

Jesus' Purpose: Glorify God.

In this passage, Jesus talks about how he will be glorified, that is, magnified and made known, and how his main mission in life is for God the Father to be glorified.

In this passage, we'll discover how Jesus' glory and God's glory work in tandem, but the way Jesus is glorified is not by him trying to elevate himself, but by giving and dying.

In [1 Corinthians 10:31](#), the Apostle Paul instructs Christians to "do all to the glory of God."

The phrase or instruction that we are to glorify God with our lives is common in church life, and throughout Scripture, but what does that actually look like? How can we put that into practice? Does that mean we listen to worship music and sing all the time? Does that mean pray a lot? What does glorifying God with our lives look like? And how do you know and I know if we're doing that?

Firstly, it's important that we see that Jesus invited and made a way for all people to glorify God. In Jesus' day, this would have been a novel idea!

An Invitation To All (v.20-22, 32b)

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some *Greeks*. **21** So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." **22** Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

The Greeks, or none Jews, are going to see Jesus
Just before this, the leaders said "The world is going after" Jesus.

These Greeks are God-fearing people who see God as worthy of worship and celebration.

Jesus is a sensation, and these unnamed gentiles want to see him. They may be powerful or influential, or they are just bold enough to ask. We no almost nothing about them.

They go to Philip, who is from a town that was probably more sympathetic to interacting with non-Jews, and was the only disciple with a Greek name, so it makes sense that they went to Philip.

We don't know where these gentiles are from either. We just know they have come to this major feast and want to see Jesus.

Jesus doesn't ask them what they want to know and doesn't go into a time of sitting and chatting with just them. He seems to shift his attention to everyone else, and begins to teach about his impending death.

Why this shift?

Possibly because this is the most important thing for everyone, including these Greeks who want to see Jesus, to hear.

They want to glorify God by honoring the Passover and practicing this tradition. But here, Jesus is now inviting not just the Jews to have a life that truly glorifies God, but also the Gentiles!

There are not many times Jesus ministers to the Gentiles, but when he does, it's always worth paying attention to.

Jesus, here, is giving us a glimpse of a reality that hadn't yet come to pass: Gentiles will be able to glorify and honor God with their life, and the way that happens is through what Jesus is about to say, NOT by them being circumcised and practicing Jewish tradition.

By the presence of the Greeks here, we are getting a glimpse of something wonderful - a right relationship with God is an invitation Jesus makes to **all**, not some - to the many, not the few.

Jesus Teaches Us How To Glorify God:

23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

The time had come for Jesus to journey to the cross, to be lifted up, and to be seen by many as obedient to prophecy and the Father.

This is the theme for our message today. This is something often on the lips of

Christians - our job is to glorify God. Or “I did something for His glory”, or “glory be to God” or “that wasn’t glorifying to God”

Today, I hope to put some skin on this phrase as we listen to the words of Jesus as he tells us how HE glorifies God because, honestly, He’s going to do it better than we are.

1 - Die To Self (v.24-25)

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. **25** Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Jesus opens by saying ‘*truly truly*’ - calling attention to his words. Remember, this is in front of the Gentile God-fearing people who were seeking him out, to talk to him about something that isn’t told to us. We see, here, that the reason for their pursuit of Jesus isn’t what is most important to Jesus, but rather, His reply to them is what they need to hear.

This reply starts not with a reference to the OT or something written in the Law, but rather, it’s a parable that would be familiar to all with any knowledge of agriculture.

Jesus says for a seed, something that is singular, to grow and multiply and find its true purpose, it must die and be ‘reborn.’

He gives an example that is seen in everyday life: a seed is singular, but when you bury it in the ground (like something dying), then it can truly find its true meaning and come to its fullest potential: bringing about another plant that has more seeds on it.

Jesus then makes the connection to human life and says, speaking to those who wish to follow him: if you want to experience eternal life (*which they believed is found through following the law*) Jesus says that you have to hate your life/die to your own pursuits. If you love your life/seek after your own desires, you’ll lose it/never be who you were meant to be.

