

# The Glory of God part 1

By David Harrell

**Preached on:** Sunday, September 4, 2016

For the past two Sundays, I have stepped away from our typical verse by verse exposition of a portion of Scripture in a particular book having just finished a study of 1 and 2 Thessalonians and I have done this for the purpose of revisiting and reinforcing the core doctrines of a New Testament church, beginning with a very careful study of the holiness of God and what it means to live a holy life, and some of the implications of holiness in the specific ministries of Calvary Bible Church. Beginning today and continuing through next Sunday, Lord willing, I will do the same thing for the same reasons with the topic of "The Glory of God." Today, I want us to examine together what is the glory of God and then next Sunday, what does it mean to live for the glory of God. How does all of that relate to my life and even the church, the specific ministries and opportunities here at Calvary Bible Church.

Now, I fear that what I have to say today and even next week will be woefully inadequate to fully cover such a magnificent topic. I understand that, but I also believe it will be helpful for us as a church and it will also provide some very important insights and theological foundations, if you will, for the next book that I believe the Holy Spirit would have me exposit with you and that is the letter to the Hebrews.

As with the topic of the holiness of God, I approach this topic of the glory of God with great fear and trepidation and though I've studied the topic for some 30 years since I was in seminary, I believe that I maybe have moved from the kiddie pool to the deep end but I'm still in the swimming pool. I'm nowhere near the ocean depths of what is even revealed in Scripture pertaining to the glory of God. And, you know, even if I were able to fully know all that God has for us in his word regarding this great theme, it would only be a tiny fraction of his glory, a mere foretaste of it, because we're not going to even be fully exposed to it until we enter into his presence and that will be a revelation that will continue to intensify throughout eternity. Do you realize that the glory of God is infinite? Therefore it will require an eternity to be unveiled before us, and yet even then, we will never be able to grasp its fullness.

But I don't want you to be discouraged. Perhaps an analogy will be helpful. Physicists tell us that light is a form of energy that exists in a spectrum and if you were to look at the spectrum from left to right from where you are seated, it would begin with radio, then it moves to microwave, infrared in the center of visible light, then you have ultraviolet and x-ray and gamma rays. And right in the middle of all of that is just this very small portion of visible light which physicists tell us occupies a mere 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of that spectrum, yet in that minuscule range of light, think of all that we are able to behold with our eyes.

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Likewise, our Creator God dwells in unapproachable light, who no man has seen and no man can see. Indeed, he is only revealed just a minuscule portion of his glory to us through creation and through his word. Indeed, we must be made like him in order to be able to see him just as he is. But until we are, think of all of the glorious truths we know about God from creation and from his word. Life changing truths, even in that minuscule portion that he has revealed to us which, obviously, is nevertheless unfathomable to us.

As we look at the glory of God, we must understand that God's glory is really an attribute that portrays the infinite majesty of his divine essence. There is nothing that can make him more or less glorious because his glory is derived solely from himself. He alone knows the fullness of his glory and yet he is pleased to manifest his glory in all of his works of creation, in his works of preservation or providence, in Scripture in his plan of redemption, in judgment and in the holy conduct of his people who have been made in his image to ultimately worship him and give him glory.

And, of course, this is summarized in the model that you see behind me of the Reformation, Soli Deo gloria, all glory is the Lord's, and he glorifies himself through his works and certainly this includes the works of salvation as the rest of the Solas indicate. We are saved by grace alone. Through faith alone. In Christ alone. By the word of God alone. We are saved without any meritorious act whatsoever that we can contribute therefore all of the glory goes to God alone. We share in none of it. Dear friends, when we understand this properly, we cast aside our own self-centeredness and we begin to manifest a radical vision of God-centered living which inevitably produces within us that soul exhilarating joy in which God delights, concepts and experiences that are woefully lacking in the church today. Johann Sebastian Bach, that great Lutheran musician, understood all of this and for this reason he appended all of his scores that he composed with the letters SDG, Soli Deo gloria.

