

What Jesus Prays For – Our Glorification
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John 17:24
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We're continuing our exposition of John in general, and the 17th chapter in particular. A chapter which is titled by most, well most of the Bibles have the title 'The High Priestly Prayer' as you enter into the 17th chapter. We have shared that title in the sense that it is a high priestly prayer. Jesus is praying right before the cross, so He is praying right before He makes an offering as high priest. He is praying as the high priest before He makes His offering, the atoning sacrifice at Calvary.

We've noted whom He is praying for. He is praying for His people. There is this specificity in His prayer. He prays not for the world, "But for those whom You've given Me out of the world." We'll see that again in the verses we are going to read today. Then we began to look at what He prays for. He is praying for His people, but what does He pray for us? We've seen in the last two weeks, different aspects, things that Jesus prays for, His intercessions on our behalf. We saw that He prays that the Father would keep them, or keep us. He says, "Keep them in Your name," Verse 11. "Keep them from the evil one." So He prayed for our protection. That was the first thing that we said Jesus prays for. What does He pray for? He prays for our protection.

Then last time, we looked at what He prays for in John 17:17 when He says, "Sanctify them." He prays for our sanctification, that is our holiness, that we would grow in holiness. So He prays for our protection, He prays for our sanctification, and today we're going to look at the third request. There are actually four in the chapter. We're going to save the most important for next Sunday, one which is repeated three times in the chapter, and we're going to cover the request in Verse 24. So the title of the message this morning is 'What Jesus Prays For – Our Glorification', and to help us prepare to look carefully at the teaching of this passage, it is helpful to talk a minute about what glorification is.

Glorification is the final stage, or step, in God's mighty work of salvation. It is the final step, or stage, in God's mighty work of salvation. A work of salvation is God takes sinners, who are separate from Him, who are enemies, who are under His wrath, and He brings them into the fullness of His presence. The whole Bible is the story of how can sinners be made right with a holy God. And so it is paradise lost



in Genesis 3 when man is separated from God, and then the story of the Bible is how man can come back into the presence of God. It wraps up in Revelation 21 when now the dwelling of God is among men. The new Jerusalem comes down, and Heaven and earth are merged, and God is restored to fellowship with His redeemed sinners.

Well, the process of how salvation happens has been broken down, as you look at the Scriptures, there are a number of facets of our salvation. Sometimes you may have heard the phrase '*ordo salutis*', the Latin for '*order of our salvation*', or '*the order of salvation*'. Though you'll see folks define this differently, basically the reformed order of salvation, I'm going to go ahead and give it to you. I'd encourage you to write it down. This is going to be a small part of our sermon, so I'm not going to elaborate on the points very much, but I want you to look at, first of all, election. It is the first stage in our salvation. God elects in eternity past, like it says in Ephesians 1:4. You were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Election.

The second stage in our salvation, in the order of salvation, is predestination. That is, that God foreordains everything in your life, He predestines everything necessary to bring you to Himself. Predestination.

The third step is outward call. That is, to be saved, after you've been chosen, and predestined, God is going to bring someone to you who gives you the outward call of the Gospel. To be saved, you must, salvation comes by hearing, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. You have to hear with your ear the outward call. But to be saved, the outward call is followed, that's the third step.

Election, predestination, outward call, fourthly, inward call. That for those who are saved, there is an inward, effectual calling of the Holy Spirit that brings them to life. As we look at all the Scriptures teaching on salvation, this is how we see these different things that are talked about in different passages come together to form this structure of salvation.

So election, predestination, outward call, inward call, fifthly, regeneration. That is when you are born again, the inward call of God results in new life. What Jesus said in John 3:3, "You must be born again to see the Kingdom of God." That is regeneration, that is the fifth step.

And then following regeneration, the sixth step in the order of salvation, is conversion. That is number six, and there are two parts to number six. You could

put 6a, 6b, conversion equals repentance and faith. That is when someone repents, and turns from their sin, and places their faith in Christ. That happens as number six in the order of salvation. Isn't that interesting? So much happens before the person repents and believes.

Number seven is justification. When someone expresses faith in Christ, they are justified. That is, declared righteous forever. Justification is number seven.

