

Glorification

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Date: 15 December 2019

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[0 : 00] Well, this is our last week for our study in Sinclair Ferguson's book, *The Christian Life, A Doctrinal Introduction*.! Today's chapter is called *Glorification*. So, *Glorification*. I just wanted to think for a minute, just pause for a second and just think, what does that word mean?

What does that word mean? I mean, it's pretty self-explanatory, but I think it's helpful for us just to think about that for a second because this is going to happen to us.

This is not just a definition in the dictionary. This is something that is going to happen to every believer in Jesus Christ. So, glorification means to exalt something in honor. Exalt something in honor. It means to be raised in position.

To be lifted above your former place, your former position. To actually be filled with glory. The dictionary has endowed, endowed. So, it's not just by name or by position, but to glorify something actually means to fill it with glory.

And that is what is going to happen to us. That is the end of the Christian life, is to be filled with glory. So, just think with me of a few examples. We've been studying the life of Joseph.

[1 : 36] Joseph was glorified. He was exalted from his former position. And so, he was filled with such majesty and with such glory that the brothers who once threw him into a pit and ignored all of his pleas for help, now bow before him. And when he goes through the city, men cry, make way, make way.

Drawing attention, there is a great man in your midst and you need to get out of the way. Mordecai was, remember in the book of Esther, Mordecai was glorified in the Persian Empire.

He was clothed in the royal robe. He rode the horse, one of the horses that the king had rode. And Haman himself went before Mordecai saying, This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor.

Mordecai was glorified. David was glorified. He was taken from the field to the throne. And the Lord said, That's what I have done for you.

And then we think of the God-man Christ Jesus. He's our prime example of glorification.

[2 : 54] He went from the cross to the grave, to buried. And then he rose and 40 days later he ascended. And I think we need to turn on our biblically informed imaginations.

So these are not fantasies, the things that we are making up. But we need to imagine what happened. Because we get glimpses of it in the Bible.

So he ascends before the disciples into the clouds. And I think on the other side the angels are gathering. They gather together and all the choirs in heaven stand in a row, so to speak.

And I can just imagine the highest archangel saying these words. Lift up your gates. Or lift up your heads, O you gates. Be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the king of glory may come in.

Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong. Mighty. The Lord mighty in battle. The Lord's returning victorious.

[4 : 02] And the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Daniel, in one of his visions, in Daniel 7, saw it.

This is what Daniel wrote. In my vision at night I looked and there before me was one like a son of man. Coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the ancient of days and was led into his presence.

He was given authority, glory, and sovereign power. All peoples, nations, and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away.

And his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. In one of Isaiah's prophecies, it says, Of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end.

The Lord Jesus is glorified. So glorification. That's what we're talking about. Last week we talked about death. But death is not the end.

[5 : 10] Death is not the end. The goal of the Christian life is not our death. It is not the intermediate state between our death and the resurrection.

We know very little about what that is going to be like. We know that it's to be home. We know it's to be with Christ. We know it's better by far than what is here.

But that is not the goal. That is not the end of your life. To die and just to be with Jesus in that intermediate state.

That's more of a halfway home. That's more of a temporary stop on this journey. And so, yes, it's better than here.

It's better by far than here. But it's not nearly as good as it's going to be. We need to understand that.

[6 : 11] It's better by far than here. But it's not nearly as good and as glorious as it's going to be. So it's the holiday season. And so let's put this in holiday terms.

That intermediate state is like Christmas Eve. It's probably the best day of the year except for one. And maybe at your house, like my house, Christmas Eve is the second best day of the year. But Christmas is better. And we are united with Christ. And so halfway, halfway glory is not enough. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. He will be glorified.

You will be glorified. So he'll have glory and you'll have glory with him. He'll be radiant and majestic. You've read Revelation 1 when John sees a vision of the risen, glorified Christ.

[7 : 16] If you haven't read it lately, read it soon. John says, I saw one like a son of man. Remember those words? He's saying, I saw what Daniel saw.

And he is overwhelmingly glorious. And so glorious that John, when he sees him, falls down like a stone as if he's dead.

It's so magnificent. So Jesus will come in that kind of glory. But here's the key, brothers and sisters. He's our life. We're connected to him. He goes before us, but we come after him. What he experiences, we experience.

