

# Gospel Partners Deprive Themselves of Glory

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Date: 18 March 2018

Preacher: Dave Nannery

[ 0 : 00 ] with better salaries, nicer houses. Your 2008 Toyota Corolla would be good enough for you if it weren't for the shiny new Lexus that your boss is driving. And you can write all of this off as a problem with Western culture.

You can blame our mindset as consumers, how we try to gain status by the goods that we consume and acquire. But this is really a problem in every culture to some degree.

It's a problem in every time period. It is a human problem. It's a problem that extends from Roman aristocrats murdering each other for military and political glory. It's a problem that extends to Polynesian cannibals killing and devouring their slain enemies as a proof of their own superiority.

So I say that to maybe make you feel a little bit better about your shoe collection. Glory-seeking.

Glory-seeking is the principal occupation of the human race.

It's our first love. It's our career path. It's our favorite sport. Each of us is thinking this to ourselves, that we want the glory. Last week I watched a movie, really an artsy philosophical film called Nacho Libre.

[ 1 : 11 ] It's a movie about... It's a deep, deep, really deep thinking man's movie about someone who wants all the glory.

He wants to be both a man of God, a friar, and also a professional wrestler at the same time.

Glory-seeking. It's such an ordinary component of our lives.

We actually don't even give it a second thought, how often we're motivated by that, how consumed we are by that. We almost think it's how we are meant to live. But there was one man.

There is one man in human history who did not live that way. And the life of this one man is described in the Bible in Philippians chapter 2. Now let me give a little bit of background for Philippians chapter 2.

Back in the first century, there was an apostle, a man named Paul, who wrote this letter to the Philippians. He wrote this to a small group of Christians living in a Roman colony town named Philippi in the area of Macedonia.

[ 2 : 12 ] And Paul wrote to these men and women in Philippi because they had a partnership together with him. Paul had brought the good news to them. Good news that God's promised king had come to earth.

Good news about a man named Jesus. This man who did not live in that glory-seeking way. This man named Jesus had come from a backwater Jewish town of Nazareth.

And the good news was that this Jesus was the Messiah. This Jesus was the Christ. And it changes everything. This chosen king changes the way that we as his followers relate to one another.

It shows us a man who went after glory in a very, very different way from you. A man who went after glory in a very different way from me. We discover this as we read Paul's letter to the Philippians.

And it's found in the New Testament of your Bible. If you're using one of the blue Bibles that our ushers handed out, you'll find it on page 980. Philippians chapter 2. Now for the sake of getting context around what we're reading, we're going to start in chapter 2.

[ 3 : 21 ] I'll read verse 1 and then read all the way through verse 11. Please follow along with me.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind.

Having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the

form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord. God the Holy Spirit, he's communicating to us through the thoughts and words of his servant, Paul.

[ 4 : 55 ] Here's the message the Holy Spirit is bringing to us. It's the same message that he brought to the Philippian church. It's the true story of Jesus of Nazareth, how he lived a perfect and sinless life as God's chosen king, how Jesus died on behalf of his people to atone for their sin, how he rose again to life, how he ascended into heaven to accept his reign as rightful king over all the earth.

It's the story of how true glory is won. And as Paul tells the story, Paul begins by focusing on what we call Jesus' incarnation, his incarnation.

incarnation. What that means is that's the story of how the Son of God, one of the three persons of the Trinity, became a man, Jesus of Nazareth. God took on human form.

He became a man. He was incarnated. Jesus was 100% God and at the same time 100% human. He was both at the same time and remains to this day both at the same time. Last week we looked closely at verse 6 in this passage and we realized that in this incarnation, God the Son declined to claim his rights, his right to appear in glorious splendor, that right to appear in unmistakable majesty.

[ 6 : 22 ] And Jesus even gave up the right to life that we all hold so dear. In verse 6, Jesus declined to claim his rights. And now today we're going to move on to verse 7.

And Paul writes here, in Philippians 2, verse 7, that Jesus Christ emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men. Now to understand what is being said here, we have to immediately account for something.