Then number eight, we are to the last two, there is eight and nine. We are almost done. Eight is sanctification, which is what we talked about last week. That is, the growth in grace that happens for the new believer. Sanctification is us being made holy in our experience, in our lives. That more and more we put off sin and more and more we put on righteousness. Ultimately, more and more we become like Jesus Christ. That is sanctification.

And the final stage in salvation is glorification. That is the ninth and final step in the order of salvation. That is, glorification is when we are brought into the presence of God, to see Him with our own eyes. When we are removed from the presence of sin, from the possibility of sin, no longer clinging to us, we are glorified.

So glorification is what we're talking about today because that is what Jesus is going to pray for. We are going to see in Verse 24, He is going to pray for, He's not going to use exactly the word here, but the sense that we have in other places in Scripture, what He is praying for is our glorification. We'll see this. He is praying that the people who belong to Him will be brought to Him, to be with Him where He is. That is glorification, when we are finally with Him where He is. Now, let's read, we're going to read Verses 20-26 of John 17. Our focus is Verse 24. The title, 'What Does Jesus Pray For? – Our Glorification'. Look at Verse 20.

John 17:20-26 ~ 20 "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; 26 and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Let's pray together.

Our Father, we ask that You might send forth Your light, and Your truth, and they might lead us to Your holy habitation, to the place where Your glory dwells. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

One of the great quests throughout time has been to understand what happens after death. Something we see recently, in evangelicalism, this kind of fad in the last few years of looking for what happens after death. I've mentioned the book that I read, I do not recommend at all, but I read it because I wanted to understand what was there. The book, Heaven is For Real, the book by the little boy that apparently went to Heaven, says he went to Heaven and came back. I've talked about that in previous sermons. We don't have a searchable thing on our website, but anyway, if you want to talk to me about that sometime, I'll be happy to talk to you about it. There are some real serious errors in it. I heard there is a movie coming out now, *Ninety Minutes in Heaven*. Let me just say that God has said in His word all that we need to know about Heaven, and so we don't need a little boy to have an experience and come back and tell us.

And in fact, I have great skepticism about these things because I take seriously what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12. In 2 Corinthians 12, he speaks of himself going to the third Heaven, which the third Heaven, in Jewish manner of speaking, was to mean the Heaven that God dwells in. So Paul says, he speaks of it in the third person, he says, "A certain man I know was caught up in the third Heaven." He is kind of doing like John does, "The disciple whom Jesus loved." He's not naming himself. "A certain man I know was caught up into the third Heaven, and he saw things, and he heard things that it is unlawful to utter." Did you hear that? What he heard in the highest Heaven was not permissible for him to share with us. If that is the case, does it not make you skeptical about anybody that wants to claim they went to Heaven and came back to tell you what they saw? And then when you test it, and like I said, reading that book, I mean, nothing against that little boy, I think he is just deceived, but his dad is a pastor. I can't believe that a pastor is that unschooled in the Scriptures that he has let this balloon out of proportion.

But anyway, let's leave that aside, and let's answer this question—*What is Heaven like? What does the Bible say Heaven is like?* That is the question, and we're going to see that in this verse we have some clear teaching from Jesus about what Heaven really is like. And we're going to see that God has told us enough because He knows, what we are going to essentially see is that Heaven is really all about being with Jesus, and being with God, okay? That is what Heaven is about. And it is so much about that, I think this is why the Lord hasn't told us that much. We have some imagery in the New Testament about streets of gold, gates of pearl, no night, no sea, some things like that that are clear teachings about what Heaven is, but these are images that are to connote to us that it is a wonderful place.

But the reason God doesn't answer all of our questions about Heaven, or tell us, He doesn't answer, for instance, are there going to be animals in Heaven? Have you ever thought, you know when your dog passes away, or your cat? "You know, I wish I knew if they were going to be in Heaven. I sure would like them to be in Heaven." You know, we don't know. It is possible, God is good, but I think one of the reasons He doesn't tell us things like that is because He knows our propensity to get hung up on all the minor, insignificant things. When the one thing that matters is that Heaven is being with Jesus Christ. So that is what we see here in John 17. Jesus is teaching us about Heaven, and He tells us in this passage two things clearly. We are going to look at three, because I think one is an extension of the second point. It is not clearly laid out in this passage, but it is elsewhere in the New Testament. So there are three things that we see about Heaven this morning. We are going to see about Heaven this morning. The first two from this passage. What is Heaven like? Verse 24:

John 17:24 ~ Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Here are the three points. To be in Heaven as a blood-bought child of God, who has repented of your sins, placed your faith in Christ, been saved, to go to Heaven is to experience these three things. First of all, the first point we're going to look at today is *To Be with Him*. Secondly, Heaven is *To See His Glory*. And thirdly, this is the extension we are going to look at through the rest of the New Testament, it is *To Share His Glory*. This is what makes Heaven Heaven, to be with Jesus, to see His glory, and to share in something of His glory. This is why it is called the Doctrine of Glorification, that the believer is glorified. This is an astonishing reality! I mean, we are here to glorify God, and yes we are, and He is completely other, and separate from us, and we will never be God. He is holy, holy, holy,

separate and distinct, and yet He has made man different and distinct from Him, but to reflect His glory, and He has crowned man with honor and glory. Astonishing reality we're going to look at under that third point.

1) Heaven Is To Be with Him:

But first of all, Heaven is to be with Him, our first point. What is Heaven like? Heaven is to be with Him, to be with Jesus. This is what Jesus prays for. ***Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me...*** You see? He's praying again for 'those whom You have given Me', the specific believers, the elect. ***Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me...*** What He is praying, and the main verb in the clause is 'I desire'. What does He desire? That they ***...be with Me...*** His desire, Jesus' desire that He prays for in the shadow of the cross is that His people will be with Him.

In fact, it is interesting, the language is a little more emphatic than comes out in the English. When He says, ***...be with Me where I am...*** This is a place where we have the pronoun 'ego' there. We've talked about 'ego ami', remember? 'Ego', e-g-o, we normally say /ee-goh/, but in Greek it is pronounced /eh-goh/. It means 'I'. 'Eimi', is actually e-i-m-i, to transliterate the Greek letters, e-i-m-i, pronounced /ay-me/, eimi. 'Ego eimi' means 'I am'. Well, 'eimi' by itself means 'I am'. Remember that, they have the pronoun in the verb, so 'eimi' means 'I am', and when they add the 'ego' in front, it means 'I myself am'. Well, that is the key phrase Jesus has used throughout this Gospel, 20 times He says 'ego eimi'. Now here is not 'ego eimi', here is 'eimi ego', so it is not quite the 'I am' force, but it still has the emphatic force. He says, "Where I am, I myself, there that they may be." That is His request, "Father, what I want, My heart's cry to You..." and it is intensified by the fact that here He addresses God as Father right before He prays it. ***Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am...***

In fact, the word order in the Greek emphasizes this sense of 'with Me' because it really says in the Greek, "I pray, I desire, that they also, whom You've given Me, that they may be..." I'm sorry, I totally butchered that. It says this, "I desire that where I Myself am, they may be, with Me." The 'with Me' is actually extra, He didn't really need it. "Where I am I want them to be," but then He adds the prepositional phrase 'with Me' again to intensify it. Jesus wants to be with His people. He wants to be with every one of His people.

So what we know about Heaven is, this is one of the things we are going to learn about Heaven, Heaven is intensely relational. It is not about the bells and whistles, it's not about the carnival atmosphere, it is about being with Jesus. It is about knowing Him, and loving Him, and being personally, unobstructively able to see Him, and to be with Him. That is what Heaven is. What makes Heaven Heaven is it is where Jesus is. That is what makes Heaven Heaven. He is the bride and the morning star. He is the rose of Sharon. He is the lily of the valley. So what else does it matter what else is there? Jesus is there, and for the soul of the person who has been truly born again, though we get distracted in our minds by all of the other concerns, if God's grace is in your heart, there ought to be something of, "Yes, that's what I want. I want Jesus, and I want to want Him even more than I do." He is what makes Heaven, Heaven. I mean, He is the glory of Heaven. I love that song 'The Sands of Time' which we sang recently. Listen to these words the hymn-writer writes, and see that Jesus is what makes Heaven, Heaven, being with Him.

