



Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2)

Spiritual Exercise

⁷ Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. ⁸ And the LORD, He *is* the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

Deuteronomy 31:7-8

Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

Deuteronomy 31:23

⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:6-9

Prayer

Introduction

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.

As we continue to explore the mystery of God's glory, let's look into the promises of the life that glorifies God and the ways it might manifest in our lives. Why is the American church not seeing more of His glory, and what must Marketplace Leaders do to begin seeing His glory in the ministries to which they have been called? These are personal and corporate questions that must be faced with courage and faith in God's willingness and ability to transform us into His good pleasure.

Definition

Grace (Hebrew – *chen*): favour, grace, charm.

Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org

Grace (Greek – *charis*): grace (that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech); good will, loving-kindness, favour (of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues); what is due to grace (the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace, the token or proof of grace, benefit/gift); thanks (for benefits, services, favours), recompense, reward.

Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org

Grace empowers us to live a holy life; it is not a valid excuse for us to avoid the pursuit of it.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

Searching Out the Matter

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

The following is a quick review of Part 1.

A Vision of Glory

We have been created in the image of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:26). He has crowned us with glory and honor (Psalms 8:5). There is glory reserved for kings that will search out a matter; and He has made us kings (Revelation 1:6). 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

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 He has determined to bring many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:10). Glory and Heaven are not the same. There is a glory reserved for us on this earth.

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

Over 2000 years ago, Christ gave us the glory He had received from His Father (John 17:22). Notice that it is for the purpose of making us one. So, when did God give glory to the Son? It was given on the Mount of Transfiguration, when God identified Christ as His well-pleasing son (2Peter 1:17). And it was displayed when Christ was transfigured, as the glory of God – His life lived in His Son – was revealed. It is important to notice that the word here – *metamorphoo* – is also used to describe what God is doing in us (i.e., transformation; 2Corinthians 3:18). 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.

The glory is passed back to the Father as we let our light (aka, Christ's life) shine before men that they glorify the Father. It is important to note that the command is not, "Go and do good works". It is to our light 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?

The first thing Jesus did was to become a humble man, a bondservant, and a sacrifice (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". He made Himself "of no reputation", which 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.

Jesus said that He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:19). The Father gave Jesus the authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man (not the Son of God; John 5:26-27). His judgment is righteous because He sought only the Father's will (John 5:30). The proof of His oneness with the Father was the works themselves – they were the Father's works (John 14:11). 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. Moreover, Jesus said that His words were the Father's and not His own (John 14:24).

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

Just How Close Were They?

Jesus and His Father were one, even when Christ was on this earth (John 10:30). Not, they will be one when He goes back to Heaven. No, this Jesus – who made Himself of no reputation – is somehow, mysteriously, one with His Father. 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 (John 1:1-3). They were, in fact, so close that they share titles (Isaiah 9:6, 1Timothy 1:17).

And so, as “one”, glory passes between the Father and Son freely and intimately (John 11:4, John 13:31-32). 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?

The key to living the Life that Glorifies the Father is to walk just as Jesus walked (1John 2:6). Not “try” to walk as He walked. Or walk something like He walked. 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 promise of abiding.

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 four things: the manifestation of our desires, glory for the Father, much fruit, and our being made into His disciples (John 15:7-8; also, Psalm 37:4-6).

As we receive the glory that Christ has given (John 17:22) and behold His glory (v. 24), 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 strength. It can be reality to us if we desire and pursue it. And that brings us to the mystery of the exchanged life (Galatians 2:20). As we are crucified with Christ, we no longer live, but He lives in us (along with the Father and Holy Spirit).

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: We are baptized into Christ Jesus (Romans 6:3-4). Baptism is not a work of man. It is a work of God – a sacrament – something very significant and supernatural.

Through baptism, we share in Christ’s death and resurrection and are called to walk in “newness of life” (v. 4). 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 (violating Ephesians 2:8-9).

In baptism, we have put off the old man with his deeds – he drowns and is swept away (should we baptize in rivers?); and we have the new man put on us – according to the image of Christ (Colossians 3:9-1, Galatians 3:27). 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.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

In fact, baptism puts Christ on us. So here we are with Christ in us and on us. It is the mystery of the glory of the hope (Colossians 1:27). Even the mystery has glory. Any hope we have of participating and sharing in the glory is just that, "Christ in you". As John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I *must* decrease" (John 3:30).

Now that we have completed our review, let's move on to the promises and anticipations for this life of glory.

The Glory Promise

Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Galatians 3:5

Who "works miracles among you"? Certainly not you, but that doesn't mean that you cannot be involved in the miracle working.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them Ephesians 2:10

Perhaps the most important thing we should realize is the amazing amount of responsibility God has taken in making all this happen. Consider His work through Joshua and the Israelites:

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. ² And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ... ⁶ 'Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷ So they cried out to the LORD; and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time.... ¹¹ Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you—*also* the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. ¹² I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, *also* the two kings of the Amorites, *but* not with your sword or with your bow. ¹³ I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.' Joshua 24:1-13

The lesson of Joshua's conquest is that we are not as responsible for the work as we might think. Or better put, He is capable of doing more than we can think or imagine. And that is exactly what He wants to do.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. 2Chronicles 16:9a

Notice that this does not say that He is looking for those that will be strong on His behalf. No, all He is looking for is a "those whose heart is loyal to Him".

