

The Cross and Glory

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[0 : 0 0] Let me begin. I want to ask a question that I want you to think about carefully. And I'm not asking for you to respond. In fact, I'd prefer you don't. But just think to yourself, this is the question.

What do I really want the most? What do I really want the most? Put it another way, what's most important to me?

What's really most important? What do I want? What's most important? As you think about this, here are some things that may help you recognize, whether you'd like to admit it or not, what the answer is.

What makes you most happy? What really just lights your fire? That you're happy about. What do you care about so much that you really don't have to be prompted to talk about it?

What are things that get you very irritated? I mean, fire you up. I want to confess that different ones of us have been hardwired by God to be fired up in moderately different fashions.

[1 : 2 5] Do you follow what I'm saying? I mean, some people are very public in their fired up-ness. Other people are kind of like a slow burn. They're like a coke fire.

They're hot. But inside. What does your moodiness say about what's important?

What causes you to have recurring bouts of anxiety? Do you know what I'm talking about, anxiety? It's circling the drain on an idea that you really don't have control over.

Let me come back again to ask you the question here. What do I really want the most? What is it that is most important to me?

Now, let me say that if you were to ask the average person on the street, what do you want the most? What's most important? Do you know what most people would say?

[2 : 3 5] What would they say? Tell me. I just want to be happy. I wouldn't immediately give the guy the smackdown over that.

I mean, I'm glad. I appreciate the fact that the individual who'd tell me they really want to be happy didn't at least be so simplistic to say, I want a million dollars.

I have to tell you that I have added something to my repertoire. How many of you know that when you call some of these service lines, help lines, at the end of the conversation, they always say, the last thing they say is, can I help you with anything else?

Right? I mean, it's always the same thing. Can I help you with anything else? And my standard answer right now has been yes. Of course, there's a long pause, and I wait just for a minute to let them think what's coming next, and I say, free cash.

You know, it's like, it hasn't worked. But let's come back to the issue. I want to be happy.

[3 : 4 3] I really do. Now, if you were to ask any child that has been instructed in the shorter catechism, what is the chief end of man?

How many of you know? Raise your hand and wave at me if you know what the answer is to the first question in the shorter catechism. Raise your hand high. I want it this high, like this.

Some of you... Here, watch me. Like this. Okay.

Got it? Okay. It's all right. What is the chief end of man? It is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

What is the chief end of man? It is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. John Piper, in his knockout book, *Desiring God*, that I would recommend you read if you're inclined to a little bit of sober labor of exceptional worth, he kind of runs away.

[5 : 03] It doesn't run away, but he kind of changes the tack a little bit on that. He says, the chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever.

So, I want you to think with me this morning of what John chapter 13, 31, and 32 have to say to this subject. Let me read a passage to you.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and glorify him at once.

Now, it's not entirely true in every case, but as a general rule, when a word is repeated fairly often, there's a reason.

[6 : 05] And it wouldn't hurt us to think, why does the Holy Spirit have so much to say about this subject of glory? And so, what I want us to do this morning is take these two verses and think carefully about the incredible significance of the cross.

And I want to draw several powerful truths from the fact of these two verses and then bring some practical application to your life so that in the future, if someone would say to you, what do you really want?

You would say, I want the glory of God. And I can tell you by personal experience, you won't get there without persistent affection for the Lord Jesus Christ and a deliberate intention to move there.

Because guess how we're naturally wired? How many of you have a lot of trouble really thinking about yourself occasionally?

You know, just every now and then someone has to bump you and say, Tim, are you ever thinking about yourself? You're so wonderful thinking about everybody else. You know, I haven't had that happen.

[7 : 30] But, you know, we want to learn to think about the glory of Christ and the Father.

And this passage hammers it. So, let's look first of all at the glory of the cross. And since we're going to spend so much time dealing with the subject of glory, and it's not a word we use very often.

How many of you used glory this last week? You said, oh, glory. You didn't. I've got to tell you, Pastor Brock, who's in heaven, he used glory fairly often.

Anytime something happened wrong, he would say, oh, glory. When I was a member, I remember hearing him say, oh, glory, over some problem. He was like, what? But for the most part, you and I don't use, oh, glory.

We don't talk about glory. We think a lot about it, but we don't talk enough about it. The idea of glory, the word glory, really carries with it the idea of worth, significance, honor, reputation.

[8 : 41] If you were kind of tracking with the different songs we sang this morning, they had a lot to do with glory. And the biblical word is most often connected with character, not just with events.