During the age of the Protestant Reformation, many valuable confessions and catechisms were written including the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Shorter and Longer Catechisms. They were completed in about the 1640s and thousands of children have learned the basics of theology through the 107 questions and answers of the Shorter Catechism which begins by asking: what is the chief end of man? And the answer is: man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

Well, dear friends, before we can truly glorify God with our lives, before we can truly enjoy him as he longs for us to do, we need to have a better understanding of what his glory really is. In fact, it's helpful to have a visual concept of God's glory beyond the glories of his creation that we are able to see, and God has given us a vision of that glory in his word. We first encounter a visual manifestation of his glorious presence in Old Testament history, and sadly, most believers are unaware of what we are about to examine, a stunning indictment on the superficial man-centered church that now

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dominates evangelicalism today. So, let's immerse ourselves for a little bit in a study of the word of God regarding God's glory.

As we look at Scripture, we know that God is an infinite Spirit but often when he materialized himself in Old Testament history, he did so in glorious light often concealed by a thick cloud. You might think of it as a blinding fire shrouded in dense smoke. The ancient Hebrews called this the Shekinah, the radiance of his presence. It describes that resplendent, brilliant, dazzling, unapproachable light of the presence of God. Daniel tells us that light dwells with him. The Psalmist says that he covers himself with light as with a garment. In his vision, God allowed Ezekiel to see the radiance of God's glory emanating from the throne and in chapter 1, verse 4, we read, "Then I looked, behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with a raging fire engulfing itself, and brightness was all around it and radiating out of the midst of the fire." The Apostle Paul describes Christ Jesus to Timothy as dwelling in unapproachable light who no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. And John tells us that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.

Now, the blazing fire of God's presence in the Old Testament was both frightening as well as comforting, a profound mystery. We are first introduced to it in a very clear way in Exodus 13 as a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to illumine the nighttime travel of the Israelites. This is how God led the Israelites through the Sinai wilderness into the Promised Land, and that visible manifestation of God's internal glory is what the word "awesome" can accurately describe. It was a picture of his unapproachable holiness and a living illustration of his power, his guidance, his protection, all which were consistent with his covenantal promises. When the glory cloud moved, the people would move. When it would stop, the people would camp.

We are even told in the Old Testament that once it moved to the rear of the Israeli camp to protect them from the advancing Egyptian chariots and give the Israelites a time to break camp, to form ranks and prepare to cross the Red Sea. In Exodus 14, beginning with verse 19, we read about this. The word says the pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night, the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side so neither went near the other all night long. What an amazing scene. The glory of the Lord produced light for the one, but it was darkness to the other. Light is always a symbol of truth and of grace for God's people. Darkness is always the symbol of judgment and of divine wrath. And how true that is even to this day, for we as believers, God's glory is a welcome sight of his presence that we long to enter into, a welcomed illustration of his power, his grace, his eternal deliverance. But for unbelievers, when they see the glory of God in the face of Christ, it's all foolishness; it's darkness because they are spiritually blind, they are spiritually dead, and they are at war with God.

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In Exodus 16:10 we read that "the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud." Can you imagine that scene? And in other passages, we see that this also includes the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Deuteronomy 32:10 speaking of Israel, we read this, "He found him in a desert land, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions." Now, what's fascinating is this concept of hovering which, by the way, uses some very rare words in the Hebrew language. This concept can also be seen in the Spirit's work at creation when he hovered over the barren waste of the original creation, even as he later hovered over God's covenant people in the barren waste of the wilderness. We read about this in Genesis 1:2, "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the the waters."

That this cloud included the presence of the Holy Spirit can also be seen in Nehemiah 9, beginning in verse 19. There we read, "You, in Your great compassion, Did not forsake them in the wilderness; The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, To guide them on their way, Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go. You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them." We read more of this, for example, in Isaiah 63, beginning in verse 11, "Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses. Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them, Who caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, Who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name, Who led them through the depths? Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble; As the cattle which go down into the valley, The Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led Your people, To make for Yourself a glorious name."

