

The Truth Part 8: The Truth Glorifies God Alone

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The Truth

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Bible Text: Psalm 115:1
Preached on: Sunday, February 23, 2020

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"One sat alone beside the highway begging,
His eyes were blind, the light he could not see;
He clutched his rags and shivered in the shadows,
Then Jesus came and bade his darkness flee.

When Jesus comes the tempter's pow'r is broken;
When Jesus comes the tears are wiped away.
He takes the gloom and fills the life with glory,
For all is changed when Jesus comes to stay.

From home and friends the evil spirits drove him,
Among the tombs he dwelt in misery;
He cut himself as demon pow'rs possessed him,
Then Jesus came and set the captive free.

'Unclean! unclean!' the leper cried in torment,
The deaf, the dumb, in helplessness stood near;
The fever raged, disease had gripped its victim,
Then Jesus came and cast out every fear."

Their hearts were sad as in the tomb they laid him,
For death had come and taken him away;
Their night was dark and bitter tears were falling,
Then Jesus came and night was turned to day.

So men today have found the Savior able,
They could not conquer passion, lust and sin;
Their broken hearts had left them sad and lonely,
Then Jesus came and dwelt, Himself, within."

Brother Richard has sung many songs and I've always been pleased with his choice of songs, but I don't think I like any of them any better than that song, "When Jesus comes to save." It reminds me of his great ability to save, overcome every obstacle in the hearts

of men, in the lives of men, and save them, gives us scriptural examples all through that song, and I thank you.

Turn with me this morning to Psalm 115, 115. I'm just gonna read one verse to you in the beginning and that's the first one.

1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. 2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? 3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

I was just gonna read one but I had to read all three first verses.

We continue today on this series I've been trying to bring to you on, "The Truth. The truth in its essential elements." And I know of a truth I'm sure of because of the truth, that the truth glorifies God alone. That is another essential element of the truth. As a matter of fact, it's a test of all that would be called true, be called the truth. Does it glorify God alone? That's the test. Does it glorify God or man?

Well, as I said, the truth glorifies God alone and if we knew of no other place in the Bible, if there was no other word in the Bible, we know it by this first verse, "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." You see, God alone is worthy of any glory and God alone is worthy of all the glory, but the problem is sin blinds men to this essential truth and by that blindness, they seek to glorify someone or something else.

In Psalm 148 we read, "Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent and his glory is above the earth and the heaven." Give glory to the Lord, and the only way to give glory or to glorify is to manifest, it means to praise and to honor but it also means this, to glorify means to manifest or reveal that which is true or great or glorious about someone. You see, we cannot glorify God in the sense of adding to God. We cannot make him better. We cannot make him more glorious. When we glorify God, we just simply manifest that which is true about God which he has revealed about himself, and the truth glorifies God by revealing him as he is and for what he's done, which is all and everything. Everything and all is what God is all about and his glory is manifested as far as men who are sinners are concerned, his glory is manifested in the sovereignty of his grace and his mercy to whom he will. He does not owe any sinner anything but just hell and casting off forever, and the manifestation of his grace to some men among Adam's race, that sovereignty grace which we call it, is essentially his glory.

That's what we read in Exodus 33, and Moses who had seen so much, seen so much done by God himself, he is still here in Exodus 33 saying to God in verse 18, "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." And God says this to him, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee," his goodness is his glory, his grace is his glory, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will

shew mercy." His glory as God, his glory as the sovereign God is the glory of his grace and his glory is this: he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious.

Since all are sinners and none can merit anything but his wrath, if he shows mercy, if he has grace, he's glorious in this, he has mercy and grace to whom he will. And the grace and the glory of God exalts and magnifies the persons of the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Spirit. When we read in Genesis 1, it says, "In the beginning God." That name for God there is plural, so all the three persons of the Godhead are involved in creation, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the Spirit of God moved upon the waters." So in creation, God is the sole cause and therefore gets all the glory not only in creation but also in providence working all things according to his own will, and in all things he does what he will in heaven and in earth.

