

All for God's Glory

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Well, we come today to a new time of examination of Scripture, a new series in Scripture. Since the pandemic broke, we have done a sweep of systematic theology, we have studied 1 John verse by verse and as we have done that, I've watched things unfold within some of your lives, within the world, within the church broadly speaking, I've come to a personal conviction of the difficulties and struggles that we are facing. I believe that we are seeing openly the conflict that Ephesians 6 describes where the Apostle Paul said, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." And over the next several weeks, I will try to justify that statement that I've made, we are definitely in the midst of a conflict. Scripture says that that's what the Christian struggle is throughout all of time, it is a struggle against demonic forces. I believe that what we are finding here in our day and age over the past several months is that this just has become very open and very obvious through the different philosophies and difficulties that we are facing as we go through the life that God has given us, and what I want to do over the next several weeks is strengthen your hand in the midst of that conflict, to give you the boldness and the faith that is necessary to respond when it is so difficult in so many different arenas of life, and it seems like it's just multiplying and one thing coming right after another, and coming from unexpected sources and unexpected places. Well, we want to deal with that.

What I want to do first, though, this week maybe next week, is I want to lay some foundation for that examination of Ephesians 6. We need to understand what's at stake in the conflict and what I believe is at stake in the conflict is nothing less than the glory of God; that that is what this all is ultimately about from the difficulties that you are dealing with in your family, some physical, some relational, from the things that are going on in the church as more and more men flee from the true biblical Gospel and exchange it for a tawdry substitute of social justice, as we find the world order collapsing around us, we need to understand that ultimately what is at stake and what we are to aim after and desire and pursue is nothing less than the glory of God. There is a transcendent purpose, there is a transcendent element to the glory of God that transcends all of these passing things which we are facing and that's a pretty broad statement, that's a pretty bold statement. I realize it's, you know, it's not certainly not the way the news is framed for us today but what I want you to see is that that is exactly the way the word of God frames the issue for us in every conceivable realm of life. There is an overriding purpose, there is an overarching purpose that is at stake in everything that happens and that purpose is the

glory of God. And if you're taking notes today, we've titled today's message "All for God's Glory," and I am going to justify that, I trust, by the time that we're done today.

Let me just say a word of preparation for you. It's like we're going to get on a high-powered motorcycle and just zoom down the straightaway here this morning. We're going to talk about lofty themes in seven different realms, seven different points, each one of which could be its own separate 60 minute message. I realize that it will be difficult to stay up with me perhaps for some of you but that's okay. That's okay. We're going to come back to this and rehearse this in the weeks to come. What I want to do today is this, I want to take you, as it were, to the mountaintop, take you to the mountaintop of, you know, the Rocky Mountain range, as it were, go up to a high elevation where you can see the whole vista and take it in in one sweeping view, and then we'll come back and we'll hike our way through some of the trails that this reveals to us in the weeks to come. Today we want to see the glory of God in all of its different realms in which it's manifested and so that's what we're going to do today. We're doing this, remember, we're doing this because the glory of God is at stake in what's being, in what we find happening in our lives and what's around us. If you understand that purpose, beloved, then you are in a position to respond properly, to respond in the right way, and not only that, to draw strength in the midst of the conflict that enables you to stand firm against the demonic forces that are at work in everything that we see happening around us. It is a battle. It is a conflict. It is difficult and if we don't acknowledge that, we're really just playing games and we might as well turn off the lights and go home if we're going to pretend that it's anything less than the challenge that it actually is. Well, where we come to rise up and to face that challenge, where we come to rise up and find courage for the battle, where we find strength to stand firm is to realize that there is a vertical transcendent purpose of the glory of God that is at stake in everything that happens and watch this, because we are grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation as Christians, because we love him, because we want his honor more than anything else in life, that girds us, it strengthens us to stand firm in the battle that would otherwise overwhelm us. And so we need to come to grips with the glory of God.