Now, before we go on, you might be wondering, "How does all of this possibly apply to anything in my life today? Truly, it's fascinating history but how does it apply to my life?" Let me give you a preview of where we're going to go with all of this. Where does the Holy Spirit dwell today? He dwells within us. Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit. He dwells within believers and as you will see, that visible manifestation of the Triune Godhead that led and protected Israel, that mysterious sign of great blessing that also evoked great fear of judgment, is still active in the redeemed. You see, we no longer see him in the form of a massive and a mobile cloud that could go from very large to very small, we no longer see him as this blazing light concealed in smoke, but now he dwells in us because we have been united to him through Christ who is the radiance of the glory of God and the Holy Spirit dwells within us.

Dear friends, you must understand as believers, the transforming power of the Spirit's regenerating grace is all for the purpose of affecting the glory of God in and through us.

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For this reason Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "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 from the Lord, the Spirit." Beloved, said differently, planted within these old bodies that are passing away is the seed of eternal glory that will one day burst forth at our resurrection, and this was so exceedingly glorious to the Apostle Paul that it was at the very heart of his Gospel preaching causing him to say in Colossians 1:27, "God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery." And what is the mystery? "It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim," he said.

But to better grasp the magnificence of the glory of the Lord, I want to return to the cloud. As we read the Old Testament descriptions of that cloud again, we see that it was a terrifying sight and yet it was also a comforting sight to the people. In Exodus 19, we learn that the cloud descended upon Mount Sinai at the giving of the law, and there it was described as a dense cloud, like smoke from a furnace, one that produced from it thundering lightning, fire, the deafening sound of a trumpet. There, dear friends, God made the holiness of his presence known in such a way as to cause the people to literally melt with fear. You will recall how Moses was to instruct the people to put a boundary around the base of the mountain to protect people from even getting near it, much less touching it lest they be consumed; a dramatic illustration of how sinful man is excluded from the presence of a holy God. Yet isn't it fascinating, it is only within the confines of that cloud that we can experience the presence of our God and experience the intimate communion for which we long, an intimacy that every man who has ever been born again longs to enjoy.

We read about this further in Exodus 24, beginning in verse 15, "Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top. Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights." In Exodus 33, prior to the construction of the tabernacle, God instructed Moses to pitch a tent far off from where the people were camped. It was called the tent of meeting. And in Exodus 33:8, we read that "it came about, whenever Moses went out to the tent, that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of his tent, and gaze after Moses until he entered the tent. Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend."

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You will recall that later in that same chapter, Moses longed to see more of the glory of the Lord. He wanted to see the Lord face to face but God wouldn't allow that, he would only allow him to see his backside. Yet, even that greatly veiled exposure to God's glory was so powerful, it was so penetrating, it was so transmissible that when Moses came down off of the mountain, his face continued to emanate the glory of God and it was terrifying to the people to the point where he had to put a veil to cover his face.

In Exodus 40, we read how the tabernacle was eventually built. It was erected there at the foot of Mount Sinai. The 12 tribes camped in such a way so that they could see the tabernacle which was in the middle. The tabernacle, by the way, being a living illustration, a pre-figurement, if you will, of the Messiah to come. And inside of that tabernacle was the Holy of Holies and there in the Holy of Holies, there was the ark of the covenant and there was the cherubim up over the ark of the covenant, and within the ark was the violated tablets of the law, and above the mercy seat, between the cherubim, the Shekinah glory of God descended and hovered there, the great picture that sinful man can never enter into the presence of a holy God apart from propitiation, apart from satisfaction, apart from blood being sprinkled on the mercy seat that will allow us access into the presence of God, obviously all an amazing picture of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ to come.

Now, think about it, suddenly the terrifying presence of the glory of the Lord that could only be seen at a distance in this massive cloud descends into the very camp of the people; that which was far off and frightening suddenly is up close and comforting. It goes from massive to very small. And then by God's command, we know that Aaron and his sons were ordained to priestly service, allowing Israel to both learn and worship God through the ministry of the priests. In Leviticus 9, beginning in verse 23, we read that, "Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting. When they came out and blessed the people, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. Then fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces."