Now there are some people, as a matter of fact, a good number of people who are willing to give God a kind of a squeezed out orange, I call it, glory to God. In other words, they take this glory, orange, as it were, and they suck all the juice and the sweetness out of it and then they hand it over to God as if they'd given him something. No, he has received, will receive, must receive all the glory in all things or no glory at all. And they will give glory to God maybe in creation and maybe in providence, but the matter of salvation which is the most important matter to God and which is the most important matter to us, they will not ascribe all glory to him in salvation.

But as Jonah said in the bottom of the sea, in the belly of the fish, "Salvation is of the Lord," and if salvation is of the Lord in its initiating, in its accomplishing, in its applying, in its perpetuating, if salvation is of the Lord in all these things, he gets all the glory. And that's what the truth ascribes to God, all the glory not only in creation, not only in providence, not only in all these other things, but especially in the salvation of his people. If you're saved, God is going to get all the glory in it, and whether or not you ascribe all the glory of salvation to God, whether or not you would do that or not may determine, may reveal whether or not you are saved.

Turn over with me to Ephesians 1. Ephesians 1. We read this often but there is something in it every time that we have need of noticing. Look here in verse 3 of chapter 1. Here the apostle talks specifically about God the Father, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being

predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Now we've read that many times. One thing I'm sure of, as this is almost one continual statement, one continual sentence, there is an ascribing of salvation to God the Father, there is an ascribing of salvation to God the Son, and there is the ascribing of salvation to God the Spirit. And then notice what he says in verse 6, "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Then if you look also in verse 12, "That we should be to the praise of his glory." And then verse 14, "unto the praise of his glory." In other words, the Godhead in each of those sacred persons, Father, Son and Spirit, has engaged himself in the totality of the salvation of his elect people and, therefore, each work by each person of the Godhead is totally for the glory of God, to the praise of his glory, to the praise of his glorious grace.

But at the same time, God has purposed that the glory of God in salvation is to be centered and magnified and demonstrated publicly by God in flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the man Christ Jesus is God our Savior. He is God manifested in the flesh. He is the revelation of the Father. He is the Savior and the Scripture says that it pleased God that in him should dwell all the preeminence.

You cannot glorify God apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. There are a multitude of religions that have this god and that god and the other god, but we know that they are not glorifying the true God and the living God because they are not glorifying Christ. Then there are others who claim to be glorifying God and they claim to be doing so by the Lord Jesus Christ, but from the truth, it is obvious that their Jesus is another Jesus. He's not deserving of any glory. He's basically a failure unless they allow him to do something. He's basically one who has made available things but he's not accomplished anything until they put their seal of approval or make their decision about him.

You see, when Christ was born one of the things that was announced by the angels over in Luke 2 is this, it says, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest," glory to God in the highest, "and on earth peace, good will toward men." He didn't say man in a generic sense. He said grace and glory in the highest and peace and good will on earth to men. You cannot glorify God apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Colossians, Paul writes this, he writes this of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." The first place. The honor. The glory.

Look over in Ephesians 2. Paul writes to these Ephesians in chapter 2 and he says, he writes to the Philippians, the church at Philippi and he says in verse 5 of chapter 2, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God,

thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Now what is amazing is what it says in the next verse. After he says Christ suffered this humiliation, after it says he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, the ignominious death of the cross, it says, "Wherefore, Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." God has exalted the Lord Jesus Christ because he came into this world, humbled himself as a man, this one who was equal with God because he was God, and he became obedient unto death, the death of the cross and therefore God has highly exalted him and it's all been done for the glory of God.

This means that God's greatest glory is the manifestation of his sovereign grace to his people in Christ crucified. That's his greatest glory. He has a glory that he alone determines who is saved or lost, who he's merciful to, who he's gracious to, but his great glory is in the salvation of those people that he chose in Christ before the world began, and saved them through the cross death of Jesus Christ. And for that reason I say that the cross is the greatest glory of God. There is nowhere that you see the true love of God manifest anymore gloriously, anymore accurately, anymore truthfully for what it is, that everlasting love, than in the cross of Jesus Christ. There is nowhere that you will see the justice of God magnified and displayed so gloriously, so purely than in the cross of Jesus Christ. There is nowhere that you will find the righteousness of God magnified, displayed anymore greatly than in the cross of Jesus Christ. It's his greatest glory, and I say there's no place that you can see the sovereignty of God anymore clearly manifest than in the cross of Jesus Christ. He's never been more in control of this world and all that's in it anymore so than he was in Christ when he hung there on that cross, submitting himself to that death because of the determined counsel of God in the hands of wicked men, and he yielded up the ghost.