So we're one with him. And so we will appear with him clothed in glory. Clothed in honor and radiance and majesty.

[8 : 17] I think C.S. Lewis is right when he said, if we saw just an ordinary Christian today, as they will be then. This is what he says.

The dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature, which if you saw the creature now, you would be strongly tempted to worship.

That day will be a day of glory. Our glory, his glory, and it will be a glory that will never end.

Christ will be glorified. And Christ is glorified. But let me. He's glorified now. But let me say this, that he will be glorified even further.

Father. And. What do I mean by that? Well. Right now he's receiving. The songs. And the praises.

[9 : 18] Of all of the angels in heaven. Right now. They are worshiping him. Who is worthy to open the scroll? The lamb of God. The lion of the tribe of Judah.

He is worthy. And all of heaven sings. But the day is coming. When the angels of heaven will gather around those gates again. But this time it's not to welcome the king back in triumph.

Not to receive their returning king. But to stream out of those heavens with him. To go with him. Down. To. This earth.

To break into this world. To not welcome him. With praise. But to attend him now. As he goes. To conquer. All of his enemies. To judge them.

In his glorification. So the earth. To this point. Has refused. To give Jesus. The glory. That he is due. There's nothing in him that we would.

[10 : 24] Receive him. There's no beauty. Or majesty. To attract us to him. That was part of it. But. Even now. The earth refuses. To give him glory.

And at that day. That time is over. It's gone on long enough. And heaven's gates will open. And Christ will come forth.

And all of his angels. Will come with him. And. We will be snatched up in the air. We will be resurrected. And all of his saints. Will descend with him. And we will be coming down.

And every knee. Will bow. And every tongue. Will confess. Willingly. Or unwillingly. That Jesus is Lord. To the glory of God.

The Father. His glory. Will be seen. He will be glorified. Even further. Now. Again.

[11:21] What happens at the same time though? This is where we come into this. This story. And we have to put these two stories. His glory. And our glory together. Because at the same time. What is happening?

We are going to be made like him. We are going to be made. Like him. Not just. In ethical holiness. Not just that we will be.

As holy. And as righteous as he is. That is certainly true. But even more so. Listen to how 1 Corinthians 15 puts it. This is very well known. But I think we need to.

To really take this on board. And believe it. And hope for it. And look for it. 1 Corinthians 15. So just as we have borne the likeness. Of the earthly man. He is talking about Adam.

Adam in weakness. Adam in frailty. Adam even at his best. Who could fall. Who could die. Be liable to death. Anyways. He could.

[12:18] Even in a state of perfection. Come to the place. Where he would die. So we've borne the likeness. Of the earthly man. So shall we bear. The likeness of the man.

From heaven. And Paul goes on. I declare to you brothers. That flesh and blood. Cannot inherit the kingdom of God. These bodies. As they are. Cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Nor does the perishable. Inherit the imperishable. Listen. I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep. But we will all. Be changed. In a flash. In the twinkling of the eye. At the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound.

The dead will be raised. Imperishable. Immortal. And we will be changed. For the perishable. That's this.

[13:14] Us. Must. Clothe itself. With the imperishable. And the mortal. With immortality. It. Again.

It's not. Just that we won't. Die. Again. We. Ourselves. Will put on immortality. God is called the only.

Immortal. Wise God. He. He has immortality. That's what he is like. In. First Corinthians 15. Is saying. We will put that.

Characteristic. On. We. Ourselves. Will not be liable. To death. Death. And decay. Will never. Ever. Be able to come near us.

Or come into us. We won't be. Susceptible. To it. In any way. So death. And decay. Right now. It infests us. Adam. Even.

[14:12] Before the fall. Could fall. He could become mortal. But. Brothers and sisters. We are going to be forever. Past that.

Forever. Beyond. That. Forever. Past. Even the possibility. So death. Death. Can have. Nothing. With. Us. To do. Can have.

Anything. To do. With us. And so. We will be like him. Now. It's very important. That we realize. That it's going to be. These bodies. In certain ways.

They're at least going to be. Recognizable. The one in the same. But these bodies. Now. Raised. And exalted.