The principle is this: multiplication can only take place if you’re willing to die/not be the center/step back.

For us to better understand such strong words, let’s look at Matthew’s gospel on the same subject.

Matthew 16:24-25

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. **25** For whoever would save his life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

This does not mean that you have to hate the life that God gave you, constantly being discontent with your life and trying to avoid living. No, that does not fit at all. Rather, Jesus is calling us to seek first not our own will but the will of God. This pursuit should be so strong that interactions with our fleshly/sinful will are so ignored that it looks like we hate them. And really, we do hate them because we love God and God's will for our lives so much more.

Galatians 5:24-26

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Here's what it means:

Where we once pursued selfish pleasures, we now pursue, with equal or greater passion, that which pleases God.

Dying to self is never portrayed in Scripture as something optional in the Christian life.

It is the reality of the new birth; no one can come to Christ unless he is willing to see his old life crucified with Christ and begin to live anew in obedience to Him.

Jesus describes lukewarm followers who try to live partly in the old life and partly in the new as those whom He will spit out ([Revelation 3:15-16](#)). That lukewarm condition characterized the church of Laodicea as well as many churches today. Being "lukewarm" is a symptom of unwillingness to die to self and live for Christ. Death to self is not an option for Christians; it is a choice that leads to eternal life.

How do you know if you're dying to self and living in the Spirit? You'll see the fruit of the Spirit manifested in your life.

2 - Following The Ways Of Jesus (v.26)

26 If anyone serves (*ministers*) me, he must follow (*accompany*) me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor (*prize, fix a value to*) him.

Jesus goes on - if someone, like the 10s of thousands of people following Jesus, really wants to serve Him, they must follow Him. And *wherever* Jesus goes, his servants will not abandon him (even if that means the cross). And those servants, who follow Jesus wherever he goes, will be honored by the Father.

This idea of following the ways of Jesus is done by being a disciple, a student of Jesus who follows the practices, style, values/code, and missions of Jesus. This isn't a fan of Jesus who mimics him sometimes, when it's convenient and when Jesus is 'winning' in life. Rather, a follower sticks with him in the highs and lows of life.

Considering the idea of 'fan or follower' (there's a book about this), a fan is cheering when the team is winning, and might even when the team isn't doing so well. A follower is one who doesn't just follow in the good times, but also the time the team is losing, and even more than that, the follower knows the players, and their personalities maybe, and studies their past and where they might be going.

Jesus, here, tells us that a true servant (or follower) will stick with Him through everything, and because of that, God will honor/prize/recognize Him.

It reminds me of: Matthew 10.

32 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, **33** but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

The one who glorifies God is the one who looks closely at their own life, using the Word of God and their guide, and seeks to rid their life of that which doesn't resemble Jesus.

Often, doing this alongside someone else who has the same goal is more effective than doing it alone.

3 - Remain Obedient In The Face Of Trouble (v.27)

27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.

Doing the right thing is often pretty easy when you want to do it.

To obey, or to comply with someone's command, direction, or request as the definition is, is often not challenging when it's already inline with your desire.

But, as you know and as I know, the nature of the word 'obey' implies that the person hearing the command, direction, or request might not want to do whatever you're saying.

"Clean your room"

"Change _____ at work"

"Don't do _____"

When we think about someone obeying, we assume that their desires might be different than what we're asking of them.

When Jesus says in this verse that his 'soul is troubled' he's saying this: my inward parts/my mind and my very life are restless, agitated, stirred up, or distressed. The Prince of Peace is restless! Do you see that? The author of all that is good is feeling distressed. The sovereign God is agitated! Don't miss this!

We must ask why!

Because "Now" is "this hour"

For 3.5 years 'this hour' has always been in the distance. But now, Jesus, before thousands of people, says that the hour has come! One might think, just by looking at the words "the hour has come" that he's talking about taking his place as Messiah King. But no - he says that his soul/psyche is troubled. If he was going to take his place as king, joy and vigor should be filling his mind, not agitation and distress.