And as a reference to that, we will see that when the word is used in Scripture, it is speaking invariably about God and things he's done.

But behind that is not just the act of what he has done, but what it tells us about his nature and his heart. So kind of mark this in your thinking.

The word glory is about honor, worth, and significance. And the most common use of the word glory in Scripture is really used in connection with our triune God.

One theologian put it this way, that the word glory is a word that speaks of God in such a fashion that glorifying God means calling attention to his greatness and showing his supreme value by delighting in him and cherishing in him.

[9 : 55] Glorifying God means drawing attention or marking his supreme greatness. Let me give you an illustration of that. Over in Matthew chapter 5, remember when Jesus said, You are the salt of the earth, you're the light of the world.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. And they say, wow, God is pretty spectacular.

Right? So there is a sense in which one of the things that we ought to always be thinking about is how does this make God look? Look, we have had the privilege of hosting Franklin County Board of Election for five weeks in this building.

And I have to tell you that every interaction that our people have had, whether it's an Awana worker coming in here early to work on Awana on Monday night, or one of our ladies walking through the lobby, or someone doing custodial work, or one of our pastors, the consistent thing that has taken place is that you as a fellowship have shown kindness and a sweet disposition to all those people.

Hundreds of them have come through here. They invited me to go to their honors banquet because of you.

[11 : 20] I don't want to go. I'm going to send one of the pastors. I shouldn't say that. But I am not a social animal.

I wasn't born for that. You know, it's like, but I'll go, you know. Let your light so shine before men that they will see your good works and what?

Glorify your Father. Your heart, affected by the glory of God, has displayed a kindness that has been so exceptional.

That's the common conversation I've heard from hundreds of people the last five weeks. And so when we think this morning about this issue of glory, I want you to understand that it means calling attention to His greatness and showing a supreme value.

Why did we host Franklin County Board of Elections? At the heart of it is because we are here to show the character and heart of Christ. Isn't that right? That's why we did what we did on Monday night.

[12 : 28] That's why we're doing the food drive. We are interested in having other people have an opportunity to see the character of our God and our Savior. So here we are in verse 31.

Judas has gone out into the night to betray Jesus and bring about His crucifixion. Knowing that the cross was only hours away, here is Jesus now with the remaining disciples, and here's what He says.

Look at the verse there in 31. When He'd gone out, Jesus said, Now! This is it! Now is the Son of Man glorified! Can you imagine that?

Against the backdrop of that brutal rendering of His body, the absolute vile betrayal of one of His own disciples, Jesus Christ called the cross the moment of His glory.

Incidentally, He referred to Himself here in this statement as the Son of Man. He was pointing to His humanity, which He has taken on for all of eternity, for the glory of the Father, and for our redemption.

[14 : 10] And here He is looking forward to the cross, and He says, Now is the Son of Man glorified.

It's interesting to stop just for a moment and consider that He referred to no other aspect of His human existence that way.

I can think of. There had certainly been moments in His public ministry that were pretty glorious. I mean, can you imagine the glory of Him cleansing the temple? My Father's house is a house of prayer, and you have made it a den of thieves, and it is time for me to bring smack down on you.

And how one man could clean out, just imagine, someone stomping in to the Supreme Court and the White House at the same time and cleaning both of them, one guy with nothing but a little whip.

I have to tell you, the thing that terrified people was not the strength of Christ, but the character and holiness of His calling. And He, that was pretty glorious, I would think.

[15 : 21] He didn't call it that way. Another thing that I think about is, remember, when He was baptized, remember He came out of the water, and we have the dove come down, and we have the voice of God, and it says, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

Listen to Him. That's pretty spectacular. I mean, how many of you have had God say something like that after your baptism? No. Terrify me if it did.

And it won't. Let's try another one. The transfiguration. I mean, that was pretty spectacular. In fact, if you were to read in the Apostles' Epistles, well, that's a word full, isn't it?

The Apostles' Epistles. Don't go there. But in Peter, remember when He says, we beheld His glory. When He was on the Mount of Transfiguration, it wiped Him out.

We beheld His glory. Did Jesus refer to the transfiguration as the moment of His glory? No. He says this. He says, now, the cross, that's my hour of glory.

[16 : 38] I can't help, and I debate whether I should or not, and here I go. So, I remember years ago when Mel Gibson came out with his, you know, what was that movie?