And that's why Paul said this in Galatians 6, "But God forbid," God forbid, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." I'm separated from the world that is under God's wrath. I'm separated unto God. I'm not accepted by the world but I'm accepted by God. I'm nothing in the world's sight but I'm everything in God's sight. How? By the cross of Jesus Christ. When he died, his people died in him and, therefore, they were separated by that death from all that was in Adam, and when he rose, they rose in him, and therefore they were in that new creation, recipients of everything in Christ Jesus. And Paul says, "I didn't do that. I didn't help do that. I didn't add to that. Christ did it all in his cross, therefore, he gets all the glory."

He is the Alpha and the Omega of salvation. If you turn over to Romans 3, in Romans 3 the Apostle Paul says it so very clearly beginning in verse 24, "Being justified freely." As I told you recently, that word "freely" there is translated another place and says "without a cause," meaning without a cause in us, without any help from us, without any goodness

from us, without any work from us. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Alright, Christ is the Redeemer. This salvation is totally by grace. It's all in Christ Jesus. It was God who set him forth as the propitiation. It's God's justice and righteousness in this salvation that is totally exonerated and magnified. And even the faith to believe is his gift.

So look at what it says in verse 27, "Where is boasting then?" Have you, or you, or me, have we got any reason to boast in the least in this salvation? He said, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law?" By our obedience to the law? "Of works?" of our works of any kind? "Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." How do we establish the law? Believing on Christ who satisfied it, who honored it. It's not boasting. We have no reason to boast.

When you go and read Ezekiel 16 where it describes the Lord's people in their natural state as a bloodied, aborted infant cast out in the field, dead, go back and read those verses about the first 15 or so verses, and see how it reads. It begins at the state that man is in in his deadness and his blood and his sin, in his pollution, it says, and then it says, God speaking, "I passed by." And there are about 15 "I's" in the next few verses and they're all God speaking of himself. "I passed by. I washed you. I cleansed you. I picked you up. I decked you out. I made you rather a queen of beauty." But there's one thing you won't find, you won't find where that one who was the object of God's grace and mercy in Christ, you won't find where they did anything because salvation is the Lord's boast. It's for his glory.

Turn over to 1 Corinthians, Paul writing to the Corinthians, verse 23 he says, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." To show them for what they are in themselves: nothing. Why? "That no flesh," no flesh be made flesh or made of flesh, old flesh, young flesh, black flesh, white flesh, "no flesh should glory in his presence." Well, does that mean just when we come to church are we in the Lord's presence? No, he's omnipresent. You can't glory in this world in yourself without glorying in his presence. "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him," of God, "are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us

wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." That's the total of salvation. He says you are of God in Christ Jesus who God has made to be to you and to me, if we're his child, all these things, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption and there's a reason for that, "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

We can't glory in our intelligence, in our pedigree. Paul said, "If anybody humanly speaking had a reason to glory and boast," he said "God so worked it providentially in my life that I had a reason to boast according to the flesh, but," he said, "I count it all loss that I might win Christ and be found in him not having the righteousness which is of the law but the righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ." There's not one of us that has one shred of anything, any reason whereof to boast in ourselves and especially in the matter of salvation.

In Jeremiah 9, the Lord gives us some unchanging truth. He says in verse 23, "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." If you've got any wisdom at all, human, natural wisdom even, God gave it to you. "Neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD." In other words, rather than glory in these things such as strength and wealth and wisdom and all, we can only glory in the Lord who has revealed himself to us and given us this understanding, this knowledge which is, what? "That I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness," and I believe that's the Old Testament word for grace, "lovingkindness judgment," or justice, "and righteousness, in the earth." God is just in everything he does, especially salvation and for that he is to be glorified and magnified. Because he says, "for in these things I delight." God will never be delighted in what you do. He'll never be delighted in how you've tried to make amends for your sins. He'll never be delighted in the ways that you try to establish righteousness. He delights in what he's done which is lovingkindness, "the exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD." And many a preacher will stand today and think he's glorifying God but he won't tell you the truth about any of these things, about the particular love, the inflexible judgment and the perfect righteousness that God imputes to his people in Christ. They won't have anything to say about it.