Oh Christ, He is the fountain, the deep sweet well of love. The streams of earth I've tasted more deep, I'll drink above. There to an ocean fullness, His mercy doth expand. And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land. The King there in His beauty, without a veil is seen. It were a well-spent journey, though seven deaths lay between. The Lamb with His fair army, doth on Mount Zion stand. The Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land. The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom's face. I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace. Not at the crown He giveth, but on His pierced hand. The Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land.

Jesus is what makes Heaven, Heaven, and the wonder of it is, is He wants to be with you. That verse in Revelation that speaks about one of the churches in Revelation. He makes the promise that if you persevere, "I will give to you a stone, and a name written on it, which only you will know." The idea is that Jesus, the Lord of the Church, the Lord of His people, has a special name for each of His children, like a pet name, a nickname, that you and He share alone. Isn't that wonderful? That's what it is to know Jesus Christ. And so to be in Heaven is to be with Him.

2) Heaven is to See His Glory:

And then the second point, *Heaven is To Be with Him*, and secondly, *Heaven is to see His glory*. Verse 24, He says, "I ask, I desire that they also, whom You've given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world." He says, "I want them to be with Me, Father, so that they may see My glory." Now when you stop

and reflect on this, this is really quite astonishing. Haven't they already seen His glory? Isn't that what John began the book with?

In fact, it is interesting, that the verb that He uses here, which is translated '*see My glory*' is actually the Greek verb '*theoreo*', t-h-e-o-r-e-o, '*theoreo*', and it is related to the same verb that is used in John 1:14, '*theaomai*'. We get our English word '*theater*' from that. It is the idea of seeing, and both of the verbs speak of intently gazing upon something. Not just seeing and, "Oh, I saw that." No, "I looked at it with intent and purpose." And so what He is saying in John 17:24, "Father, I want them to be with Me so that they may see, and gaze upon intently My glory." But this word is almost identical to what John said in John 1:14. What did he say in John 1:14? The word became flesh and dwelt among us, literally tabernacled among us. Remember the image, pitched His tent, like the Old Testament tabernacle. The word became flesh and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory. Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. We looked intently and we've seen His glory. And they had seen His glory.

I mean, think about all the glory that John himself had seen that was behind him when he said, "We have beheld His glory." He saw all the miracles. He was there when Jesus turned the water into wine. He was there and he's recounted miracle after miracle. When Jesus healed the nobleman's son from Capernaum by simply speaking the word from a distance, exerting His power to heal across the miles, John was there. John was there when He fed the 5,000 men, probably 20,000 total people. There were 5,000 men plus women and children, the way they rendered their counting. With five loaves and two fishes, He fed that many people. John was there. John was there when He walked on the water. John was there when He healed the lame man who had been lame for 37 years. He healed him. John was there when He healed the blind man. John was there when He raised Lazarus from the dead. John had seen His glory. John had seen His authority over the demons, that when Jesus would be teaching, walking into an area, that the demon possessed, the voices would come out of the demon possessed people, saying, "Son of God, have mercy on us!" The demons recognized and saw His glory, and John saw in that response the glory of Jesus.

But John had actually been there—remember Peter, James, and John had one special moment with Jesus? There were others, I'm sure, but the one that we're told about that is most prominent, they were there on the Mount of Transfiguration where we read in Matthew and in Mark that as they woke up and looked up, Jesus was transfigured before them. He was metamorphasized in the sense that they saw a man, they saw the physical body of Jesus, and then suddenly the divinity of Jesus

comes pouring out, so that one of the things they mention is His face shone like the sun shining in its strength. The light that was coming out of Him made His garments, no matter what color they were originally and what they were afterwards, made them so white that Mark said they were whiter than no launderer could possibly have laundered them. So they see the glory, and Peter would speak of this as having seen the majestic glory and hearing the majestic glory on the mountain. So they saw His glory in this way. And so when Jesus says then, “That they may be with Me where I am so that they may see My glory,” what He seems to be saying is, “They haven’t seen nothing yet. All that they’ve seen is just the beginning. I want them to be able to see My glory.” We have a window into it as He says:

John 17:24 ~ ...My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

The glory in the God-head, the glory that the Father has poured upon the Son, in fact, He recalls Verse 5 of the prayer. When Jesus begins praying back in Verse 5, He said:

John 17:5 ~ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

See, they haven’t seen the glory that Jesus had before the world was. They haven’t seen His glory as Creator. They’ve seen glimpses of His glory, but they haven’t seen the glory that hung the planets in their place. For all things were created by Him and through Him. Or as John says in John 1:3, “Apart from Him, nothing was made that has been made.” Colossians 1 says, “All things were made by Him and for Him.” So to see His pre-existent glory, the glory He had in eternity past. John has spoken of this a little bit though. He didn’t see it, but he spoke and he connected the dots, and he says in John 12:41, he talks about Isaiah, and he’s explaining the unbelief of the Jews, because Jesus’ ministry is drawing to a close. It’s John 12:41. Remember John 13 begins the farewell discourse the night before He was crucified. So it’s right before that. It’s after the triumphal entry, and the Greeks have come, and then he’s explaining why the Jews have rejected Him, and he quotes Isaiah 6:10, where it says, “Though seeing they don’t see, and hearing they don’t hear.” And John says in John 12:41, “Isaiah said this concerning Jesus, because Isaiah saw His glory.”

What he’s saying is when Isaiah had that incredible vision in Isaiah 6, remember when he saw the train of the robe filling the temple, the earth quaked, smoke filled

everywhere? His eyes were opened to see the train. That is the bottom of the Lord's robe. Just the very train of His robe was filling the temple, and there were seraphim, these majestic creatures with six wings. We're told they have six wings. You would think you only need two. They needed six, because they needed two to fly, they needed two to cover their feet, and two to cover their eyes, because these majestic creatures who have never sinned cannot look square into the glory of Jesus Christ. They must cover their eyes. How can we possibly hope to look into that glory? And so John recognizes, "Listen, the one that I'm telling you, 'We beheld His glory,' we know that He is the eternal God. He is Yahweh. He is the one Isaiah saw." And then when he hears this prayer on the lips of Jesus, how much it thrilled his heart to think as he understood it over time, what Heaven is going to be like. The glory that we have seen so far is nothing in comparison.

There was a song some years back. I forget which group sang it. *But not the half has been told. A small part, not the whole. It's beyond imagination what's in store.* That's the reality of what Heaven is, but it's not because of all the stuff that's going to happen. It's because of seeing Jesus Christ. That's what *not the half has been told*, to see His glory, to see the wonder of His greatness and His majesty. Part of it you can see in Revelation. Remember when John sees Jesus in Revelation? He gets a glimpse of that glory that he will see in the end. In Revelation while on the Isle of Patmos, he hears a voice behind him like the voice of many waters, and he turns around, and he sees the white hair and the eyes that are a flame of fire, and His feet as burnished bronze. He sees the risen Christ in His post-ascension glory, and what happens is John falls as a dead man. He knew Jesus. He leaned on Jesus' bosom, on His shoulder. He loved Jesus. He was so dear to Him, and he called himself *the disciple whom Jesus loved*. But when he saw Him in His glory, that glimpse of glory, he fell as a dead man.

What he's saying is the glory that we are yet to see is so far beyond our imagination, and yet the wonder of it is, when we will see it, we will be enabled to see it. John wasn't enabled to see it, because he didn't have a glorified body. That's why he had to fall as a dead man. But when He glorifies us, I think we'll be able to look and see what the angels can't see, because though we're made lower than the angels, on the other side of glorification, we judge the angels. He makes us greater, to the praise of His glory, so that we will be able to look face-to-face upon the One who has made us, and the One who reigns. We'll see His glory. Heaven is Heaven because we will be with Him, because we will see His glory, and thirdly:

3) Heaven is to Share His Glory:

As I said earlier, the reason, if you think about just the form of the word *glorification*, what that's saying is that the final stage of our salvation is our being glorified. Do you see that? That doesn't compute. We know we're so unworthy, and in reality, we are, but the wonder of it is that God chooses to lift us up and to give us a place of not equal glory to Him—never—we will never be like the Most High, but to give us a place far above every other created thing. This is the wonder of it and really the irony, the supreme irony, that man has in his heart this desire for glory, and sin has perverted it so that it's totally messed us up, wrecked us. But the irony is God created us for glory. He created us for some sense of greatness, but you only find it when you are giving Him the ultimate place and worshipping Him supremely. Then you find your true worth.