Now, the glory of the Lord would bring great blessing to the people but it would also bring a curse if they disobeyed him because whenever God's holiness encounters sin, blessing is immediately replaced with judgment. We see this in so many stories in the Old Testament like the tragic story of the Israelites who at Mount Sinai built and worshiped a golden calf and called it Yahweh. I mean, can you believe that? The Psalmist tells us in Psalm 106:20, "they exchanged their glorious God for an image of a bull which eats grass." And we know the outcome of that story, some 3,000 were killed in God's judgment. I think of the story of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire, unauthorized fire before the Lord, Leviticus 10, resulting in fire that came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them.

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Well, eventually the cloud of God's presence led them into the Promised Land in in 1 Kings 8, we read of Solomon's permanent temple that was built there and the glory of the Lord fills the house of the Lord and the priests were unable to minister. An incredible display of God's power, of his holiness, once again, demonstrating to the people that worship is all about God and his glory. This is going to sound silly but not man and his needs which is typically the theme of most churches today. "Now will you obey me? You see my glory coming again. O yes, we will obey you." Well, they did for awhile but you know the story, sin and idolatry began to take over. That was the reoccurring theme of Israel's history. Isaiah spoke of that cycle in Isaiah 3:8, "For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen, Because their speech and their actions are against the LORD, To rebel against His glorious presence."

In Ezekiel 8 through 10, we have a description of the hideous corruption of idolatry that characterized the people. The joy and blessed communion associated with God's glory began to disappear because God's glory cannot co-exist with persistent sin and idolatry and so Ezekiel gives us this amazing description of how the Shekinah presence of God gradually departs which, by the way, is the meaning of the name Ichabod, the glory has departed. He describes how it rises from between the cherubim and it hovers over the threshold of the temple court. Then it moves across over to the east gate of the Lord's house which, by the way, is the same gate from which the Savior would depart when he was rejected. And in Ezekiel 11:23, we read that "The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city." That, by the way, refers to the Mount of Olives. And I might add that the precise sequence of the departure of God's glorious presence will be reversed when he returns again in power and great glory, a preview of coming attractions, if you will.

For 500 years, Israel did not see a sign of God's presence. No glory. No angels. And then suddenly the celestial brilliance of the divine presence returns to some lowly shepherds caring for sacrificial sheep on a Judean hillside. Luke records this in chapter 2, verse 9, "And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'"

This is staggering when I think about it. The glory of the Lord would now return to Israel not in a cloud, not in a temple, but in something exceedingly more magnificent and more blessed to all of the people. It would now appear in the Incarnate Son of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who according to Hebrews 1:3, "is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature." He alone will be able to reconcile us to a holy God through his sacrificial death. This is all that is pictured there. He alone is the one that is able to make us stand in the presence of his glory blameless with great joy. And what an illustration of grace. The good news that our Savior had been born was first announced to

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the lowliest of that culture. I find great comfort in that, don't you, because I'm among those lowly ones, lower than the lowly.

The long awaited Savior, the Messiah, prophesied and prefigured in the Old Testament has come to exalt the lowly. The one that had been pictured in millions of animal sacrifices that could never forgive sin has finally come. As John said, "The Word became flesh and we beheld His glory." It's now dwelling amongst us and it is in the one who is the light of the world. For this reason Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." You see, friends, he alone is the true glory of God and he will never depart from his people and he has made provision for us to draw near to that which was formerly unapproachable. He alone is the one that can cause us to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

But what a strange thing it is to understand that Jesus didn't come in glory. He came in humility. He came in utter obscurity. He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. He was hated, rejected, despised, crucified. What an astounding paradox and what a lesson and, dear friends, the lesson is this: glory rises out of humility. Glory is the fruit of suffering. The greatest display of the glory of God is found in the greatest display of suffering and sacrificial love and this is just contrary to human reasoning, right? This is such an offense to human pride. Glory comes through humility and a willingness to suffer for Christ. Folks, let that sink in a little bit in our comfortable middle Tennessee world. It is for this reason that in Romans 8, beginning in verse 17, God calls us to share in his sufferings in order that we might share in his glory. As his children, Paul says, we are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. 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."

