



Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1)

Spiritual Exercise

*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.*

Proverbs 25:2

Prayer

Introduction

As we move from “Sacrificing for His Plan” to “Submitting to His Power”, let us consider once again the purpose of God in transforming us into the very image of His Son. His story is about Him getting back that which was lost in the Garden. He has invited us to join Him in the work. A life filled with joyful, Spirit-filled ministry awaits those that will surrender, sacrifice and submit to Him.

When Jesus was on this earth, He left us more than fifty commands to guide our participation with Him, the Father and the Holy Spirit. In Matthew 5:16, Jesus commands us to “let your light so shine before men that they see your good work and glorify your Father in Heaven.” In this command, there is a mystery; a mystery that will radically change our work, ministry and family life. It is the mystery of “our light” and the work that glorifies God.

Let’s start with a few questions:

1. Recognizing that our Father in Heaven is a just and loving God, and He is to be glorified in the “good work”, who do you think will be doing the work?
2. Would a just God take credit for work done by His children?
3. Then why does Jesus call it “your good work”?
4. If it’s God’s work – and somehow our work – what part of the work is His; and what part is ours?
5. Just what is our responsibility in a work that glorifies our Father in Heaven?

The answers to these questions, and the mystery they represent, will be found in searching out the matter of the glory of God, the glory given to Jesus Christ and the glory passed on to believers. Yes, that’s right!! The Father has not only given glory to His Son, but He has determined to share it with His other children, as well.

I want you to know right up front that there are verses here that I believe and understand in my heart, but cannot put into words. This mystery of glory is one that exposes the limitations of our minds. It may be your natural inclination to settle for only that which your mind can comprehend. Trust Him to lead you into all understanding. May our desire be to know the Lord – so that we may better love Him – with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength.

Definition

Glory (*doxa*): splendor, brightness, magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace, majesty; a thing belonging to God; the kingly majesty which belongs to him as supreme ruler, majesty in the sense of the absolute perfection of the deity; a thing belonging to Christ; the kingly majesty of the Messiah; the absolutely perfect inward or personal excellency of Christ; the state of blessedness into which believers are to enter hereafter through being brought into the likeness of Christ. *Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org*

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1)

(continued)

Searching Out the Matter

(All Scripture references, but those noted, are NKJV; Thomas Nelson, Inc.; footnotes and headings excluded)

A Vision of Glory

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26-27

Being created in His likeness and image is more than we can think or imagine. And it scares us. Just what might this mean? Should we settle for ignorance and a fear of exploring the meaning? How many are afraid of God's disapproval? Does He not want us to know Him, and who we are in His creation? There is meaning here that we must search out.

³ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
⁴ What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
⁵ For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor. Psalm 8:3-5

Like a king crowning his heir – giving him the resources, authority and responsibility to reign.

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
But the glory of kings *is* to search out a matter. Proverbs 25:2

There is glory reserved for kings that will search out a matter; and He has made us kings (Revelation 1:6).

But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,
My glory and the One who lifts up my head. Psalm 3:3

The Psalmist's glory is the LORD!! There is an important clue to the mystery of God's glory.

Fallen with the Hope of Return

... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God... Romans 3:23

Without His redemption and restoration, we will not see, nor partake of, His glory. But there is hope:

For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Hebrews 2:10

Glory and Heaven are not the same things. This is not a about the "Sweet By-and-by".

Passing on the Glory: From Father to Sons and Back Again

²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. John 17:22-23

Over 2000 years ago, Christ gave us the glory He had received from His Father. Notice that it is for the purpose of making us one. So, when did God give glory to the Son?

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1) (continued)

¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 2Peter 1:17-18

Glory was given in a word that identified Christ as a well-pleasing son.

¹ Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Matthew 17:1-2

The veil of the physical was pulled away for the glory inside to be seen. This was the glory of God – His life lived in His Son. Now, notice that transfigured is from the Greek word *metamorphoo*; and it is used to describe what God is doing in us.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2Corinthians 3:18

Transformed is *metamorphoo*. Once created in the image of God, we are now being transformed into the image of His Son – from one level of glory to another, iteratively. Notice that it is the Spirit's responsibility.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

And the circle is complete in the Father being glorified, not by us, but by others. It is important to note that the command is not, "Go do good works that will glorify...". The "that" indicates that this is a result of the command: To let your light so shine.

So, how do we do this? The best place to start is with the One that came to show us how to live a life that glorifies our Father in Heaven.

How Did Jesus Do It?