That's that our different translations of the Bible handle verse 7 a little bit differently depending on which translation you're using. So the English Standard Version that many of you are using, you might already be wondering if you're reading from that, thinking Dave keeps reading emptied himself, but mine says Jesus Christ made himself nothing.

The ESV, up until a few years ago, said made himself nothing and then they changed it to emptied himself. I'm not a huge fan of that change. It is a close translation of the original Greek of that word, but I think it's a little bit of a misleading translation because our English word emptied can carry a lot of different meanings and suggestions and ideas that the Greek word would not have carried.

And some scholars have completely misunderstood this word. They have taken this phrase, emptied himself, they've run with it in a totally wrong direction and this was something that was very popular at the end of the 19th century.

[ 7 : 51 ] Not as popular today, fortunately. These scholars would say that when God the Son took on human form when he became a man that he gave up some of his divine attributes.

For example, maybe Jesus gave up his omniscience, in other words, his knowledge of all things. Jesus stopped knowing all things.

So, in other words, Jesus Christ in his incarnation was 100% man, but, you know, not 100% God. Some of those divine attributes he gave up.

He emptied himself of them. that would fly in the face of everything else that the apostles and the New Testament authors witnessed to. Jesus did things that only God had the authority to do.

Jesus calmed stormy seas, demonstrating his supremacy over nature. He drove demons out of people, demonstrating his supremacy over all spiritual powers.

[ 8 : 52 ] Jesus even had the audacity to forgive people's sins, something only God can do. Jesus demonstrated absolute power, absolute control over his life.

He demonstrated divine foreknowledge. He lived a sinless and holy life. In Jesus' human nature, he did possess finite strength, finite knowledge, but in his divine nature, his power and knowledge were and are infinite.

And so, when Paul was saying that Jesus emptied himself, he is not saying that Jesus tossed aside some of his divine attributes. Jesus never stopped being fully God.

Whenever this verb empty is used elsewhere in the New Testament, it's used in four other places, in fact, the word is always used in a figurative sense. As an example, in 1 Corinthians 9, verse 15, Paul talks about being emptied, but your translation will probably say something like deprived of his ground for boasting.

It's the same word there. Paul is using it figuratively. He's someone, like someone has had his ground of boasting reduced to nothing. And that's why I think the English Standard Version used to have it right and translations like the New International Version do have it right when they say here in Philippians 2, verse 7, that Jesus Christ made himself nothing.

[10:17] And I would say perhaps an even better way of saying it is this, Jesus Christ deprived himself. So the idea is this, Jesus Christ deprived himself of glory.

Jesus Christ deprived himself of glory. Now what does that mean exactly? In what way did Jesus Christ deprive himself of glory?

Well, Paul explains what that means. he took on the form of a servant or a slave. He was born in the likeness of men.

In other words, even though Jesus is fully God, God the Son, he chose a servile role.

He became a pathetic little human being like you and me. God the Son deprived himself of the glory of being the obvious clear master, the one who is served.

[11:19] He deprived himself of the glory of being pure immortal spirit as he took on a mortal body. Let me show you how this played out in the life of Jesus.

There are many examples, so I'll just pick two. The first example is found in Matthew chapter 4. In Matthew's biography of Jesus, he relates an event that took place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

This is when Jesus was 30 years old. And Jesus is alone in the wilderness of Judah. He's in a dry and desolate hilly wasteland. And he's on sort of a spiritual retreat in the wilderness having been sent there by God the Spirit.

And this is kind of a, you know, people talk about a spiritual retreat as going into a retreat center in the mountains and you've got nice food and it's just a relaxing, beautiful time. That wasn't how Jesus' retreat went.

Matthew tells us this. After fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. Well, one of those almost comically understated expressions in the Bible.

[12:27] You know, after fasting 40 days and 40 nights, which means he's on the verge of death, he was hungry a little bit. Really, this is the point of hunger where you, you know, I've read enough. I know exactly how this is because I've seen enough comic strips that this is the point of hunger where you start looking at other people and in your mind their heads turn into Thanksgiving turkeys and their arms are like KFC drumsticks.