Now in the New Testament, the word "glory" comes from a Greek word "doxa." It's used 166 times in the New Testament. Now once in a while occasionally it's used to refer to the glory of human beings. For example, Jesus referred to King Solomon in all of his glory in Matthew 6, but the vast majority of the uses of the word "glory" in the New Testament are referring to the glory of God. Now that word "doxa" may sound, may have an echo of familiarity to maybe some of the older ones among us. We use the word "doxology." There's a particular doxology that I used growing up that our church used when I was a child before I was a believer, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below. Praise him above, ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost." A doxology like that is a hymn, it is a song that ascribes glory to God. It praises God. The purpose of a doxology is to ascribe glory to the God to whom we sing and when it's used particularly in respect to the person of God, this New Testament word "glory" expresses – watch this – it expresses honor and splendor and radiance and the highest of magnificence. It denotes the divine and heavenly radiance of God. The word "glory" expresses his loftiness and his transcendent majesty and when we

speak of the glory of God, we are speaking in the highest of terms which while we understand them in part, they transcend our ability to fully comprehend. The glory of God refers to his inherent brilliance and his intrinsic grandeur, and so we are speaking about the greatness of the glory of God. The glory of God is the sum expression of the multitude of perfections of his essence. The glory of God was manifested in the Shekinah glory that Isaiah saw that undid him in Isaiah 6. Peter, James and John saw it unveiled for a brief moment in the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ when the brilliance of his glory was shed through, was broadcast through the veil of his human flesh, and there is this great glory of God that is overwhelming and lethal to the eyes of men. That is his inherent glory.

Now you and I cannot add to that intrinsic perfect glory of God. We can't make him any more glorious than he already is. God's glory is perfect and it is what it is and we can't detract from that intrinsic glory, we can't make it better than what it is, but you and I can do something different and we have to realize that we're using the word "glory" in a different sense here this morning. There is something different that we can do. We can't make God more perfect than he is, that very thought is silly to think about, that we as sinful creatures could somehow make the holy uncreated God, you know, more glorious than what he is. You know, that's not the case. But we can do something different. In a different sense, in a slightly different use of the word that we're going to see in these seven realms here this morning, we can give glory to God. We can ascribe glory to God. We can speak of his glory. To give glory to God and I'm going to give you a definition here, to give glory to God is to ascribe praise to him. It is to ascribe excellence to him. And so as we give glory to God, we speak well of him. We obey his word. We praise his character. We give thanks to him for his revealed character and for his work in creation and in our lives. Stated differently, my friends, we respond to the intrinsic glory of God with our love and praise which ascribe glory back to him. You could think about it like this, we have no glory of our own to give to him, we can't make him more glorious than he is, but in our hearts, in our minds with our lives we can function something as a mirror that reflects that glory back to him, that reflects his own glory back to him vertically and makes it known horizontally among men. In that sense, we can give glory to God in the same way that the dark rock of the moon reflects the light and brilliant splendor of the sun.

Now let me just say this and just trying to keep the theme consistent here and prevalent before your mind. That means that in the midst of our sorrows and our difficulties, that means in the course of this changing world, it means that in the unfaithfulness of other realms of so-called Christian thought and teaching that are betraying the Gospel before our very eyes, it means that you and I, it means that true Christians everywhere, it means that our church, that what our focus is and what gives us the orienting perspective that we need to get through these difficult days, to prosper through these difficult days is to have our minds focused on the glory of God; to understand that that is ultimately what is at stake and that our supreme purpose in life no matter what our circumstances might be would be to give glory and honor back to the God who created us and that saved us. In other words, what we're about to see here this morning, I love these kinds of biblical perspectives and these biblical themes, when we talk about the glory of God from

Scripture, we are talking about that which defines our worldview. It defines our life goals. It defines our daily habits. It defines the deepest aspirations of our heart. It should be the deepest aspiration of your heart that God would be glorified in your life far more than anything else that you might want or aspire after. The glory of God is infinitely more important than your personal prosperity. It is infinitely more important than whether you are recognized in life or whether you live in obscurity. It is infinitely more important than anything that happens in the world around us. The glory of God is everything and we bow before that and seek to be a vessel that ascribes glory to him in response to our salvation in Christ.