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:14-21

This verse contains some of the most incredible promises and mysteries of the Kingdom (e.g., strengthened with might, to know love that passes knowledge, to be filled with all the fullness of God). Remember, Paul is

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

praying the will of the Father – as we are when we pray this prayer for ourselves and others. Lastly, notice that the “exceedingly abundantly above” is according to the power that works in us; and it is for the Father’s glory.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

More amazing still is the work that He does on the inside of us. It is time that we stopped trying to will and do to His good pleasure. That is His responsibility. Our part is hard enough – believe, abide, listen, trust, choose, obey, etc. How much more might He do if we directed our energies to these things?

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2Corinthians 4:6

Dear God, we are so grateful that You have commanded light to shine out of hearts that were once dark – by shining into our hearts that we might know You and Your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1:4

Here we learn that the light we are to shine is His life. We are to let His life come out of us in all we are led to do. The greatest promise of all is that His life will shine out from us. The question for us is, “How much?”

How will It Look... Anticipations

Christ was sent by God to both make a way for our salvation (i.e., restoration of man into His story), and to show us what it means to be a disciple and a disciple maker. He only did what the Father was doing; and He did it God’s way. Christ’s final instructions to the disciples reveal the immediate blessings and the Father’s expectations in our being made a disciple, and in making disciples His way.

These instructions (aka, commission) are found in each of the Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts. Read each account, and consider the following highlights:

Matthew 28:16-20

1. Christ first established that He had been given the authority to commission them.
2. He expected them to go to all the nations – AFTER they had reached those nearby.
3. Baptizing was an important expectation (and worth searching out).
4. They were not to just teach Christ’s commands, but to teach them to observe the commands. From Vines Dictionary, this means to “to watch over, preserve” – a word close to “steward”.

Mark 16:14-20

1. Signs will follow those who believe – they are for the church, not the unsaved.
2. These signs are supernatural and involve the spiritual realm.
3. Though it was His followers that went out and preached, it was the “Lord working”.

Luke 24:44-53

1. An understanding of the Old Testament is important – particularly as it relates to Christ.
2. Repentance and remission of sins are an important part of the message.
3. The disciple’s mind is opened, by Christ, to understand the Scriptures.
4. They waited to be endued with power.
5. It was important to note that He blessed them.
6. The result was great joy, and them praising and blessing God.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

John 20:19-23

1. Disciple making produces peace – the peace of God that transcends all understanding.
2. Evidence of Christ's suffering and sacrifice are a part of the disciple maker's character.
3. Jesus sends His disciple makers as the Father sent Him – to do only what He is doing. A properly made disciple has exchanged their life for Christ's.
4. The Holy Spirit is given by Christ, and must be received by the one being made.
5. Incredibly, disciples are given the authority to forgive and retain sins – as was Jesus (John 5:27).

Acts 1:4-8

1. There is not only a baptism in water, but one in the Holy Spirit. This baptism requires a "waiting".
2. This baptism "when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" precludes the disciple bearing witness to Jesus Christ, wherever they are sent.

And what was the result?

And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

Acts 4:33

Most of the church leaders I know have not experienced the results described in Christ's last instructions to His disciples – His commissioning. Isn't it supposed to be a "Great Commission"? Didn't He say we would do greater things than even He did? Perhaps a return to the way God, through Christ, did it is what we need. Perhaps it is time to lay down the lesser ways for the great way that He left us.

Notice that He was making them into what He was. He was apprenticing them. It is important that those we are formally discipling know that it is apprenticing, not educating. It is also important that they understand who is discipling them (Jesus). As disciple-makers, we are instruments – it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

You cannot be a disciple-maker until you have been made one yourself. Once you are made one and you begin to make others, you will find that you are still being made. It is that glory to glory transformation.

Disciple-making occurs in seasons and cycles. The first disciples were made in approximately three years (a season), then they began a new cycle, making disciples (as Christ commanded in the commissioning). A careful look at the commission reveals its perpetuating nature: Go and make disciples, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you – including this command (to go and make disciples).

Disciple-makers must be able to cast vision. Disciple-makers must know the purpose for the season and the group they have been called to disciple. The disciples may not know the purpose, or they may be confused about the ultimate assignment. This may be the most frustrating thing about disciple-making – casting vision and motivating a group of people that do not completely understand the ultimate purpose or assignment. Sometimes, all the disciple-maker has is the Psalm 37:4 desires and the general encouragement to be more like Christ. Therefore, it is important to establish God's perspective on who they were (generally) called to be: Mighty Men of God, greater than the greatest prophet, to do greater works than Christ.