What must those shepherds have thought? The angel said, "Yes, go to the city of David. You'll find your Savior there and you're going to look for a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." I'm sure in their own vernacular they said, "What? Are you kidding me? The Lord of glory? The Messiah of Israel, a mere baby in an animal trough?" "Yes." And they went and they saw him and there the glory of God was cloaked in human fragility in sacred humility. How can this be? And little did they know that their Messiah would suffer and die for all whom the Father had given him, and through his death be glorified in ways that none of us could have ever imagined. That's why when they went to see the Lord Jesus, suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with angels praising God and saying, you guessed it, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased."

Oh, dear friends, what an inconceivable mystery, to think that housed within that sinless little human body was the self-existent, pre-existent, uncreated Creator of the universe. Suddenly the ineffable dazzling light of the Shekinah glory of God is no longer veiled in

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dense smoke, no longer hidden in a cloud, it's now in a human body made in his image, destined to suffer and die. And we see this most vividly in the transfiguration, do we not? Peter, James and John are there and Luke says as Jesus was praying, the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing became dazzling white. The original language, the word "dazzling" carries with it the idea of emitting brilliant flashing lights similar to lightning. Can you imagine the scene, to see that coming off of the Lord?

And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his, catch this, departure. Spoke of his departure, referring to his imminent death? That's what it says. They spoke of his departure which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Don't you know Peter, James and John are hearing this and they're thinking, "But what of the glory? What's this departure stuff?" Beloved, what we must learn from this is nowhere does God's glory shine more brightly than at the cross. Is God more or less glorified because of what he did at the cross? He is more glorified. And once again we see how humiliation always precedes glorification. In fact, as Jesus prepared to go to the cross, he said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified," and he went on to explain how a kernel of wheat must fall to the ground and die if it is to produce many seeds and so forth in John 12.

And like Jesus, we are first called to suffer for him before we can be glorified with him. In fact, Luke's account of the transfiguration bears testimony to this truth. He tells us that just before the transfiguration Jesus told his disciples that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. But then he went on to explain the pathway to glory for the lives of his disciples, for all of us and he said this, "Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

This is so mind boggling to me. Think about it: at one time the glory of the Lord hovered over the earth when it was formless, when it was empty and darkness was over the surface of the deep. Why? In preparation for creation. Then later it hovered over Israel in the barren wasteland of the Sinai Peninsula. It then comes and descends on Mount Sinai and then it comes to descend upon the tabernacle and later the temple, and then it is veiled in the Incarnate Son of God. Why? Once again, in preparation for creation but this time a new creation, the redeemed will become new creatures in Christ, and all of this pointing to the ultimate new creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

Oh, but the majestic glory of God will one day be made visible again. Do you realize that? This old wicked world is going to see it when Jesus returns in power and great glory as King of kings and Lord of lords. According to Luke 21:27, after the pre-kingdom judgments have been poured out upon the world, God is going to turn off all of the lights of heaven and here's what we read, "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud

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with power and great glory." Matthew adds, "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky," Matthew 24:30. And what is the sign? Grammatically in the original language, it is "the sign of the Son of Man," denoting the fact that he is the sign. Said differently, "the sign which is the Son of Man." At that time, his glory will blaze forth against the backdrop of all of that darkness, that glory that was once concealed in that dense cloud and veiled in human flesh is going to be fully unveiled and what a scene that will be. Those who have mocked Christ will see the effulgence of his glory blaze forth in a terrifying display of pre-Incarnate deity. In Matthew 24:27 we read, "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west," Jesus says, "so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

Unlike his first coming in obscurity and humility, he will return in full view with full glory. I mean, think about lightning. What happens when you see lightning? Oh, you just don't pay any attention to it, right? This never even catches your eye. No, suddenly the whole world stops. That's all you see. Lightning never goes unnoticed. It is shocking. It's as if it goes from the east to the west. Beloved, this adds new meaning to the grand finale. This is what's going to happen when the Lord returns. In fact, in Revelation 1:7 we have a description of Christ's appearance, "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him." Then according to Bible prophecy, we know that the earth is going to instantly be renovated; it will be returned to Edenic splendor as paradise is regained. The long awaited Messianic kingdom will explode in all of its promised beauty. And Habakkuk tells us that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. I cannot wait for that day.