So let's look at Scripture now. Let's see the seven realms of the glory of God that give us clarity on these things. By the time we are done here this morning, everything that I have just said will be undeniable in your mind. There will be no alternative but to realize that the glory of God is the supreme element in the universe, it is to be our supreme aspiration, and to be that to which we give ourselves come what may. So we've got seven points. We're gonna launch into them now. I've alliterated them all with the letter "S" to help you try to remember them as we go along.

First of all, this first realm of the glory of God, the first place that we see it, the supreme place that we see it is in our Savior Jesus Christ. In our Savior Jesus Christ. Now Jesus Christ is God Incarnate and Jesus Christ radiates the essential glory of God. Look at Hebrews 1 and you're going to need nimble fingers today to stay with me. We're going to go to several different passages to find how this theme is woven throughout the entirety of the New Testament. The centrality of the glory of God, we see it first of all in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in Hebrews 1:3, every place that you see the word "glory" in the message here today, it's a translation of that Greek word "doxa." It is a consistent theme and a consistent translation and that's what unifies our understanding here today. Hebrews 1 beginning in verse 2, let's say. God, verse 2, "in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world." Lofty statements about our Lord Jesus Christ and in verse 3 it says this, "And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature." And so for us to find a revelation of the glory of God, what the glory of God looks like, we see it preeminently and perfectly revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ. Because he is God, when we read about him in the four Gospels we are seeing the glory of God revealed. Jesus said to one of his disciples, Philip, he said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." He has seen what the Father looks like. He has heard what the Father says because there is this perfect identity of essence between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ so that when you look at him, when you hear him speak, when you see what he did, you are seeing the glory of God manifested before you. So Christ is the radiance of God's essential glory.

Now with that basic thought in mind, turn over to John 17 in the high priestly prayer where Jesus is praying to his Father on the eve of his crucifixion. I want you to see how Christ in his own words summarized what he did leading up to his crucifixion, what is it that Jesus did in relationship to God the Father. Notice in verse 1 that that's who he's praying to. He says, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may

glorify You." The hour had come for his crucifixion. The hour of redemption at the cost of his lifeblood had arrived and now he is praying in preparation and in anticipation of that great eternal moment for which he was appointed, but up to that point Christ had lived for 33 years from the time of his birth to Mary all the way through to his public ministry, his manifestation to his disciples, his teaching, his miracles, all of these things. Notice how Jesus summarizes it all in verse 4. He says, "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." There's a sense of anticipation in that past tense, "I have glorified You." He's including the cross that was just about to happen, so in this final prayer before his crucifixion he gathers it all up, he looks at the totality of his life and he can sum it up by saying, "I glorified You during My time on earth." And he goes on to say in verse 5, "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." And so he's looking back into eternity past, remembering, as it were, the glory that the Triune Godhead shared among the three persons before Genesis 1:1 was even spoken into existence, so to speak. Jesus says, "Father, now that I've finished the work that You've given Me here, return Me to that prior glory. Restore Me to that prior glory." But know that in between those two points of pre-eternal glory and the glory that would become Christ's again in his ascension, Jesus says, "Between those two points, Father, I have glorified You on earth." He didn't add to the essential glory of God, he himself was the embodiment of that glory, but rather through his life he reflected glory back to God. He made God's glory known. He manifested the glory of God through his life and through his ministry.

So Jesus summarizes the totality of his life by saying, "Father, I have glorified You during My time on earth." And now the crucifixion awaits. What does that mean for us today as we're thinking about the glory of God? You and I should have clarity on this particular point because it lays the foundation for everything else. In a real sense, in a true sense for us the glory of God begins and ends with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the one who revealed the glory of God to us in human flesh. Jesus Christ is the one who obeyed him perfectly. Jesus Christ is the one who makes it possible for us to enter into that realm of glory. And having saved the believer, Jesus Christ is now the one who strengthens us to display the glory of God, to ascribe glory to God in life. There is no meaning to the glory of God to us apart from Jesus Christ because we would not have eyes to see it, we would not have a mind to understand it, we would not have a heart seek it apart from the work of Christ that he did for us. And I say it directly here this morning, those of you that have not repented of your sin and humbly come to Christ for forgiveness, you are outside the glory of God looking in. You are a contradiction in his creation, to exist in his creation and yet not have the whole purpose of your life be directed to the glory of God come what may. God does not exist for your happiness, you exist for the glory of God. If Jesus Christ, God Incarnate himself, the highest, loftiest feet that ever walked on this earth would say that his purpose, his accomplishment in life was to glorify God, on what possible grounds could any man think that he has any different purpose than that? To live for any other purpose than the glory of God found in the Lord Jesus Christ is a contradiction of the order of the universe.