And Jesus is in that state of mind and the devil comes to him and begins to tempt him. He begins to test him. Satan is an unbelievably powerful and cunning spiritual being.

His IQ is off the charts. Satan knows exactly how to get to people. He's kind of like a pied piper. And Satan tries a couple of sneaky tricks to get Jesus to do his bidding.

He tries to get Jesus to turn the desert stones into bread or to throw himself down for the temple to prove that he's the son of God but Jesus won't do it and so finally the devil throws aside all of his trickery, all of his pretenses and he dangles in front of Jesus the ultimate prize.

Here's how Matthew puts it in Matthew chapter 4. Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, all these I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.

[13:47] Then Jesus said to him, be gone Satan for it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve. Then the devil left him and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Now realize this, when the devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, presumably in some sort of vision, perhaps he's showing him not only the world as it is but the world as it will be, past, present, and future.

He's offering Jesus the ultimate glory. He's offering Jesus everything that Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, and Hitler all fought for. The devil is offering Jesus an economic empire that dwarfs Apple, Google, and Microsoft, Rockefeller, Standard Oil Company all put together.

This is way, way more tempting than that new pair of shoes, that amazing new job offer. This is the ultimate glory. And all Jesus has to do is, you know, just real quick, get on his knees, praise the devil a little bit and it's his.

All he has to do is transfer his allegiance from God to someone else. Some people do that for free. Most do that for free. Think of all the, you know, it would be so tempting, right?

[15:05] Think of Jesus going, man, imagine all the good I could do if I could, you know, if I were given all the glory of all the kingdoms of the world, all the good I could do. Jesus won't do it.

Jesus would rather stay exhausted and hungry in a dusty wasteland on the verge of death, skin and bones, than reign as emperor over the earth.

In fact, Jesus did choose death over this ultimate glory. His disciples did not get this attitude at all. It was incomprehensible to them. Later in his ministry, Matthew records an incident as Jesus heads toward Jerusalem on a journey that would prove to be his death march.

Matthew writes in Matthew chapter 20, as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the 12 disciples aside and on the way he said to them, see, we are going up to Jerusalem and the son of man, that's himself, and the son of man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified and he will be raised on the third day.

[16:30] Well, up until that last phrase, that all sounds pretty much terrible. That is not at all how you expect God's king to inaugurate his reign. This does not sound like a coronation at all.

It is so completely outside of the thought categories of his followers that immediately after Jesus says this, you know, just goes in one ear out the other, they're jostling for political power in his kingdom.

It's almost like he never said it at all because Matthew continues. This is literally the very next verse. Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons and kneeling before him, she asked him for something and he said to her, what do you want?

She said to him, say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom. Jesus answered, you do not know what you are asking.

Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink? They said to him, we are able. He said to them, you will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my father.

[17:52] And when the ten heard it, they were indignant of the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, you know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones exercise authority over them.

It shall not be so among you, but whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave.

Even as the son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Notice in that final sentence the progression towards an extreme. If you want to be great, you must be a servant. If you want to be the greatest, you must be a slave.

If you want to be the son of man, God's chosen one, you must forfeit your life. That's what Jesus did.

[19:02] He gave his life as a ransom for many to liberate them from slavery. Brothers and sisters, you and I were once slaves. We were slaves to sin.

We rebelled against God and we loved it. We didn't need the devil's promise of all the kingdoms of the world. The devil didn't even need to promise that because we gladly refused to worship God. We gave in to the devil for free. But because God is owed worship, because it is his right to receive worship, we were severely in his debt.

And what Jesus did is this. Jesus offered himself as a payment for our debt, the honor and worship that we owed to God. Jesus ransomed us by paying the penalty that we deserved.

And now we are free. Not only from our debt to God, we are free from the enslaving power of sin over our lives. And it is all possible because Jesus Christ deprived himself of glory.

[20:11] Now as followers of Jesus, as citizens of his kingdom, as members of his family, as partners in proclaiming this good news, you and I have been called to imitate Jesus.