At the close of the millennium, we know that God will uncreate the heavens and the earth. Peter says they will pass away with a roar, and he will create a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21, we read how the new Jerusalem will descend and hover over that new earth. In verse 2 of that chapter, John says, "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." What a picture of the personal union in intimacy that we all have as the bride of Christ. The new Jerusalem will be this immense Holy of Holies that will contain the fullness of the presence of God's glory, where the divine eminence of the Shekinah that once filled the earthly temple will become the only source of light. Ultimately the new eternal temple will be the Lord God himself and John says the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it for the glory of God has illumined it and its lamp is the Lamb.

All of this, of course, is in fulfillment of Jesus' prayer in John 17 before he went to the cross. He said, "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." In the Old Testament, the privilege of direct fellowship with God was limited to the high priest

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# The Glory of God part 1

By David Harrell

**Preached on:** Sunday, September 4, 2016  
alone but not so in the new Jerusalem. Because of Christ, that privilege of intimacy will be extended to all of the redeemed.

What an amazing story, isn't it? All glory belongs to God alone. Soli Deo gloria. Yet he has sovereignly ordained to glorify himself by reconciling sinners to himself through Christ, and because we are in Christ, he is pleased to glorify us by his Spirit through the way of suffering. God has crowned us with glory and honor, the word of God says, but all of our glory redounds back to the glory of God and for this reason we are looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave himself for us.

Well, folks, as we close this morning, I hope that this brief historical and theological overview of the glory of God helps you better understand why Jesus told us in his model for prayer, remember in Matthew 6? The model for prayer? Remember how he asked for us to begin, at least the concept behind that, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name." That is not an acclamation, that is a petition. You must understand that. We're not to pray, "Our Father who is in heaven, Your name is so hallowed, it is so sacred, it is so holy, Hallelujah!" That's not the point. No, this is a prayer. It's a petition asking God to act. Jesus wants us to pray, in essence, "Our Father in heaven, make Your name hallowed. Cause Your name to be sacred and glorious in my life, in my family, in my ministry, in my community, in my church. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Empower me to value Your holiness. Do whatever it takes in me to reverence and honor and esteem and value and treasure and exalt Your name above all things because that will bring glory to You because Your name and Your glory are one and the same. Father, make Your name glorious in all of the earth beginning with me because I long to see Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." If Jesus obediently suffered and died because he treasured the infinite worth of God's name, how can we do any less?

Oh, child of God, we now see even more clearly the unfathomable riches of God's glory of which we are heirs and one day we're going to experience it and see it in all of its fullness. How can we do anything that would dishonor his name? How could we value anything more than his glory?

Well, the great challenge before us now is therefore how then shall we live, right? Paul said, "Whether you eat or you drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." What does that look like? How do we live for God's glory in this crazy world? With all of the wickedness, with all of the deceptions, all of the distractions? And what role does the church play in all of this? Well, Lord willing, we will examine what God has to say about these things next week and I would ask you to prepare your heart as I have been doing because I can tell you ahead of time, given the work of the Spirit in my heart, that you're not going to like everything the Lord has to say to you. I haven't liked everything he has had to say to me but isn't that just like a loving Father who comes along and exposes

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some things that we need to examine that we might not only see his glory more and more but experience the fullness of it. So let's pray to that end, that God will reveal himself.

Let's pray together.

*Father, thank you so much for these great truths. May they bear much fruit in each of our hearts. For your glory and your glory alone, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.*

We pray you've been edified by this presentation. You've been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at [otcr.org](http://otcr.org).

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