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:5-8

It is important to understand that Jesus was a man. In fact, He called Himself "Son of Man" approximately 10 times more than "Son of God". "Of no reputation" means "empty, void, deprived of force". When we look at what He did while on this Earth, we must recognize that He was a man.

¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. ¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. John 5:18-21

Notice that being the Son of God made Him equal with God. I am sure there is significance here that I don't understand. More importantly, Jesus said that He could do nothing of Himself. Later on, we will see that He said the same thing about us. Lastly, by Who's will does the Son give life – His own or the Father's?

²⁶ For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, ²⁷ and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. John 5:26-27

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1) (continued)

Why did the Father grant life to the Son? Because He has life. Why did He give him authority? Because He is the Son of Man. I think it is worth noting the connection of life and judgment.

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. John 5:30

And now we find out the key: He sought the Father's will. It is to whom the Father wills that the Son gives life.

¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. John 14:10-11

The works were enough to prove that the Father was in Christ. It's like Jesus was saying, "Look at the works that you have seen. Don't you know that I cannot do them? I'm just a man. Someone more powerful than me had to do the works. That was my Father.

He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. John 14:24

Now Jesus is saying that not only are the works of the Father, but the very word that is coming out of His mouth. How could Jesus say that the works that He did and the words that He spoke were not His; they were the Father's?

Just How Close Were They?

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." John 10:27-30

So Who's hand are the sheep in? Can a sheep be in more than one place? What, are they throwing them back and forth like a hot potato? Or two circus jugglers? Of course not! They are the same hand.

And here we finally learn the truth: Jesus and His Father are one. Not, will be one when I go back to Him. No, this Jesus – who made Himself of no reputation – is somehow, mysteriously, one with His Father.

For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

This verse has always troubled me – until now. The Father and Son are so much "one", that they share titles.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. John 1:1-3

Interestingly, though God did all the work when Jesus was on the Earth, none of the work of creation was done without Him, nor through Him.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1Timothy 1:17

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1) (continued)

Who is this King? Not Jesus, but the invisible God (the Father). More title sharing.

When Jesus heard *that*, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." John 11:4

³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. John 13:31-32

And so, as "one", glory passes between the Father and Son freely and intimately. Of course, this is not something we already knew – the Father and Son are perfectly united. What is amazing is the claims of Christ that we would be as united with each other and Them. It is the Father's intention that His Son's Bride be perfect, without spot or wrinkle. So...

How Do We Do It?

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." John 20:21

He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. 1John 2:6

This is the key to living the Life that Glorifies the Father – walk just as He walked. Not "try" to walk as He walked. Or walk something like He walked. And we know exactly how He walked because it is carefully recorded in the Gospels. Please note that this is not something that we strive to accomplish. It is the proof/test of abiding. It is the promise for a person that abides in Him.

⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. John 15:4-8

The abiding is bidirectional. Notice that Jesus is saying the same thing about us that He said about Himself – without Him (and the Father in Him), we can do nothing. The branch cannot bear fruit. It is simply a transport for the life that causes the fruit to bear. What is the importance of this abiding? It produces three things: glory for the Father, much fruit, and disciples.

²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. John 17:20-24

As we receive the glory that Christ has given and behold His glory, we are transformed into the very image of Christ – the image Peter, James and John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. That image was the life in Him, the glory of God. When we let our light shine before men, they will see the life of the Father in the life of His Son, and the Father will be glorified (Matthew 5:16).

The oneness that Jesus speaks of transcends the Father, His Son, and His human sons and daughters. This is a mystery that will never make sense to our limited minds. However, we can know it in our heart, soul and

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1) (continued)

strength. It can be reality to us if we desire and pursue it. And that brings us to the mystery of the exchanged life:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

Let me remind you not to let go of this until God does something in you with it. It is too important to put on the shelf until some later day. It is about His life in us. What could be more important?

So, how do I get there? It starts with being “crucified with Christ”. How does that happen? How do we die with Him? Paul makes it clear in Romans 6:

¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:1-11

Let’s start by clearing something up. Baptism is not a work of man. It is a work of God. It is only from this perspective that the related verses peaceably harmonize. Yes, baptism is a sacrament when God does something – something very significant and supernatural.

So, what is this “newness of life”? The Greek here – *kainotes* – means “life of a new quality; the believer, being a new creation”. It is not “newness” in time, but “newness” in creation. This is not something that man can do. It must be a work of God. We do not need to be distracted by it being a work of man that saves (and thus violating Ephesians 2:8-9). And now we must ask, what does this work of God accomplish?