Jesus Christ deprived himself of glory, so gospel partners imitate his humility. Gospel partners imitate his humility. And they do so when they choose to deprive themselves of glory as well.

So in other words, gospel partners, we don't need to have all of the best stuff. gospel partners don't need to be recognized as awesome and powerful and really trendy.

Gospel partners don't need to be loved and respected by everyone around them. Gospel partners don't need to have a life full of amazing adventures and experiences. Gospel partners deprive themselves of glory because they're pretty much okay with not thinking about themselves.

There's a 19th century Scottish pastor named Robert Murray Machain who knew that we love to think about ourselves. We do. We think about ourselves all the time. If I have a high self-esteem, I'll spend a lot of time thinking about how great I am.

[ 21 : 28 ] That's a nice feeling. If I have a low self-esteem, I'll obsess over what a lousy person I am. If I think I'm a good person, I'll be congratulating myself for my own righteousness.

If I think I'm a rotten sinner, I'll drown in introspection over my own sin. And Machain warned us against all of that. He warned us against all of that self-attention, all of that focus on self, all that fixation on me.

And he wrote this in a letter to a friend. He said, for one look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ. For one look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ.

Jesus Christ wasn't spending all his time on earth, brooding over his own glory and how, oh, I'm not being applauded, I'm not being praised.

He wasn't moping around thinking about his own situation. He was out there doing his Father's work for his Father's glory. He was captivated by the glory of his Father. And you and I, we are called to forget ourselves, stop worrying about our own glory.

[ 22 : 40 ] Fix our eyes on Jesus Christ. If you have ten thoughts about Jesus Christ for every one thought about yourself, I guarantee you, you will be the humblest and happy person I have ever met.

And here's why. It's because Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord. Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord.

Ah, to dwell on him. To have our eyes fixed, our minds fixed on Jesus and his beauty and his glory. Paul writes this in Philippians chapter 2 verse 9, verses 9 through 11.

He says, Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord and he will be exalted as Lord. That means that Jesus is the one who deserves to be worshipped. It is right and fitting that we and every person on earth should worship Jesus.

[ 23 : 58 ] In fact, that is our very purpose. That is what we are created for. The chief end of man to glorify God and enjoy him forever. forever. That is what we are made to do and everyone on earth will one day confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Everyone on earth will one day bow the knee before him whether they want to or not. And this is important for another reason. It tells us that Jesus didn't deprive himself of glory for no reason, for no purpose.

He didn't just humble himself, you know, just for humility's sake as if rolling around in the mud and dust is all we're meant to do as if he didn't do it out of this grim sense of joyless duty and drudgery. Jesus deprived himself of glory in order that he would be exalted and in order that his father would be glorified. in an ultimate sense, Jesus actually did have his own glory in mind.

The key is that Jesus wanted to be glorified in the right way. That's what it means to have wisdom. You know what the right ends and purpose are and you know the right way to achieve them.

[ 25 : 22 ] And Jesus was wise. He is wisdom. Jesus wanted his father to be the one who exalted him. Jesus wanted his father to be the one who gave him a good name.

Who granted him the name of Lord. That's why he could just look the devil in the eye and tell him get out of here. You're not the one who glorifies me.

I will not accept glory from you. He would not accept glory from Satan. He would not accept glory from any human being. It was his father's glory. Jesus wanted to be glorified by his father.

And his disciple John records the way Jesus prayed the night before he was crucified. In John chapter 17 we find the very first thing that was on Jesus' mind.

The very first things he says to his father as he prays in the garden of Gethsemane facing this horrifying and shameful death on the cross. Jesus prays this in the hearing of his disciples.

[ 26 : 21 ] Father the hour has come. Glorify your son that the son may glorify you since you have given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

And this is eternal life that they know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do and now father glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

And God the father has answered the prayer of his son. He has glorified Jesus as Lord and he will glorify him again when Jesus returns to judge the world. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God will receive glory because the son of God deprives himself of glory in order to be exalted as Lord.

And here's how this changes everything for you and for me. Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord so gospel partners will share his glory. Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord so gospel partners will share his glory.

glory. What that means is that glory seeking is actually deep down what we were made to do. Are we to seek glory?