The last week of Jesus' life is now here. Why does this trouble him?

Because very soon Jesus will be drinking the cup of the wrath of God for all mankind.

Jesus was not afraid or too weak to handle the cross. We often say that Jesus had this trepidation or trouble of going to the cross because it would be very painful. Yes, it would be painful, but if that were the only reason, then we must also consider Jesus weak, because many of his followers went to the cross with courage, with joy, and were burned at the stake while singing.

So it's more than the pain of the cross.

It was much more.

He knew he would be experiencing the full wrath of God towards mankind for their sins. He would be taking on his perfect self the punishment of God for sins he did not commit, but rather, that all of humanity had done.

Because of this, God could not stay in union with him, so, not only would he be soon carrying the sins of mankind, he would also be, for the only time ever, broken off/forsaken by His Father.

This caused his soul great trouble.

And yet, he remained obedient.

Consider Hebrews 12:1-4

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. **4** In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

It's hard to stay faithful when others aren't faithful.

It's hard to stick with it when your body wants something else.

It's hard to step up when you want to step up.

It's hard to lean in when you want to lean away.

The one who seeks God's glory - God to be magnified - is the one who checks with God before moving. It doesn't mean we ignore our true feelings, but it also doesn't mean our feelings dictate our choices.

4 - Listen For God's Words (v.28-30)

28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." **29** The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." **30** Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine.

There was 3 times that a voice came from Heaven during Jesus' ministry.

- 1 - his baptism
- 2 - the mount of transfiguration
- 3 - here.

Jesus' prayer here is not for his courage, for his comfort, or for God to change plans. Rather, it's for God to be glorified. This is Jesus' mission. No matter the cost, this is what he wants!

God, in a loud and thundering voice that, it seems, wasn't understood by the people looking on, replies to Jesus.

Interestingly, the people don't seem to know what the words God spoke were, and yet Jesus says that the voice was for them.

Some say that they did understand it, but because of their hard heart and closed minds, they were not willing to recognize this voice as God's.

I'm more inclined to assume they really didn't - as the text suggests.

Rather, it was meant to be an encourage Jesus and show that when Jesus looks to heaven/the sky and speaks, and there's a reply, Jesus must be 'in close' with God. If the people looking on see that Jesus is able to speak to the skys and the skys reply, the might also realize the words of Jesus are important.

God says that His name has been glorified (through the life of Jesus) and will be glorified again (through the coming death of Jesus).

God doesn't often speak from the heavens to us, which some of us might really appreciate. Rather, He speaks through His Spirit and through His Word. The Words that Jesus heard was a good reminder and encouragement to Him, and we have a place that we can go to find encouragement and be reminded too.

There are a lot of voices around us that tell us lots of things - beware.

The amount of voices and the high volume of others doesn't mean they are right. If they were, then Jesus should have taken over the Romans and become the sitting King of Jerusalem at that time. But, Jesus didn't listen to the voice of the people - the volume of the crowd. He did what he was called to do, and went back and checked in with the voice of God for validation and verification. This is where we are to get our validation/find identity - in the Words of God, not the words of man.

That's a whole topic in it'self, but today, start that process of exploring where you find your identity by taking out a piece of paper and writing down "I am" statements. Be honest. "I am _____" and see what comes up on your paper.

Then, take time and ask yourself where those statements originated. Who said those things to you first? Who reaffirms them? Do they match with what God says about you?

5 - Realize The Power Of The Cross (v.31-33)

31 Now is the judgment ('krisis', *separating, selection*) of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. **32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." **33** He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

Part 1) (v.31)

At the cross of Jesus, a separation occurs.

The leader of this world is the Enemy, the Deceiver of the world; Satan.