And not only is this why that God is glorified, this is what the Spirit of truth reveals. In John 16 it says, Christ said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me." The Holy Spirit does not tell lies on Jesus Christ. The Spirit of truth glorifies Christ Jesus, "for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." He bears witness to the word of truth which shows the person and the work of Jesus Christ manifest that and give to him all the glory.

So how do we glorify God? It's a pretty good question. How do we glorify God? Do we glorify him by building big buildings and temples? Doing great works? Trying to

suppress wicked works? Selling oysters to advance his cause? Get us a Trump bus to park in front of the church? How do we glorify God? There's just one way and only he can enable us to do that, but we glorify God by believing, by confessing, by trusting what he says about himself, and most especially about what Christ has done. We glorify God by believing God but we can't even do that apart from his grace, apart from that grace whereby he gives us faith to believe when Christ hung on that cross and declared from his lips in the flesh, "It is finished." We can only glorify him if God enables us to believe just exactly what he said. The evidence of salvation is never anything we could glory in. No flesh shall glory in his presence. The evidence of faith is something we can't glory in and that's faith. What do you do in faith? Nothing. You believe that somebody else did it for you. You believe it is finished.

In Romans 4, Paul said using Abraham, that example of faith, it says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." How do you glorify God? Believing the truth of his Gospel, identifying with his people in this world and confessing him day-to-day as your only hope, your only righteousness, your only salvation. And all who seek to steal his glory by their works, by an act of their will, by their decision, by their worth, even by their faith, and in some way they become the determiner, the accomplisher, or the improver of their salvation, they steal the glory from him. If you are the one who determines it by your decision, if you're the one that accomplishes by your works in some way, or if you're the one that improves it by something you do, you steal his glory and false religion which is the devil's, always seeks in some way to steal the glory of Christ.

In Isaiah 45, God speaks of his true Israel. He says, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified." All God's elect people are justified in the Lord Jesus Christ. But listen to a few more words, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." We glory in the Lord. We don't gather here and preach a Gospel that glorifies or exalts man but one who glorifies God as the initiator, the accomplisher and the perpetuator of all salvation. We say with Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." It's to the praise of his glory. It magnifies his love. That cross death of Jesus Christ, that's where the love of God is. That's where the righteousness of God. That's where the character of God is most greatly displayed. That's where grace is. Grace always gives him the glory.

An old hymn-writer wrote this hymn. I just stumbled across it.

"Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory be to God the Spirit:
Great Jehovah, Three in One!
Singing, Glory, glory, glory
While eternal ages run!

Glory be to him who loved us,
Washed us from each spot and stain;
Glory be to him who bought us,

Made us kings with him to reign!
Singing, Glory, glory, glory
To the Lamb that once was slain!

Glory to the King of angels,
Glory to the Church's King,
Glory to the King of nations;
Heaven and earth, your praises bring!
Singing, Glory, glory, glory
To the King of nations bring!

Glory, blessing, praise eternal!
Thus the choir of angels sing:
Honor, riches, power, dominion!
Thus its praise creation brings.
Singing, Glory, glory, glory
Glory to the King of Kings!"

And in our daily lives, Paul said whether you eat or you drink or whatsoever you do, do all for the glory of God. Every person that God saves ascribes to him all the glory. We have no grounds upon which to boast. It is excluded. We're to glorify him in the messages we preach. We're to glorify him in the methods that we use. We're to glorify him in the lives that we live. But his glory is in Christ crucified.

Our Father, we thank you this day. We magnify your name if we can but a little bit, praise you and exalt you and glorify you, speak the things which are true about you, believe the things that are true about you, identify with those who believe the truth because we know that you will not give your glory to another. We thank you and we pray in Christ's name. Amen.