[ 27 : 56 ] You bet. But we're to seek it in the right way. To share the glory of Jesus Christ. Not only will we one day bow our knees and confess with our mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord, but we have been given that eternal life to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

That is a new life. A life of freedom from sin. A freedom to know and love and serve the Lord God. It is a new life. The good life that is already breaking into the here and now.

Breaking into our lives. And when we are raised to life again, life beyond the grave, we will experience this new life not just in part but fully.

in all of its fullness forever and ever. And that is why Paul writes in Philippians chapter 3 verse 20, our citizenship is in heaven. That is our home.

That is where we belong. Our citizenship is in heaven. And from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

[ 29 : 11 ] here is how this changes our mindset. Paul explains it further in another letter to a church in a little town of Colossi in what's modern day Turkey.

And this is one of my very favorite passages in all of scripture. Here is what Paul writes to these believers in Colossians chapter 3. verse 1. If then, you have been raised with Christ.

Seek the things that are above where Christ is. Seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

For you have died. died. And your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

[ 30 : 14 ] glory. You have died. Your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

This is a mindset that is worlds apart from the mindset of our culture. Because in our culture, people either deny that there will be a resurrection or they maybe have a vague notion of an afterlife.

Maybe someday we'll be in some sort of heavenly place. We'll get to see our friends and family again. Just yesterday, I helped my dad officiate my grandpa's funeral. You could tell the difference between those who believed in Jesus Christ and had real hope of the resurrection and those who did not.

The difference between sure, solid hope of glory, confidence that Jesus Christ has won the victory over death, confidence that my grandpa who is a believer will rise again in glory in the resurrection. And those who all they've got to offer is, well, maybe he's just living on in our hearts. And those say, well, maybe he's in a better place, but there's no confidence behind that.

[ 31 : 38 ] No reason to believe that's true deep down. If you don't have that solid confidence in a resurrection and a glory that's waiting for you, a glorified body, freed from the curse, freed from suffering, freed from death, you're not going to have the hope that you need to live a life deprived of glory, to live as a partner in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You need that hope of glory. Because that is something worth living for and that is something worth dying for. Those who don't believe think the present world is the true life.

Anything that comes after death is just, you know, some sort of afterlife. There's no telling what that's going to be, whether it's going to be any better than the here and now. And so the mindset the world around us tends to adopt is this, that we find in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.

Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die. And Paul explains there in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 that that is in fact a perfectly reasonable way to think if there is no resurrection from the dead. Or if you have little confidence at all there's resurrection from the dead. If it's a just so story that you and all your friends around you tell you to make you feel better. If Christ Jesus was never raised from the dead, then why should we have any confidence whatsoever that we're going to be raised? [ 33 : 22 ] We might as well try to jam pack as much pleasure as we possibly can into this life, turning our world into a paradise as best we can because it's the one shot I have at glory and if you fail you lost your shot.

And that's why we obsess over our retirement savings so we can afford beautiful luxury vacations to all the wonderful places.

That's why we're trying to move into nice houses and buy fancy cars. That's why we jump from church to church to find one that caters to all of our needs. That's why all the songs on the radio use the language of paradise to describe love and sex.

We're grasping, we're struggling for glory, we're clambering for that extraordinary, meaningful, wonderful life that will make all this worth it and then we die. Let me take a moment to give a bit of a reverse pep talk.

If you're my age or younger and maybe you need this too if you're older as well. And if you're younger than me your parents can listen in and they can nod their heads. So here's what we have been promised all our lives by our teachers, by all our high school guidance counselors, by our TV shows and often by our parents too.

[ 34 : 37 ] You've been told that you're an extraordinary person and because you're an extraordinary person you've probably assumed that you're going to live some sort of extraordinary life. Maybe you'll have an incredible career doing that one thing that you absolutely love.

Maybe you'll make loads of money, get filthy rich, buy one of those \$10 million mansions in North Vancouver. Maybe you'll marry an amazing supermodel or movie star, have the perfect family, maybe you'll travel the world, see things that those other ordinary people don't get to see and have all those amazing experiences and marvelous adventures.