So we look to Christ, we see the glory of God revealed, we see Christ himself summarizing his life as being aimed at the glory of God, and we move from there, we move on from there. Secondly, I told you we were going to go quickly, we consider our sphere of existence. Our sphere of existence and for that you can turn over to the book of Romans 11 to a familiar text. We're trying to take these things from the broadest of circles and then just kind of bring them in in smaller concentric circles as we go along. Romans 11 says this in verse 36. Notice how sweeping and how comprehensive it is. After the Apostle Paul has summarized the doctrine of justification by faith, after he has explained how things work out between Israel and the Gentiles in days yet to come, he says in verse 33, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" Paul says, "I have been speaking about things that thoroughly transcend the human mind's ability to understand. It is so great, it is so deep, it is so lofty, it is so wonderful, it is so unsearchable." He's just speaking in these magnificent superlative to jar us, as it were, out of our preoccupation with earthly things to summarize the greatness of the things that he has already said. Now in verse 36 watch what he says here. I'm making a very simple point for this morning. He says, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." So be it, in other words.

So Paul summarizes it all and says, "Everything invisible and visible, everything in salvation, everything in creation, everything in life comes from this God of whom I have been speaking, it comes through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ to us, and the ultimate end of it all is that it would go back to Him and to the ascription of glory to Him so that all of creation, all of salvation for all those that Christ has saved, all of the manifestation of the glory of God in the skies and in His revealed word, all of it, it aims for this one great particular purpose, it all aims for the glory of God and it aims for His glory forever. Amen." What that means is, let's put it this way, a little more accurately stated, one application of the significance of that for us is this, is that everything that is in existence in the created world exists ultimately to bring glory to God. There is nothing in the created world that is outside of that purpose. God's sovereignty as we've talked about many many times here, God's sovereignty, God's providence is over all of it. God is directing all things to accomplish his eternal purpose and the climax of his eternal purpose is that everything that he created and that everything that he does and even the rebellion of man against him, it is all designed ultimately to accomplish this great purpose of ascribing glory to God. The saints of God, the saints through the ages will come to heaven and they will give glory to God for his mercy in saving them from their sins. The justice of God, the holiness of God will be vindicated to his glory in the judgment of ungodly, unholy, unrepentant men. So we find that everything is swept up in our sphere of existence and Paul says "all things," and then he says "To Him be the glory forever. Amen." So we, you could think about it in this sense I guess, we are walking in a realm, we are walking in a realm that belongs to God. There is a sense in which we are guests in his realm and as guests, we should be concerned with what the host wants out of his realm, what the host is working everything toward is the acknowledgment of his own radiance, his own glory, his own brilliance, his own excellence.

So the realm, the sphere in which we exist is designed for the glory of God. Let me just remind you, you don't need to turn there for the sake of time but just remind you of a verse that we've looked at often, Ephesians 1:11, where it says that "we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will." You see, my friends, this is what you and I must understand: it is comprehensive, it is exhaustive, it is exclusive, it covers everything. Just as the sky covers the earth, the purpose of the glory of God covers all of the created order. It exists for his glory and you and I as we move about in the sphere of what he has created, we're moving in the sphere of things that are ordained for his glory.

That brings us to point 3 and that is our salvation in Christ. I should have just had you turn to Ephesians 1 because that's where I want you to go now. Our salvation in Christ. You know, we love the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us that Jesus left heaven, took on human flesh in order to live a perfect life and offer that life to God as a sacrifice for the sins of his people. He was buried, he was raised again, he was exalted to heaven and from that position of preeminence, he now calls on sinners to repent of their sin, to receive him for the forgiveness of their sins, and to yield to him as the Lord of their lives that they might be forgiven and enter into eternal life, to be delivered from Satan, to be delivered from the power of sin, one day to be delivered from the very presence of sin. You know, that's the Gospel in a nutshell.