I'm forgetting. The Passion. Okay. And pretty spectacular. I remember someone got up in Cedarville Chapel and said, and I heard this by way of rumors, so I don't know it to be firsthand, but someone said, this was going to be the most significant evangelistic event since Pentecost.

How many of you know what hyperbole is? Jared? Over-exaggeration. It's like, hello? Anyway, I, the Passion of the Christ kind of made clear that he suffered, but I got to tell you, the suffering of Jesus is not the thing that brought glory to his name.

I heard, I read on the internet, of course, everything you read on the internet is true, but I heard on the internet that Morocco, a fish, fisherman, was put through a grinder.

That's pretty spectacular, right? You know, it's like, yuck, bad. Jesus suffered, but the thing that is glorious is not his suffering particularly. The thing that is spectacular about Christ is all of the above.

[18 : 09] And as we read there in verse 32, and skip ahead, it says, now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him.

Okay? What we understand, actually the latter part of 31 is what I meant to say, we understand that Jesus saw the cross not only as the means of his glory, but he also saw the cross as the means of his Father's glory.

Jesus brought glory to his Father by dying on the cross for our sins. And that is what is meant when the text says God is glorified in him.

Jesus understood that his perfect and willing obedience to the Father glorified the Father. And I wonder whether or not you think about the cross first and foremost as being something that glorifies Christ.

Think about it. Most of us, when we think about the cross, our first thought is to bring ourself into the frame. You know, hey, the cross is tremendously significant to me, right?

[19 : 23] Were it not for the cross, I would be a sinner directly on my way to hell and have no hope of redemption lost forever. I did a funeral on Friday that was a wonderful gospel opportunity, but it broke my heart.

The sorrow in that room was palpable. It was just, it was there. And were it not for the fact that I had the sweet privilege, by the way, funerals are captive audiences for me.

Do you understand that? I'll take any funeral you throw my way. Any funeral. So long as I get to be free with the gospel. And here, I can say to people whose hearts are broken in the face of death, there is only one hope for you and it's Jesus Christ who died on the cross and rose again.

And so here is Jesus as he looks towards the cross, he looks at that event and he says, this is it. Now I'm going to give you a summary of the Bible.

Genesis chapter 3 verse 15, remember when God shows up in the garden and is talking to two individuals, Adam and Eve and he brings the snake into the conversation and he says, listen, he will crush your head and you will bruise his heel.

[20 : 57] It is called proto-evangelism. The first indication of the gospel. And how does the story end over in Revelation chapter 5?

what we find there is this just absolutely wonderful picture of the glory of Christ in heaven. And as people are worshiping God in chapter 4 of Revelation and Christ in chapter 5, do you know how they address Jesus over and over again in chapter 5?

What do they say? Worthy is the lamb. I don't know about you but that gives me cold chills. I like to know that the story didn't happen just kind of like a warm night and mushrooms popping up.

God put a lot of thought into this and pulled it off over millennia. And here is Jesus looking at the cross as the moment in history where the plan of redemption ordained by the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit before the foundation of the world was coming into full fruition and evidence.

Now notice what we read in verse 32. If God is glorified in Him God will glorify Him in Himself. How many of you just don't raise your hands but a question how many of you have struggled with giving glory to other people?

[22 : 29] You are just the most holy group I've ever been around. Let me ask the question a little slower because I may have confused you a little bit. How many of you have struggled with giving glory to other people?

How many of you this is a little more comfortable how many of you have tried to diminish the glory of other people? They buy a new car and you think they shouldn't have one that good. And so when you have an opportunity to make an observation about their car purchases you have something to say about no that's not a car I'd buy.

I'd be more frugal and I'd probably give at least \$30 of the whole entire process to missions. You know I'm generous to a fault. We always we're we're thinking about ourselves too often.

By the way the little sidebar I've probably said it more than once people that think a lot about themselves are invariably pretty unhappy. How many of you have learned that?

Just one of you. the rest of you are still learning. Okay? People who think a lot about themselves are invariably unhappy. Back to the text.

[23 : 45] When we give him glory he is glorified and the one who gives him glory is glorified. The math is bulletproof.

He that exalts himself shall be abased. That means you try to puff yourself up he is going to do what? He's going to let the air out of your tires.

If you humble yourself what is he going to do? Huh? What? What's he going to do? If you would by the way you have the responsibility of humbling yourself and the way to humble yourself is by remembering God is on the throne and he is supremely significant and it's all about him and when you humble yourself he will do what?

He'll put just a little more air in the tires to help you. Do what? Does anybody know what his intention is? It is not so you get a big head and start taking credit for you.

