

The Glory of God

Shown Through His Worth and Desire for Relationship

April 27, 2014

I. The Glory of God

- A. Psalm 26:8 . . . O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells.
- B. Psalm 57:9-11 . . . I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. [10] For Your lovingkindness is great to the heavens and Your truth to the clouds. [11] Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth.
- C. Prayer

II. The Glory of God Revealed in His Worth

- A. One of God's qualities that makes Him glorious, that sets Him apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe, is His worth; and His worth is of such proportions that it is beyond calculation.
 - 1. In fact, God's worth is so great that there is nothing in this world, be it people, possessions, positions, pleasures, power, riches, or fame that even comes close to the value of God.
 - 2. Therefore, God is the supreme treasure – which makes Him the most valuable treasure we have the privilege of possessing, if we will possess Him.
- B. Jesus made it clear that God is the supreme treasure when He said: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. [45] Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, [46] and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:44-46).
 - 1. There are four truths here that are self-evident and important for understanding these two parables.
 - a. First, every kingdom is what its King makes it. Therefore, for the Kingdom of Heaven to have this kind of value, it must have a King who is equally valuable. In other words, the first parable is not just about the worth of the Kingdom of Heaven, it is also about the worth of its King.
 - b. Second, the pearl of great value was not the first pearl examined. The merchant was seeking fine pearls – which means he was intentionally looking for valuable pearls, and examining the ones

he found to see if they fit the description of a fine pearl. It was in the course of searching that he found a pearl of such great value that he sold all he had to purchase it.

- c. Third, the inference of the parables is that upon finding something that exceeds the value of everything else you have or can obtain, the normal person eagerly sells all that he has to obtain the treasure.
 - d. Fourth, both the Kingdom of Heaven and its King are worth more than anything and everything we have or can possibly obtain and possess from this world.
2. Which raises the question: “Why should we make God and His Kingdom our most valued treasure – so valued in fact that we would sell all our earthly possessions, hopes, and dreams to obtain Him?”
- a. Jesus answered this question when He said: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21).
 - b. In other words, we pay attention to what we treasure. No matter how many things we have or hope to obtain, the course of our life is pointed toward what we treasure. No matter how many decisions and choices we make, we rarely if ever make any that jeopardize what we treasure. No matter how two-faced or mixed motivated or double minded we may be, deep within our heart we are committed to promoting and protecting what we treasure.
 - c. You see, our strongest affections, our deepest longings, our repeated cravings, our fondest dreams, and the driving motives that are always with us point toward one thing – what we treasure.
 - d. Therefore, if what you treasure is not God, then you will not love Him with all your heart, and you cannot be holy in all your behavior, and you cannot worship Him in spirit and in truth. It is only as God is your gold and your choice silver, your favored possession and cherished pleasure, and the One who fulfills your longing to be accepted and loved that you will set your heart on loving God, delighting in God, obeying God, living for God, and worshiping God in spirit and in truth. (Job 22:25-26)
- C. Now I don’t doubt that for most of us the idea of treasuring God above all else seems like the right thing to do. And it may even be something we really want to do.
1. But the reality is, though we may want to do something of this magnitude, following through is another matter. In fact, if we would be fully honest, we would probably see ourselves as treasuring God

at certain times and in certain situations, while treasuring other things at other times and in other situations.

2. However, as Jesus said, we cannot serve two masters. And when we apply this principle to treasures of the heart, it means we cannot hold two competing or conflicting treasures in our heart at the same time, for one will always ascend above the other and control how devoted we are to the other. In other words, if God is not our greatest, most valued treasure, then He will be – like everything else in our life – subservient to the treasure we value the most.
 3. Therefore, I want to speak about treasures in a way that may help you discern who or what you treasure, with the hope that you will treasure God above all else.
- D. The reality is, we all have treasures. We all treasure something or someone. Even if we cannot obtain what we treasure, we still harbor dreams and hopes and longings – deep within our hearts – that we think about and wish we could obtain.
1. Therefore, we can identify what we treasure by discerning what we set our deepest affections on, or what we repeatedly long for, or what we dream about, or what we believe we cannot live without.
 2. For example, some treasure a prized possession – such as a sports car, an heirloom, an antique, or some musical instrument. Some treasure physical appearance, expensive clothes, or the latest fashions and hairstyles. Some treasure an excellent GPA, an undergrad or master's degree from a prestigious university, a highly respected job, an important position, or recognition for one's accomplishments.
 - a. Some treasure relationships that make them feel important or as if they belong to someone or are loved by someone – such as a best friend or a boyfriend or a girlfriend or a spouse. Some treasure the pleasure of food, the pleasure of sexual activity, the self-gratification of shopping for personal things, the speed of motorcycles and race cars, the thrill of water or snow skiing, the challenge of mountain climbing, the serenity of hiking, the joy of children, the gathering of family, or the quiet comforts of home.
 - b. Some treasure financial security, or a secure job with good benefits. Some treasure hard work, leisure time, entertainment, being the one doing the entertaining, arts and crafts, world travel, working in the yard – and obviously this list could go on and on.
 - c. Now beyond what we treasure today, what we treasure can change due to such things as age, circumstances, relationships, health, and spiritual growth.