Remember I've talked about the word *glory* being a sense of weightiness in the Old Testament. The *kavod* of God is His weightiness. And so the *kavod* of God, the glory of God, is the impact that His character, and His beauty, and His majesty make. It's the impact. It's the value, in a sense. It's the weight of. The reality is that He gives to man, to redeemed humanity, an enormous sense of value and weight. And the irony is that sin is seeking that apart from Him. If you think about it, and let me just give you some passages to look at and reflect on to see this, if you look at Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. Now, let me explain them to you, and then when you look at them, you can see if this is how you understand it.

In Ezekiel 28, you have there a taunt to the king of Tyre. God is taunting the earthly king of Tyre. It's a man who had an exalted view of himself, who thought he was like God, and so God taunts the king of Tyre and basically says, "You act like God, but you're going to go down to the place of the dead, and you won't be acting like God then. I'm going to bring you down. You've exalted yourself to the heavens." And then in Verse 11, He seems to stop talking to the king of Tyre and start talking to the spiritual entity behind him, which is Satan himself, because He addresses the one who was in Eden, who was the most beautiful creature that God had made. And He goes on and He talks about how, "Though you were created in beauty, you had violence in your heart, and sin was found in you, so I cast you down."

Well, then you compare that with Isaiah 14. In Isaiah 14, He's talking to the earthly king of Babylon who wants to be like God, but I think in Verses 12 to 14, He's doing the same thing. He's talking to the spirit behind the earthly being, and He says to him there that, "The evil that was found in you was that you wanted to

be like the Most High.” So understanding those together, what happened was Satan was Lucifer, the highest created being, not equal to God, but created. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit created him, and yet it wasn’t enough for him. He wanted to be like the Most High. He didn’t want to glorify the Most High. He wanted the glory of the Most High, and in wanting that, God cast him down and he lost all of his glory, all of his beauty. Then he comes to Adam and Eve, and what does he say to Eve? “If you eat that fruit, you won’t die. You will be like God.” He says, “You should want the same thing that I want.” So she eats the fruit and she is separated from God, and she loses all of her dignity. She loses all of her hope. She loses all of her glory. She and Adam lose all their glory, because when you look at Genesis 1, God made man in His image and in His likeness. That’s the language of Genesis 1:26-27. He made man to rule over the fish of the sea. He lets man name the animals in Genesis 2:15. I’ve mentioned that before. I’m just astonished that He did that. That’s giving them authority over all the animals. Whatever Adam wants to call them, he can call them that. “What do you think is a good name for that?” And then Adam says the name. “Okay, that’s the name.” God doesn’t say, “No, that’s a stupid name. We’re going to change that.” He lets him name them. Why? It’s because God has given this incredible high station to man. This is what the Psalmist is talking about. Remember Psalm 8? We often think of Psalm 8 and some of the verses there.

Psalm 8

- 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 take thought of him,
And the son of man that You care for him?*

When I look at the vastness of creation, and we learn now how wide and vast the universe is, what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You even notice him? Look what he says in Verse 5:

Psalm 8

- 5** *Yet You have made him a little lower than God,
And You crown him with glory and majesty!*

Some translations say, “Yet You have made him a little lower than the angels.” You’ve made him a little lower, and You crown him with majesty and glory. You give man glory. It is God’s purpose to give man a measure of real intrinsic value.



Now, it has to happen through His grace, because you and I are sinners, cut off from that which makes us valuable. What makes us valuable, and this is the irony, the only thing that will make you really valuable and glorious is when you bow the knee to Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, and seek Him with all of your heart. When you put Him first, you become valuable. As long as you live for yourself, then look what people are like. It's all around us. Live for yourself, live for your own glory, and look at the ugliness. Look at people trample on one another. But when you bow the knee to Jesus Christ and you seek His glory above everything else, and you seek to live for Him, to die to yourself, what happens is you become more and more lovely, more and more glorious. That's the wonder of it.

