indeed, our lives should be poster boards for Christ.

You and I should live lives that bring glory to God because he has no means, he has no vessels, but us.

You and I are the ones through whom God is glorified. Why do we glorify God?

[22 : 25] Why do we do it? Why is the psalmist responding so strongly to God, so emphatically to God? Not to us, oh Lord, not to us, he writes.

Romans 11, 36 gives us in a nutshell why we glorify God.

This is what Paul wrote to the church at Rome. Paul said, for from him and through him and to him are all things to him be glory forever.

Amen. Let me say that again. Paul says to the church, for from him, that's God, that is, for from God and through him and to him are all things from him, through him and to him are all things to him be glory forever.

Charles Spurgeon, in examining this verse, said, it is laid down by the apostle Paul as a general principle that all things come of God.

[23 : 48] They are of him as their source. They are through him as their means. and they are to him as their end.

They are of him in the plan, through him in the working, and to him in the glory which they produce. So all things, they are of him as their source.

God is the source of everything. They are through him as their means, and they are to him as their end. Everything that there is, everything, we can't escape it.

We cannot escape God or the things that he has done. We cannot escape it. Everything is for him, through him, and to him.

God is our all in all, like we used to say on the island. How many of you remember that? God is our all in all. He's everything to us.

[25 : 03] And that's why we give him glory, because he's our all in all. He's our everything. We see an even more personal, an even more personal reason, if you will, if there is such a thing for us, for why we glorify God in the second half of Psalm 115, verse 1.

Here the psalmist says that we should give God glory for the sake of your steadfast love and faithfulness. So the psalmist says that because of his steadfast love and his faithfulness to us, we will give him glory.

God gave. I just say that we ought to glorify God because of what he does for us, salvation, through us righteousness, and in us his Holy Spirit.

Yes, he is a faithful God. The prophet Isaiah writing about God's faithfulness in Isaiah 64, verse 4 says, from of old, no one has heard or perceived by the air, nor air, nor eye has seen a God beside you who acts for those who wait for him.

I want to say that again. Isaiah 64, verse 4 says, from of old, no one has heard or perceived by the air, nor eye has seen a God beside you who acts, who acts for those who waits for him.

[26 : 50] Isaiah says, I want us to explore this verse a little bit. We are told that no one has seen a God besides the God we worship.

The God we worship, we're building a case now for why we ought to give him glory. We are told that there is no God like him. there is no God like our God who acts for those who wait for him.

God acts for those of us, for us as believers who wait for him. Could you imagine that? The sovereign Lord of the universe acts on our behalf.

God acts for us. There is no one like him. Isaiah makes the point emphatically. He says that no one has heard or seen a God like our God.

God acts for those who wait for him. The fact that he promises to act for those who wait for him should give us peace in the midst of all circumstances.

[28 : 01] No one is stronger than our God. Therefore, if he acts for you and for me, we should have confidence that we know that his will cannot be for it. How wonderful is that God who acts for those who wait on him.

I'm here today to tell you that whatever your circumstance might be, that you can rely on Isaiah 64 verse 4.

It tells us that we serve a God who acts for those who wait on him. We've got some work to do. And guess what? Our work is easy. We've got to wait on him. That's the part of our work. We've got to wait on him. Not only should it give us peace, it also confirms our reasons to give God glory. It is not unusual for us to say during times of difficulty in particular. That the Lord would intervene, that we hope that the Lord would intervene in a manner that is clear both to us and to others so that they would observe the results and so that God would get glory.

[29 : 24] That's not unusual. That's not an unusual prayer for some of us to pray. I think it's an appropriate prayer. Because God can act on our behalf.

And there is no God like him who does that. If you are like me, you get anxious from time to time. And often times when in certain situations we get a little anxious and a little concerned and we wonder whether God has heard the cry of our hearts.

Wonder whether God is aware of what's going on in our circumstances. Wonder whether he realizes what's happening with the neighbor who appears not to be serving him at all while we are experiencing challenges and difficulties.

He realized that others who do not see him as Lord are enjoying such and such while we are sometimes experiencing difficult times.

[30 : 51] yet I know and we ought to know that ours is a life of faith.

God is glorified in every circumstance. A life lived in a manner that seeks to glorify God is one that is reliant on his goodness and his grace.

One that is anchored to the reality that he will not permit anything to harm us outside of his will. I want to give you another reason why we should give God glory.

We ought to give him glory because he forgives us when we sin. When we sin he forgives us. His grace and his mercy exceed our sin.

How amazing is that? We can always go back to the well of God's forgiveness and receive grace and pardon for our sins.

[32 : 15] And here is a final reason. God will give him glory because he saved us in the first place. Saved us in the first place.

While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. When we were enemies he died for us. And now we are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

The Bible tells us in 1 John that it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him.

I want to tell you today that we have got reasons to give him glory today. As I conclude wouldn't it be great if the world knew that you and I the world knew that we were believers and that our standards were different?

Wouldn't that be you know that seems very fundamental right? But wouldn't it be fantastic if the people around us not only knew that we were believers but they knew that we were different from unbelievers.

[33 : 43] You know very often today sadly it is hard to recognize the difference between someone who professes Christianity and someone who does not. How can a Christian bring glory to God in such a circumstance?

Remember what we are told that in everything we do everything whether it's eating drinking in all things we should seek to bring glory to the Lord in everything and everything excludes nothing.

As believers you and I are called to live in such a way that God is glorified through our words. God is glorified in the way in which we handle challenges and successes.

God is glorified in our difficulties, in our relationships, our interactions.

God is glorified in the way we respond to authority. God is glorified in every aspect of our lives.

[35 : 07] It is comforting to know that God is faithful and loving and stands ready to receive glory from our lives.

Isn't it comforting to know today believers that you and I can be used as vessels through which God causes his glory to be demonstrated?

What an amazing thought that is that we serve a God who stands ready to act on behalf of those who wait for him.

We serve a God who never leaves us alone. yet today if you're not a believer you can have no such assurance no such assurance sadly.

You live in a world filled with uncertainty if you are an unbeliever and you face an eternity that is marked with separation from the one for whom and by whom and for whom all things were created.

[36 : 39] It only makes sense that you and I would glorify God if you are a believer if you're an unbeliever that you would ask the Lord to cause this to be true for you as it is for those of us who believe that you and I would glorify God and enjoy him forever which is the reason why we're here the reason why we're here the reason why we're here on this earth is because God wanted agents of glory men and women who would bring him glory throughout the universe in our neighborhoods and on our jobs in the playground and at school wherever we are that we would promote the name of Jesus

Christ wherever we are and that we would enjoy him not only in this life but in the life to come because you see the forever here that we're told about is not just forever so long as we live here it's forever for all eternity I'm going to ask the prison worship team to come now as we pray Father