It is also important to keep in mind that there are grand scheme purposes (e.g., Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 4:11-16) and specific purposes (e.g., introduce prayer into a High School, take a mission trip, minister to the homeless).

By sharing the truth they know, disciple-makers are used by God to make people free from:

1. Satan's oppression and deception
2. The world's influence and snares
3. The lusts of their own carnal nature

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

A disciple-maker must know how to handle the truth. It may not mean what I say it means, but it must mean something. Find the meaning for you. God's ways and thoughts are far above ours. Therefore, it is foolish to think we have a corner on the truth. Truth found in community is "and", not "or". We must seek it in humility and in community.

No one will make the journey/adventure to joyful, Spirit-filled ministry alone. The "your" in the New Testament is most often plural. Discipleship is like a holy multilevel marketing campaign. The disciple is made to disciple others. Every Marketplace Leader is responsible to God for the people within their spheres of influence.

Discipleship is not a program, nor is it a time slot set aside for an assigned few to teach the masses something that they wish those listening would consider. God uses these things as part of His discipling "formula", but they are only a part. Discipleship is far, far more than what it has become in most American churches.

Discipleship is THE prescription for church growth and maturity (see Ephesians 4:10-16). Discipleship is a lifestyle – for both the disciple-maker and the disciple. "Go and make disciples..." was the last and most important of Christ's commands because it encompassed all the others ("...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you").

Christ is the ultimate example for who we are to be as disciple-makers. In fact, He is still the One that is doing the making. We are the instruments of His work. This explains why many are involved in the making of one. Thank God He has assigned more than one person to be my disciple-maker. Most have been for a season – many for only a moment – but they have all been Christ's instrument to make me His disciple (and His disciple-maker).

Where Do We Start?

Over the last ten weeks, we have discussed a number of foundational elements of the joyful, Spirit-filled life: Finding God's desire for this season, relational prayer, abiding in Christ, unity, surrender, sacrifice, etc. Admittedly, I have assumed others that are as important to search out (e.g., repentance, the pursuit of holiness). Hopefully, you will be encouraged by the Holy Spirit to continue exploring these and other mysteries of God. For now, I would like to offer a few other "starting points" that are close to my heart.

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. John 14:23

Love Jesus and keep His word (aka, "Abide in Me, and My words in you"). I once heard someone pray, "Father, give me the love for Your Son that You have for Him." Our love for Jesus is never as intimate as He deserves. Each new season of our lives – each new desire and assignment – is an opportunity to grow deeper in love with Him.

³ Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

⁴ Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,

And He shall bring *it* to pass.

⁶ He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

Psalm 37:3-6

Trust the Lord and do good. "The land" represents His promises. I challenge you to read the promises of Psalms 34 and 37, challenging your belief in them. Allow faith to rise up as you meditate on them.

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

Additionally, the Hebrew word translated here as “delight” means “to be soft” – like clay in the Potter’s hand. Lastly, it’s important to recognize that Christ is our righteousness (1Corinthians 1:30).

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. 2Corinthians 4:16-18

Do not lose heart. Paul’s “light affliction” – stoning, drowning, scourging, etc. – would seem quite heavy to most of us today. Nevertheless, by experience, Paul realized that it was working for him glory. This too is a mystery, but one to which many of us can testify.

The days ahead will include this “light” affliction. They are the days of trial and tribulation that will prove what we believe, remove what doesn’t belong, and grow in us the faith and character of Christ. We will learn to love one another as Christ loves the church. The world will be drawn to us, for we are the temple of the Living God. Most importantly, they will see and glorify our Father in heaven.

Like Joshua, we must “be strong and of good courage”. We must fear nothing and no one but the Living God – who is a consuming fire. We will search these out in our next session.

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? Has God given you any anticipation for your future assignment?

Devotion

God Is Not About YOUR Success

TGIF Today God Is First Volume 2 by Os Hillman
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"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." John 12:24-26

God is all about your death so that HIS success can be realized through you! This is why the Church is having such little impact - there are too many believers who have not yet died to their old nature so that Christ can live fully through them. When believers come to the end of themselves they will lose their lives to Him and live through the power of the Holy Spirit and begin to see the reality of a living gospel that impacts lives, workplaces, cities and nations.

"Much of modern Christian enterprise is 'Ishmael.' Born not of God, but of an inordinate desire to do God's will in our own way - the one thing our Lord never did," said Oswald Chambers. The psalmist describes what it means to live in our own strength:

"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat - for he grants sleep to those he loves" (Ps 127:1-2).

How does one die so that Christ can be our all and all? It usually takes a crisis of significant proportions for most people to relinquish the control of their lives. It means we come to the end of ourselves and our striving

Life that Glorifies the Father (Part 2) (continued)

to control the events in our lives and we finally come to the place where we can say, "Lord, I surrender. Please take full control of my life."

Have you come to this place with God in your life? Let go and let God make you a success His way.