At the cross, the ruler of the world appeared to have won (His followers even thought this), **but** the cross wasn't a sign of Jesus' death and defeat, but rather it was a sign of the death and defeat of sin's power over the people of this world. The work of the cross signified a change in world order - no longer was sin the ruler over mankind any longer. Freedom could be ours!

Jesus is the king and sovereign - thus he is stronger than this leader. Satan knew this, but he had still been granted great power in the world over the lives of humans. Now, at the cross, this enemy will no longer have the power that he used to have, particularly against Christians. This is good news!

It was because of disobedience that man was driven by God out of the Garden of Eden for having submitted to *the prince of this world* ([John 12:31](#));

But now, by the perfect obedience of Jesus on the cross the prince of this world will be deposed from his present dominance."

[Colossians 2:14-15](#) vividly described the defeat of Satan at the cross: *having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed (stripped down the) principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

Part 2) (v.32)

This verse is a bit easier to understand, perhaps.

The verb used for **lifted** has a deliberate double meaning. It means both a literal *elevation* (as in being raised up on a cross) and *exaltation* (being raised in rank or honor). Jesus promised that when He was **lifted** (elevated, exalted) on the cross He would **draw all peoples** (nations, people groups, not all of mankind to ever live) **to** Himself.

When he says he'll draw all men to him, it's also a reminder to us that the cross of Jesus wasn't just meant for Jews, but for Gentiles as well.

Jesus, and the preaching of the cross, is the magnet of Christianity. It's a polarizing event that one will either reject or accept. The work and mission of Jesus comes down to what happened at the Cross of Christ.

Many accept the teachings of Jesus

Many love the morals of Jesus.

Many want to put a picture of Jesus on their walls in pictures or have statues of him.

But when the cross of Christ is preached clearly, it's both offensive and lovely. When Jesus' sacrifice is clearly understood, both the heart is gripped with guilt and also there is great freedom that can be found.

When we truly understand his sacrifice, our understanding of how much God hates sin is understood, as well as the great grace of our God.

As followers of Jesus who want to glorify God, we must realize that not only the world calendar hinges on Jesus' death, but our whole life must hinge on it as well.

The cross is where we can realize that that we truly are NEW CREATIONS.

6) Believe In Jesus While You Can (v.34-36)

34 So the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" **35** So Jesus said to them, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk (*progress/live*) while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. **36** While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

(V.34)

The crowd realizes that Jesus is talking about his death, and, most likely the Jews, ask about this, because it doesn't make sense. They are rightly putting together OT

passages speaking about the coming Messiah having a kingdom that will never end (thus, he won't die/will remain forever), but here, Jesus is saying he'll be dying soon. This doesn't make sense.. As Jesus often does, he's refers to himself as the Son of Man, as Daniel does, speaking about the Messiah. So, with all that's going on, it would make sense for them to also ask who the Son of Man is.

(v.35) Jesus, instead of answering their question clearly, transitions to another analogy - and it's one he's used before: him being the light.

Instead of walking them through the Son of Man (himself) having a future kingdom that will never end, and that's what the prophets were speaking of, he leans in to what's more important: He won't be here much longer, so you'd be wise to walk with/trust in/lean on/follow Him while you can.

Just like daylight is a safe time for a walk and night time is unsafe, so it is with Jesus. If you'd like to walk in safety in life, walk with the Light. But, just as the sun sets so you'd better hurry up, so Jesus is telling the listeners that the opportunity for walking with Him is getting shorter and shorter.

Here's another way to say it: Answer the phone while it's ringing. Don't wait until after it stops ringing to pick it up.

Jesus tells us here that the way for Him to honor His Father is by making himself available to world where darkness has great power, and to be the light. **But, the opportunity to walk with the Light Of the Life isn't forever.**

Jesus says it clearly in verse 36: while you have the light, believe in the light, and thus, become sons of the light.

Jesus, the Light, wants to bring you into the Family of True Light and help you and I be a light in the World.

When we are lights, like Jesus is the Light, we will glorify God. The ability to glorify God starts with being in a right relationship with Jesus.