You know what? I gave glory to God and now I'm pretty special. Down it goes. Okay. Back to the text because I want you to focus on the text.

[25 : 03] Here we are. There's verse 32. If God is glorified in him God will also glorify him in himself. So keep in mind that one of Christ's goals in his final words to his disciple before the cross was to give them hope in a truth that would prepare them for what was coming.

That's important to understand. Here were his disciples who were going to be absolutely trashed, blown out by the cross. Their hero, the one they'd been following for three years, was going to hang on the cross and suffer the most cruel death.

And their entire worldview of life was going to be just shattered. He says, don't worry about it. Don't worry about it. That which I am doing on the cross is all for the glory of God and I want you to understand the math.

When I give glory to the Father, he'll see to it that glory comes back to me. Jesus wanted to see, Jesus wanted his disciples to see more than his physical suffering.

He wanted them to understand that there was more that was going to take place than his separation from the Father. Behind the suffering that he was going to endure was the most merciful, the most wonderful, the most noble, the most dramatic display of the wisdom and love of God of all of eternity.

[26 : 30] Forever. When people think about Christ, they will think about the cross. Do you understand that? And what Jesus also wanted his disciples to understand is that his death for our sins according to the Father's will was all for the Father's glory.

And at the same time, his Father would act for the glory of his Son. There is an if in the logic here.

Look at the passage. If God is glorified in him, that's a condition. God will also glorify him in himself.

If God is glorified, God will glorify the one that brings him glory. Will you kind of fix that in your minds? How many of you understand that?

Let me try some of this perverse Christian math for you. Here we go. Are you following me? It is more blessed to... The word blessed actually means happier.

[27 : 47] Being a genuine heartfelt giver is more enjoyable than being a greedy self-focused circling the drain thinker. Right? Jesus said this, he who saves his life will lose it.

He who's interested in his glory is going to lose it. He who loses his life gives glory to the one who deserves it, namely God, will be glorified.

If God is glorified, God will glorify the one that brings him glory. I'll not leave off the last little part of the verse here, but the little statement that is made in himself is pointing out a very interesting theological fact.

How many of you got your hands around the Trinity issue? I mean, it's like you got that one. It's, you know, you can answer that. It's like, yeah. How can, what's it saying is that when God the Father gives glory to the Son, guess what happens?

It comes how? Back to the Father. How do you separate the, well, if Jesus, we're all into this, if I give him glory, I'm not going to have some left for me.

[29 : 09] No. God, in glorifying his Son, there's a nice little word coming here, that glory redounds, redounds.

That's got a ring to it, just a simple one, it's not a hard one, it just means it comes back. So God, Jesus gives glory to the Father, and the Father gives glory to the Son, and we wrap up the story by here's the statement, and it comes back, it just comes back.

So here's some closing thoughts on glory and the cross. Listen, I want to say this carefully, we diminish the glory of God and the glory of Jesus Christ when we think about the cross as only being about us.

I think that's important to get our heads around. them. The truth of the matter is, is our first thoughts about the cross, and am I blessed by the cross? Are you blessed by the cross? That is undeniably true.

But our first thought about the glory of the cross should be that it magnifies the unbelievable glory of God. Our appreciation for the cross should first of all reflect our appreciation for the glory of God.

[30 : 30] Yes, he died for us, but Jesus also died for the glory of the Father. And it is appropriate in this passage to see that his main goal was to glorify the Father.

That was the most important thing he had in mind. Remember in the garden when he prayed, if it's possible, let this cup pass from me? Nevertheless, what?

In essence, what he was saying is it's about you. And I want to appeal to you that it is noble, it's appropriate for us to appreciate the significance of the cross in redeeming us.

But more than that, the significance of the cross is the glory that redounds to the character of God and to Christ. And so we who seek to follow Jesus should be focused on living our lives for his glory.

Jesus was willing to live and Jesus was willing to die for the glory of the Father. And that's the way it should be for us. So try this. The next time you think about how many of you have ever had a conversation and left and then afterwards thought of things you could have said, should have said, wish you'd said, and are glad you didn't.

[31 : 51] One of the advantages of being 68 is that I've had so many absolute bombs in things I said off the cuff that I've at least learned to pace myself.

That's it. You know, it's like, yeah. But then my little old perverted mind still goes in circles, you know, I could have said this. Yeah. I should have.

This would have helped, you know. No. So, I want you the next time you find yourself going in that hamster cage logic.