Either way, your life is meant to be a decades-long pleasure fest of extraordinary experiences. Woo! It's the Disney hope.

Well, as I and my friends began to enter our 30s, we started to figure out something that all the generations before us already knew. Almost none of that is true.

This is the reverse pep talk. I have many friends who spent years in college only to end up in lousy jobs that they don't enjoy. Some are struggling to get from paycheck to paycheck. Many are in good marriages, but no one's in a perfect one.

[ 35 : 50 ] And many are not married at all, even though they desperately want to be. Many are married and they were really looking forward to having children and they can't. Most did not have the money to travel the world.

Some took out loans for their education and world travels. They're now drowning in tens of thousands of dollars of debt. I spent enough time around people who've reached their 70s and 80s to see the effect that all of this disappointment can have on a person.

When you reach that age and you have had, you started out with a very optimistic view of life and things did not work out the way that you expected. Folks like that get very grumpy and angry. And of course, once you get old, you just don't care anymore. You can get away with being cranky. Some of them do care. Some of them put on a veneer of politeness, but as you know them, underneath you see that they're full of sadness and full of bitterness.

They're sad. They spent years pursuing successful careers and they never made time to get married and start a family and then it was too late. Or they did do that. Maybe they gave up a successful career to a family and then it all fell apart and exploded.

[ 37 : 08 ] They're still angry toward the spouse that divorced them and left them with nothing. They're bitter against their children who don't come and visit them anymore. They're hurting from the breakdown of their bodies.

Their limbs and joints and organs hurt. Their strength fades away. Their mind is going. They look back at their lives and the experiences they never had, the dreams that were never fulfilled. And they're loaded with resentment and anger and regret and bitterness towards all the people who ruined their lives.

If we do not take care to seek the kind of glory that Jesus sought and to seek it in the way that he did, we're going to become the most resentful and regretful old people who have ever lived. Because we've been promised that world of pleasure. We feel entitled to extraordinary and meaningful lives but odds are the world is not going to give it to us even if we strive hard and work ourselves half to death. If you don't believe me in any of this, just open the book of Ecclesiastes and read for a while.

Because it effectively bursts that bubble of false promises about the world that we've been told. So here's the good news. Here's what rescues us from becoming elderly folks full of bitterness, resentment, and regret.

[ 38 : 29 ] Here's what makes us joyful. If your life is hidden with Christ in God, what that means is that your life, your true life, it is safe.

No one can ruin your life if it is hidden with Christ in God. It's okay to have a life in which not all your dreams come true.

It's okay if you don't get the marriage and the family that you wanted. It's even okay if you get stuck pumping gas at a gas station for the rest of your life. It's okay if you never get to travel or you can't afford the lifestyle you want to live.

It's okay to look back and realize you didn't finish half the items on your bucket list. Your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

And when you stand before his throne, when your legs give out from underneath you and you fall down in worship, when your mouth instinctively utters the greatest words of praise you can articulate, when your soul is filled with glory and inexpressible joy, that is the true life.

[ 39 : 57 ] That is eternal life. life. And that is the good life. This world, this life, this is just the prologue. And the prologue is never the best part of the book.

Gospel partners deprive themselves of glory because they know that they will share in the far greater glory of our risen and reigning Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God.

God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus Christ deprived himself of glory, so we as gospel partners, we imitate his humility, and Jesus Christ has been exalted as Lord, so we as gospel partners, we will share his glory.

[ 41 : 18 ] Our God, our Father, we have glory that is waiting for us. Though Jesus Christ was crushed for our sins and for our iniquities, though in his life he chose to be deprived of glory, crucified on a cross in shame, yet we are healed by his wounds, and we glory in our Redeemer.

We find our glory in Jesus Christ, and one day when he returns to earth in full glory, the radiance of God the Father, we will appear with him in glory and joy.

Oh God, give us a sight, a vision, a craving, a longing. Let us not be satisfied with what the world says is glory. Let us seek the glory that comes from God.

Amen.