Well, look, friends, you can start to anticipate the answer to my questions here today. Why did God design a Gospel before the world began? What was the Gospel embedded in his purpose in creation, his purpose for the creation of man, his purpose in permitting and even ordaining the reality of the fall of Adam and the subsequent ruin of the human race? Why did God ordain that? Why did God plan that? What was his purpose in that? What was his purpose? What is his purpose as he saves men and women, boys and girls from sin? Keeping this whole service in mind, what was his purpose in saving Andrew Michael Ellison? What was his purpose in saving any of you? What's his purpose in calling those of you that are still unrepentant, calling you, inviting you, pleading with you to come to Christ, to leave sin behind and to come to Christ for your salvation? What is the purpose in all of that? Well, I'll give you one guess. I'll give you one answer: the purpose in all of that is the glory of God, and the Bible could not be more clear and more specific about that than what it is in Ephesians 1. I know we've looked at this many times, it's because it's so very important for us to grasp.

Look at Ephesians 1:5 and actually we're going to take the time to do this right, go back up to verse 3. We won't rush through this because you see these wonderful Gospel doctrines of election and predestination and adoption and redemption in this great passage, so that in Ephesians 1:3, you see Paul starting out – watch, this is gorgeous, this is wonderful to see – you see Paul in Ephesians 1 opening with the ascription of glory to God. He is praising God as he opens, verse 3. He ascribes glory to God. He doesn't make God more glorious, he just acknowledges it in what he says with his inspired pen. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." Why would he do that? "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless

before Him." Why would they do that? "In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will." Why would he do that? Why would he choose, adopt, preordain, predestine sinners to salvation in Christ? Why would he do that? Verse 6 he says, "To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." He did it that we might praise the glory of his grace to us. It's for his glory. He goes on in verse 7, he says, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace," and he goes on and on. Why would he do that? Verse 12, "to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory." Verse 13, "In Him after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise." Why would he give his Holy Spirit to his people? Verse 14, "given as a pledge of our inheritance." Why would he do that? The end is, the purpose of it all at the end of verse 14, "to the praise of His glory." Verse 6, "to the praise of His glory." Verse 12, "to the praise of His glory." Verse 14, "to the praise of His glory."

Now look, I may shock some of you with what I am about to say here but this is one of those fundamental shifts in foundational thinking that needs to take place if we're going to get it right in our theology and in our lives and in what we proclaim to a sinful godless world. You and I need to understand this, is that God's gift of salvation is not first and foremost for the benefit of man. It is not first and foremost that you could go to heaven and have your sins forgiven and all of that, those things are a means to a greater end. The greater purpose, the salvation's purpose is not primarily about man, salvation's purpose is for the glory of God. That's what the Bible says. Listen, it's God's word. It's God's salvation. It's God's purpose. He determines why he does these things and Scripture tells us that it's for his own glory. You and I are not at the center of the saving purposes of God, the glory of God is at the center of it and you and I he saves so that there might be a people who would one day be a bride for his Son, who would be a people devoted, gladly giving praise and glory to the God who saved them from their unworthy condition. That's why he saves us is that we would be a people unto his glory.

Now watch how this works. We started with Christ, the glory of God Incarnate. John 1 says, "we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." From Christ we went into the realm of the totality of the existence of the universe. You and I dwell, as it were, as sub parts of that universe, that universe designed for the glory of God, you and I now fitting into that realm, our salvation under the realm of the universal purpose of the glory of God, our salvation being one aspect of that. So there is this driving unifying purpose of the glory of God in everything that we find. And so, you know, I want to stop and dwell on this more but I've got to keep going here. We see it in our Savior, we see it in the sphere of our existence, we see it in our salvation stated in plain direct language in God's word, this is for the glory of God.