How many of you understand what I mean by hamster cage logic? How many of you ever seen hamsters getting exercise in a cage? You know, just like, it's a very, very little circle and they're just worked up to death, you know.

Hamster cage logic. That's when you are the center. You know, and so next time you find yourself thinking that way, just stop and say, just a minute, Tim, Tim, stop, stop, stop.

[32 : 55] How does this bring glory to God? How does this bring glory to God? How does this bring glory to God? We should be focused on living our lives for His glory.

Another little truth that I want you to put your hands around here is that God honors those who honor Him. God honors those who honor Him. There is no heavenly logic in the Word that proposes that a man who defies the Scripture in being self-focused and about himself is ever going to receive the glory and the encouragement and the strengthening of the Spirit of God.

God, I've got to say this carefully. I think our preponderance today on all the heartaches and sorrow that I see in many people's lives is most often a reflection of the fact that they're not very focused on the only one who they will focus on for all of eternity.

Does that make sense? Huh? Everybody listen. What we're doing now is warm up for the main event. Now, thankfully, when we're there, we're not going to be obsessed with all the other things going on around us, but it doesn't hurt to focus on hitting the ball properly.

The ball, the thing that we're focused on is the glory and supremacy of Christ, and if that's what we're going to occupy ourselves with in eternity, we ought to understand that when we honor God, He lifts us up.

[34 : 42] When you make much of yourself, when you're obsessed with your own sufferings, when you're just overwhelmed by your own mistreatment or circumstances, and when you think you're better than others or more deserving, the fact of the matter is that God steps out of the way and He lets you run your own unhappy path.

He will not bring glory to the one who does not glorify Himself. Finally, the day is coming when all will honor Him.

That is stunning to me. Do you understand that? The thought is profoundly encouraging for one.

The thought is profoundly troubling for another. Do you think that in hell, the unrepentant sinner will not bring glory to God?

And what is the answer? The unrepentant, hard-hearted, absolutely rebellious sinner in hell will bring glory to God. All will glorify God.

[35 : 55] God will glorify God. And I would encourage you to recognize that one of the things that we who know Christ are going to do is we are going to spend eternity enjoying His presence, just lavishing in the absolute joy of bringing glory to Him.

Get the picture for me here. Here is a boy who is dating a girl. And the girl is really pretty insecure and a little bit obsessed with herself.

They're standing on the beach during their honeymoon. And it is the most spectacular sunset. And the guy in all his innocence says to the girl that he's just married, honey, isn't that spectacular?

And she says, what? You're not thinking about me? Get a life. Okay?

I've bumped into people who have no imagination of what the joy and glory of heaven is going to be like. Do you know what it's going to be? It is going to be occupied with the one absolute supreme God and Savior of this universe.

[37 : 24] And we will worship Him forever. So there's some of you here this morning that need to do what I had to do this week. There's some of you that need to say, you know, God, I have spent too much of my energy thinking about me and it's not been very productive.

I repent. And I, with conscious deliberation, pray that you would help me glorify you. There's some of you here that actually need to put feet to that prayer and go talk to other people and say, you know what?

The way I've treated you is reflective of the fact that I've been all about me and not about Him. Do you know what really strains relationships?

It's when we take God out of the picture and insert ourselves into His place. It just makes messes. Your wife probably knows you've been doing it. She just doesn't have the nerve to tell you.

But go ahead and suck it up and let her know the fact. I got the memo. I heard pastor's sermon and the Holy Spirit convicted me. I've been a self-focused person and the reason I've been such a jerk is I've not been worshiping Christ.

[38 : 48] There's some of you here this morning that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ and there is no remedy for your soul except in Jesus. And here's Jesus looking at the cross and He says the first thing about this is the glory of the Father.

He also died because He loves you. He died to offer to you complete forgiveness for all of your sins. And for you to walk out the door and say no thank you or I don't really care about what you have to offer is a sobering thought.

I want you to ponder that. Let's close in prayer. Our precious Father in God this morning as we think about our Savior, the glorious work on the cross, we marvel.

We're beside ourselves when we think of how you planned redemption. willingly taking your Son to be our sacrifice.

And we're thankful for how the story ends. We will spend all of eternity, we who know you, in worship before your throne saying, worthy is the Lamb. we want that expression to be well practiced.

[40 : 21] And so we, with humility, commit ourselves to live lives that bring glory to your name, not our own. We rededicate ourselves to that great and holy purpose this morning for the glory and the testimony of Christ.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.