

'Who are you, Lord?' Pt.3 May 18th 2025

180522 "When he (Judas Iscariot) had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once." (John 13:31-32)

What do you think of glory? Do you think of glory at all, especially God's glory?

I think one of the things that holds back many Christians today is that they do not think of God's glory often enough. They do think of other things such as God's love, his holiness (occasionally), his Holy Spirit, his mercy, his creation, his Word (sometimes not enough) and other things, which are fine, good and right, but these all tend to be things that touch on our worldview. These are things we think on because we feel we need them or would like them or they touch us in some way.

God's glory isn't quite like that. God's glory is something peculiar to God alone. We can't access it or experience it directly and so occasionally we acknowledge he has it, but we don't tend to think any more about it. But we should think about it because as believers we will access it, if not now, then when that glorious day comes where our Lord brings us to himself.

Glory in relation to God can mean one of two things. There is glory in the sense of honour or excellent reputation. It is the sort of thing that we attribute to God in a recognition of his being, in the context of prayer, praise or thanks. But there lies the rub. When was the last time that you did that outside public worship?

Then there is the sense of that bright radiance or light that surrounds his holiness. We read about it in Exodus when Moses sees God's glory passing by him while Moses is looking from behind the rock on Mount Sinai. It is the same light or radiance that Jesus talks about in John's Gospel when he says he is 'the light of the world' or at the Transfiguration in the synoptic gospels. Again, this seems difficult for us to grasp literally, though we sometimes see it reflected in the manner of people we meet who walk closely with their God. The reason for that is because God's light shines in them. It is a quiet charisma that points not to themselves but to the one they worship.

Why do they shine so? John Piper, a retired pastor of the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minnesota captures it when he says this: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."

Another American, the 18th century theologian, Jonathan Edwards puts it this way: "God is glorified not only by His glory's being seen, but by its being rejoiced in. When those that see it delight in it, God is more glorified than if they only see it.... Those who have a close relationship with their God recognise his worth and love him all the more for it – to greater worth and love.

God's glorification has great consequences for us. When Jesus said: "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him", he is saying far more than "Hasn't he done well!" Jesus' glorification was the final setting in place of that cornerstone that would ensure that God's plan for salvation could not be moved, no matter how hard others would try to destroy it:

'Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once':

How interesting that immediately before this moment the devil in Judas, the betrayer of Jesus had fled the scene! The unrighteous could not stand at the moment of God's glorification, only the faithful.

For glorification is 'the state of being glorified'. In theological terms, that means for us attaining the great prize of the race of faith we run. It is our treasure – sharing eternal life with our Lord and

Saviour as he promised us. It is about receiving according to his promise, a resurrection body like his.

Wayne Grudem puts it like this:

‘Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all the believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own.’

That will be the day of glory when Christ returns and what a day it will be! What will we look like? That is the stuff of another sermon. But judging by Jesus’ resurrection appearances, we will be recognisable to other saints who have gone before us and our bodies will be made perfect as God intended us to be. We will be re-fashioned by our creator, imperishable, as befits ones raised for eternity with the one who loves us so much that he would even give up his Son for the cause.

That is love indeed and love is the key to this. It is here that we see who Jesus truly is. Do you want to see God’s glory? Then love one another. Do you want to reflect God’s glory? Then love one another. Do you want to be confident of salvation through the Saviour? Then believe in Jesus and then love one another. For by loving one another you are practising for eternal life and you are learning to be satisfied in the love of the one who loves you.

As John Piper said: “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”