Now point 4, our supplication to God. Our supplication to God. I'm going to spend like 90 seconds here just to make the point. When God saves a man, that man becomes a praying man to one degree or another. God puts his Spirit in us and our response is to speak to, to pray to, to acknowledge the God who saved us. There is an aspect of prayer

that is intrinsic to true Christian life. Jesus Christ taught us in Matthew 6 and in Luke 11 what our first priority in prayer is to be, "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Father, may Your name be set apart for the praise and recognition that it deserves. Father, honor Your name, glorify Your name." So just as in the whole sphere of salvation generally and broadly, when you come to an aspect of the practice of Christian living, that central element of prayer, we find that the Lord Jesus Christ who is the glory of God himself in perfect consistency tells us that when you pray, you are to seek the glory of God as your first priority and theme in prayer. "Father, hallowed be Your name."

Now look, I'm going to spend more than two minutes here, look, the fact that you and I have a habit of running past that, walking over that in order to talk about the things with God that we want and need in a particular moment, the fact that our practice falls short of making that the first priority in our prayer life doesn't change what the reality of it should be. You pray for the glory of God. We pray and we have the honor of God in mind as we pray. How could it be any other way? The force of this, the impact of this on our thinking is just immense. It is incalculable. Christ for the glory of God, creation for the glory of God, salvation for the glory of God. Well, look, look, then how could the purpose of my prayer from day to day and over the course of time be anything other than seeking the glory of God? And when we pray as he invites us to do, when we pray for our daily bread, when we ask for the forgiveness of our sins, it's in the context of seeking the glory of God, not seeking our personal benefit apart from that great theme. So our supplication to God is directed to the glory of God.

Point 5, our sanctification in life. Our sanctification in life. So we've seen our Savior, our sphere of existence, we have seen our salvation, our supplication, and now we come to our sanctification in life. When God saved you, he justified you and everyone that he justifies, truly justifies, truly gives new life to, everyone starts a process of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Everyone starts a process of being, as it were, weaned off of sin and onto the image of Christ as the reproduction of what their life is to be. Now the Bible could not be more clear, my friends, that your Christian life, your sanctification now that you have come to Christ, understand this, let me state it like this: Christian living is not preeminently about your happiness. It is not about your physical well-being. It is not about life going well for you. It is not about that. It could not be about that as its preeminent primary goal. No, your Christian life is about the glory of God. It could be no other way in light of these prior four things that we've said. And what the process of sanctification does, sanctification leads us to ascribe glory to God. Our Christian growth is designed to praise God and you can't, let me just say this as bluntly and directly as I possibly can, you cannot glorify God, you cannot give glory to God when you are living in unrepentant unconfessed sin. You're dishonoring the glory of God when you do that. We can only live life properly when we understand that our lives in these bodies are given so that we might live to the glory of God.

Look at 1 Corinthians 6. In the context of an unrelenting uncompromising call to sexual purity in 1 Corinthians 6, a condemnation of fornication, adultery, homosexuality and all other manner of sexual sin in 1 Corinthians 6, along with other sins like theft and covetousness and drunkenness, all of whom practice such things will not inherit the

kingdom of God. Look at what Paul says as he brings that argument to a close in chapter 6, verse 18 of 1 Corinthians as we talk about our sanctification in Christ. He says, "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" Do you not understand these basic things, he says. And then he clenches it in verse 20, speaking about our redemption in Christ, the price that Christ paid for our salvation at the cross. He says in chapter 6, verse 20, "you have been bought with a price." Here is the consequence of that, "therefore glorify God in your body." Because you were bought at the price of the precious blood of Christ, therefore glorify God with your body. Aim your life, aim your existence in this human flesh toward this unifying, transcendent, overarching purpose, aim it to the glory of God that the way that you live and the way that you speak and the way that you think would all be oriented toward this vertical purpose of the glory of God; that my life is under the glory of God, that means that I obey even in sexual matters, I obey for the sake not simply of an external morality that men might praise me for, I do this for the glory of God because that is what he is worthy of. It is how I mirror back the holiness of God, I live in a way that pursues the holiness of God, that reflects the holiness of God even though I understand that I fall short as I do. Later on, turn to chapter 10, verse 31, later on Paul makes it even more comprehensive. He takes it out of that realm of purity and makes it absolutely comprehensive so that he says in chapter 10, verse 31, "Whatever, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Do all to the glory of God.