So in Heaven what we're going to see is that to see His glory, this is the whole story of redemption, is that to see His glory is to share it. In a lesser way, yes. We are not Jesus. We never will be. He's fully God, but He has lifted us up to be what man was intended to be. Let me show you this. In 1 John 3:1, look at the doctrine of glorification and how it all comes together. I mentioned Heaven is a place where we will be with Him, we'll see His glory, and seeing His glory means sharing His glory. Let me show you why. This is the same author of our Gospel of John.

1 John 3:1 ~ See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be.

He hasn't told us all the details.

1 John 3:2 ~ We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

Do you see that? We'll be like Him because we'll see Him. To see Him is to be like Him, to become more glorious ourselves.

1 John 3:3 ~ And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Philippians 3:20-21, listen to these verses:

Philippians 3:20 ~ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the

body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

When we see Jesus, the risen Jesus, coming back for us, He will transform us instantly to be like Him. Paul writes:

Colossians 3:4 ~ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

We read Romans 8:18-21 earlier.

Romans 8:18 ~ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

He's saying the creation is eagerly longing for the sons of God to be glorified. Isn't that amazing? The creation itself—it's under bondage. It's in futility because the one that was made to rule over it as God's co-regent, His sub-regent, that He's ordained to rule, that He's given this glory to, is in sin, and everything is wrecked. But when God glorifies the sons of God, then everything will be right.

Romans 8:21 ~ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The Lord has called us to be conformed to the image of His Son, to be like Jesus, so that He could be the firstborn among many brethren. He will forever be the captain of our salvation, the one that we worship, and yet He lifts us up and calls us His friends and His brothers. He says, "I go to My Father and your Father, My God and your God."

C. S. Lewis, I believe it's in his sermon *The Weight of Glory*, makes an interesting statement that I think is right, and think faithful to Scripture. He's trying to get people to think about the incredible opportunity of every moment of every day to make a difference for eternity, and he says this. He says, "You realize that when you walk through life, that you never encounter an ordinary human being. The person that checks you out at the grocery store, the person that you pass as you walk down the street, every person that you come in contact with is either someone who is destined for eternal destruction, and if you could see their end, you would be so moved with agony and pain for them, that your heart would break. This is

where they are going. This is what their ultimate end and value is. Or the person that you pass that is a believer, that if you could see their ultimate end, the glorified follower of Jesus Christ, if you could see them in their beauty, if you saw them in their beauty right now, you would be tempted to worship them. So great is what God is going to do in the lives of people.”

I think that’s consistent, because Paul talks about the glorified body in 1 Corinthians 15, and he says, “What is our resurrected body going to be like? We don’t know.” But he says this, that in the same way that you plant a seed and then you have a plant grow up, now think about how different the seed is from the plant, no matter what you’re talking about. The seed, a little tiny thing, and a plant. A watermelon seed, a little dark thing that if you get it in your mouth, you want to spit it out. Watermelon, that’s alright. The difference, though, is the difference of the plant from the seed. He says, “So will it be with our resurrection body.” There will be a consistency and a unity to it, but it will be so glorious in comparison, that it will seem that different. That which sown is perishable. That which is raised is eternal in imperishable. So the wonder of it is Heaven is going to be a place where we are with Christ, where we see His glory. And one of the things that’s going to be a continual source of us marveling at His glory is we see what we now are, and we remember what we were. How can it be? How can God have done this? Jesus, our glorious Savior. Hallelujah, what a Savior.

Let’s go to the Lord in prayer...

Father, we stand in awe of You. We stand in awe of a God who is fullness, and bliss, and joy, apart from anything outside of You. You don’t need anything, and yet You created the world. You created us. And then when we rebelled against You, when we were enemies and haters of God, You chose to have mercy by doing the unthinkable in taking our punishment Yourself in Your Son, and in doing that, to make us fit, we who are of the dust, our lives are a vapor, we’re like the grass that withers, and yet You have chosen through Jesus Christ to make us eternal, to stay with You and to be with You forever. How good and gracious and merciful You are. Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways. For who has given to Him that He should repay him? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. Lord, we pray that You would be with every person in this room, that those who still are outside of Christ would repent today and place their faith in such a glorious Savior. Thank You for the sufficient offering of Jesus Christ on the cross. Thank You for His glorious resurrection, and thank You for so wonderful a salvation. We pray in Jesus’ Name, Amen.



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