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all. ¹² Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

Colossians 3:9-14

In baptism, we have put off the old man with his deeds – he drowns and is swept away (Should we baptize in rivers?). We have the new man put on us – according to the image. There’s that image again. It is Christ that is all and in all (including us; more in the promise section). The new man comes with the character of the life of Christ.

²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Galatians 3:26-27

In fact, baptism puts Christ on us. So, here we are with Christ in us and on us. How much of me is left? Not much compared to all that He is.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1) (continued)

²⁷ To them [His saints] God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

Colossians 1:27-29

And now we see glory, mystery, and hope – all wrapped around “Christ in you”. Even the mystery has glory. Any hope we have of participating and sharing in the glory is just that, “Christ in you”. Also note that Paul is laboring, but it is according to Christ’s mighty working in him. Again, it is more of Him and less of Paul.

Perhaps John said it best:

He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

John 3:30

Conclusion

In this part of our searching out the meaning of God’s glory, we have discovered that the children of God have been given the glory that God gave His Son. This glory came in two ways: In Him identifying Christ as His well-pleasing Son; and in the life that He lived in the Son. We have discovered that we are also, in this way, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. God the Father, and Christ His Son, are glorified in the work that They do in us (transformation) and through us (the good works we have been created to walk in).

As Marketplace Leaders we must make it our responsibility to be disciplined in these truths and to be used by God to make other disciples. This making disciples includes “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”: Humility, surrender, sacrifice, submission, abiding, baptism, and decreasing that He might increase.

Next week we will look further into the mystery of God’s glory – the promises and how they might manifest in our lives. We will also discuss why the American church is not seeing more of His glory, and what Marketplace Leaders must do to begin seeing His glory in the ministries to which they have been called.

Assignment

1. Review your notes and the Scripture passages from this week’s module. Share the ones that are most meaningful to someone you are discipling.
2. What might your work look like when others see it and glorify your Father in Heaven?
3. What are one or two things in your life (or missing from your life) that inhibit the manifestation of the Father’s glory in your work (be specific)?
4. What have you believed, or failed to believe, that makes it difficult to receive the glory you have been given? As best as you can, write out the truth that you now believe (and add it to the following prayer).
5. Pray this prayer as often as the Spirit leads you:

Dear Father, thank you for the promise of Your glory. Though I do not understand it, I believe that the glory You gave to Your Son has been given to me. Therefore, in faith, I choose to take hold of it. I claim it for my own. Please deal with anything in me that is inhibiting this work. I surrender to Your hand in creating a vessel worthy to hold and display the glory I have been given. My desire is that it be for Your glory. I surrender to You. I choose to put to death the deeds of my flesh, and to put on Christ. I trust You to will and to do to Your good pleasure. Amen.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 1)

(continued)

Devotion

Perseverance for Success

TGIF Today God Is First Volume 2 by Os Hillman

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"And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Rom. 5:2-4).

Perseverance is the key to every great accomplishment because nothing of lasting value has ever been achieved without it. Industrialist Henry Ford is one of the great success stories of American history, but he failed in business five times before he succeeded. A Ford Motor Company employee once asked his boss the secret of success, and Henry Ford replied, "When you start a thing, don't quit until you finish it."

Jesus glorified the Father by finishing the work He was given.

The path ahead of you is strewn with obstacles. People will oppose you. There will be financial setbacks, time pressures, illnesses and misfortunes. Some of the biggest obstacles will be inside of you: self-doubt, insecurity, procrastination, and worry. These things are to be overcome through faith, discipline and the Lord's encouragement.

When we persevere through adversity, we win the approval of our Lord Jesus Christ, who told the suffering church at Ephesus, "I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. . . . You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary" (Rev. 2:2-3). That, I'm sure, is the same commendation Joseph received from God when he passed the perseverance test.

Perseverance is a refusal to quit. It's falling down 100 times and getting back up 100 times. We need to remember that perseverance is not a matter of forcing doors to open; it's standing in front of the doors as long as it takes before God chooses to open them.

Life is a marathon, not a sprint. The race doesn't go to the swiftest, but to those who don't give up. We need endurance in order to deal with the stress of adversity. We must maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and get plenty of rest. People give up or give out when they feel depleted - when they physically, emotionally and spiritually run out of gas.

When going through adversity, watch out for pessimists, blamers and toxic personalities. Beware of people who try to talk you out of your dreams and goals. Spend time with optimists and encouragers. Seek out people of faith.