Now look, I'm just gonna have to trust the Holy Spirit to work this and convict your heart after the service and in the remainder of the day and in the days to come for you to sort this out and what it means in your life. Those of you that have been loose with your morality, that have been loose in your living and mediocre in your approach to Christian living, you need to understand that you need to repent of the whole mindset that makes that possible. "I have not been gripped with the glory of God in my life. I have not been consumed with that overarching purpose." And that's why you're able to live in such a way of ungodliness, professing the name of Christ. Understand my friends, that God gave a body to you, God gave salvation to you, God gave a realm of relationships to you, God gave giftedness to you and you are to take the sum of that and to say, "I have these things in the time that I have left here on earth, I have these things to use and exercise them so that somehow they manifest the glory of God in my life. Whatever I do is unto that great purpose." So the whole of Christian life comes into that.

Point 6, our suffering on earth. Our suffering on earth. Yes, God sends even suffering to us for his glory. He sent suffering to his people for his glory. Look at 1 Peter 1:6, "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." When Christ appears, we have persevered through our suffering, it will ascribe glory to him, it will show that our faith was given to us by God, that it survived the severe tests that God brought to us and lead his greater glory. Martyn Lloyd-Jones says this about this passage, he says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ

will stand at that great day and look with a sense of satisfaction at Christian people, those whom He called. They have passed through great tribulation but they have stood the test. They have not faltered. He will look at them and He will be proud of them. They will be to His glory and praise and honor at the great day that is coming." So that even your sorrows, your profound sorrows are working toward a purpose in a minor key, you might say, to result in the ultimate praise and glory and honor of God.

Now that brings us to our seventh and final point. You could throw in here that even our death, but that doesn't alliterate, but even our death is under the glory of God. Jesus said to Peter, you know, that men were going to carry you off one day, and in John 21 it says Jesus said that signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God, so that even our death is unto the glory of God. That's a point 6a, you might say, 6b, whatever but we'll just come to point 7, our sanctuary in heaven. Our sanctuary in heaven.

Turn to Revelation 4. When we gather together in heaven, when this life is done, we will gather together to celebrate all of the glory of God. In Revelation 4:11, this scene that the Apostle John saw in heaven, he saw in verse 11 the living creatures, the 24 elders casting crowns before the throne and saying this, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." The culmination, the purpose in heaven is going to be to ascribe glory to God. Chapter 5, verse 13, verse 12, let's say instead, angels, living creatures, the number of them myriads of myriads, thousands "saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.' And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them." Do you see how comprehensive it is, beloved? It's everything. And he heard them saying, "'To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.' And the four living creatures kept saying, 'Amen.' And the elders fell down and worshiped." I told you it was going to be a jet tour kind of thing.

Beloved, let's wrap this up here. I feel almost a little bit like Daniel. Daniel saw great visions and, you know, he said, "I feel exhausted and sick," and he needed rest after all of this. It's so transcendent, it's so beyond our normal way of thinking to contemplate all of these things but how much we need to see it all gathered together in one place. Do you see, my friends, that the universe itself finds its unifying principle in the glory of God. You and I as believers in Christ, we find our unifying principle in life in the glory of God. All of life intersects with it in our Savior, in our sphere of existence, in our salvation, in our supplication, in our sanctification, in our suffering, in the heavenly sanctuary. It all has this central driving purpose of the glory of God and ascribing praise to him.

So my Christian friend, this is the great theme upon which you are to set your mind in the days in which you live, the glory of God. My unrepentant friend, my unsaved friend, I call you with this final breath that I have here this morning anyway, I call you to come to Christ for salvation and to repent of your self-centered life and to receive Christ that you might live to the glory of God. His shed blood gives you access to the throne to be able to do just that.

Let's pray together.

Father, from You and through You and to You are all things including everything that we have said today. Father, may it all be to Your glory forever and ever. Amen.

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