- E. Therefore, for Christians, the issue is not whether we have treasures, but whether God is our supreme treasure – so that all other treasures are so subordinate to God that we will eagerly give them up to have all of God.
1. And just as a reminder, it is vital for us to make God our supreme treasure because – as Jesus said – what we treasure the most has the greatest influence over how we think, what we choose, what we say, and how we behave.
 2. What do you treasure? Though this ought to be an easy question to answer, it rarely is, because few of us examine ourselves this deeply and this honestly. But we can.
 3. Therefore, if you want to know what you treasure, then the place to being is to ask God for discernment. Then, with His gracious help, carefully examine what you turn to when you want to feel happy, or want to feel loved, accepted, and important. Look at what you turn to, to soothes your fears, and what you turn to regain a sense of well-being when going through trials and tribulation. Finally, examine your thoughts, longings, and choices to see what they say about who or what you treasure.
- F. Without question, God has been and always will be the supreme treasure, and His worth is part of what makes Him glorious. If you want to know the glory of God and if you want to bring glory to God in accordance with His worth, then I urge you, treasure Him according to His worth.

III. The Glory of God Revealed in His Desiring Fellowship with Us

- A. One of God's qualities that sets Him apart from and above everyone and everything else is His desire to have an intimate, meaningful, mutually satisfying relationship with each one of His created beings – both individually and as a community.
1. When I say that God desires relationship with us, I want to make it clear that God does not need such relationships. He is not nor will He ever be incomplete or unfulfilled without them – for God is not only self-existent, He is self-sufficient. And yet, God wants to be in a mutual, meaningful, and eternal relationship with us. He wants to fellowship with us. He wants us to love Him. He wants us to want to be His children and His bride, just as He wants to be our Father and our Husband. Therefore, though God does not need us, He wants relationship with us – and the scriptures affirm this.
 - a. Speaking in a vision to John, God said: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I

- will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).
- b. Jesus said that whoever “has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” Then Jesus went on to say: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (John 14:21,23).
 - c. In praying to His Father, Jesus said that the purpose of eternal life is for us to personally know and intimately fellowship with God the Father, and God the Son (John 17:3).
2. Paul also speaks about the relationship that God wants with us. In 2 Corinthians 5:19 he said: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (*providing repair for damaged and broken relationships*), and not counting their trespasses against them.”
 - a. In 2 Corinthians 6:16 Paul said that “we are the temple of the living God; for it is God who said, ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
 - b. And Paul also tells us that God’s love for us and His desire for meaningful relationship with us is so strong that He demonstrated its strength by giving Christ to die for us while we were yet sinners, that is, still in our rebellion against Him (Romans 5:8).
 3. In Jude’s explanation of God’s dealings with the rebellious angels, we see how powerfully God’s wants relationship with us.
 - a. In Jude 6, we read that the “angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, [God] has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”
 - b. What this statement tells us is that God made no move to rescue the rebellious angels from eternal damnation and restore their relationship to Him. Yet God sacrificed His only Son to rescue us from the consequences of our rebellion and reconcile us to Himself. This testifies to how much God wants relationship with us.
 4. Which brings us to one of the earliest actions of God in making it clear He wants meaningful relationship with us – He made us in His image.
 - a. We read in Genesis 1:26a-27 . . . that God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” . . . [27] so God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- b. To our knowledge, of all the living creatures God created, including the angels, humans are the only ones created in His image – and it is this part of our being that forms the bond between us, and that enables us to live forever, and that makes possible a mutually meaningful and satisfying relationship.
5. But God did not stop there, He also created us with a desire to know Him and to be fulfilled by Him. Paul affirms this in Acts 17:24-28 . . . The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; [25] nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; [26] and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, [27] that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; [28] for in Him we live and move and exist.
6. And as if making us in His image and creating us with a desire to know Him was not proof enough of His wanting relationship with us, God goes further by revealing Himself to us in a variety of ways so we can easily find Him and satisfy our inner desire to know Him.
- a. For example – God reveals Himself to us through nature: Romans 1:20 . . . For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Note: Psalm 19:1-6)
 - b. God reveals Himself to us through our mind, our conscience, and a built in sense of right and wrong: Romans 1:19 . . . that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. Romans 2:14-15 . . . For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, [15] in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts (*mind*) alternately accusing or else defending them.
 - c. God reveals Himself to us through Jesus Christ: Colossians 1:15a; 2:9 . . . [1:15a] He is the image of the invisible God . . . [2:9] and in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.
 - d. God reveals Himself to us through the gospel of salvation and the scriptures: Romans 1:16-17a . . . For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who

believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. [17a] For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

7. Now, after having done all these things to demonstrate His wanting an eternal and meaningfully intimate relationship with us, He goes a step further and draws us to Himself.
 - a. John 6:44 . . . No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.
 - b. Jeremiah 31:3b . . . The Lord said: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.”
 - c. Romans 2:4 . . . Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads (*carries, brings*) you to repentance?

IV. Conclusion

- A. I know we have covered a lot of material today, so let me wrap it up this way. As should be apparent, God has given us numerous reasons to believe He wants meaningfully intimate and lasting relationship with us.
 1. Sadly, some look at God, not as a loving Father wanting fellowship with His children, but as a God they don't trust and who is unworthy of their allegiance and love. Such negative views of God can result from seeing all the evil in the world, or from being self-absorbed and expecting God to serve you, or from getting caught up in the cares and riches of life, or from seeing the hypocrisy in the Church, or from a reasoned hostility toward God and religion.
 2. And so it is our responsibility to show the unbelieving world the glory of God through the way we relate to Him and fellowship with Him, which is a direct reflection of how much we treasure Him.
- B. Therefore, let us own Paul's words as our own: “Whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ (*the treasure*). More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord (*the relationship*)” (Philippians 3:7-8).