Above. Their former position. Above. Their former quality. So we're going to be. Free from death. Free from sin. Free from anything. Mortal. Or common. Or lowly.

[15:08] Or weak. Glory. Will shine. Through these bodies. Through us. And in us.

That's what 1 Corinthians 15. Is saying. Is our bodies. Will become like his. Glorious. Body. So. Again.

Revelation 1. Where John saw. The glorified. Jesus. I'm not saying. We're going to become. Exactly like him. Like that. But that is something.

Of like. What we are going to become. I don't know. What that all means. But. He shares. In our humanity. And we will share.

In his glory. So. What. We've. Kind of been talking about. Is. He's going to be glorified. We're going to be glorified.

[16:03] With him. But is that enough? Is that the end? And the answer is. No. It's not enough. So glorification.

Is more than Christ glorified. It's more than. Us glorified. With him. That. That. Even is not enough. That won't do. Because. As great.

As that is. That. Wouldn't be. A complete. And full. Salvation. And what I mean is. What good would it be. To be glorious.

And have to live in it. In glorious. Creation. salvation. So Jesus. In Matthew 19. 28. Talks about. The renewal. The regeneration.

Of. All things. All things. He says this. I tell you the truth. At the renewal. Of all things. When the son of man. Sits on his glorious throne.

[17:00] You. Who have followed me. Will also sit on 12 thrones. Judging the 12 tribes of Israel. He says that the renewal. Of all things. Hebrews 1 12. Talks. About the heavens. And the earth.

And it. And it says. You will roll them up. Like a robe. Like a garment. They will be changed. They're going to be changed. Isaiah 65.

Behold. I will create. New heavens. And a new earth. The former things. Will not be remembered. Nor will they come to mind. But be glad. And rejoice. Forever.

Forever. In what I will create. Rejoice. And be glad. Forever. In what I will. Create. What he's saying is.

When we get there. In our glorified bodies. With a glorified Christ. In a glorified creation. We will rejoice forever. In that creation.

[17:57] The delights. And the experiences. Of that creation. Will be so wonderful. That we will praise God. Forever. For it. We will be happy.

In that place. Forever. Because. What we are. Will match. Where we live. Will go together. Again. The new heavens. And the new earth. Are not a totally. Other. Different. New creation. It's a renewal. It's a regeneration. It's. It's. What happens.

To us. But now. On a global scale. We are the first fruits. And the whole creation. Is the whole harvest. So to speak. Um.

So the trees. And the animals. And the flowers. And the mountains. And the rivers. And the sky. And the stars. And all of creation. Will be.

[18:56] Glorified. And then the creation itself. Will be liberated. Unchained. Unshackled. At last.

It will be liberated. From its bondage. To decay. And brought. Into the glorious. Freedom. Of the children. Of God. So. Imagine. This creation.

Unchained. Now free. At last. So. Isaiah 55. Says. You will go out. In joy.

And be led forth. In peace. The mountains. And the hills. Will burst. Into song. Before you. And all the trees. Of the field. Will clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn bush. Will grow the pine tree. And instead of the briars. The myrtle. Will grow. This will be. For the Lord's. Renown. For an everlasting. Sign.

[19:54] A sign. Is a miracle. A work of God. And what he's saying. Is. Is. It's going to be. A forever. A ongoing. Marvel.

You will. Not. Get over. How great. This. Thing. That God has done. How great it is. And it's going to be.

An everlasting. Sign. That which will not. Be. Destroyed. I think what. Something of what he's getting at. Is. We will walk around.

In a miracle. That's where we will live. Where it's. An amazing thing. And we ourselves. Will be amazed.

And we will be amazed. At him. And it will never get old. It will never get tired. It will never wear out. And so. We'll be glorified. With a glorified Christ.

[20:50] In a glorified world. And then. Paul says. That's when you're finally. And fully. Adopted. For the creation is waiting for the sons of God to be revealed.

Uh. J.B. Phillips renders it. Until the sons of God come into their own. We're. We're not. We haven't come into our own yet.

But when we come into our own. Uh. Then. That's when salvation is completed. That's when. So we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons.

The redemption of our bodies. And so only then. When we are glorified. Living with a glorified Christ. In a glorified world. Will salvation. Be complete.

Then. At long last. We will be forever. The work of salvation will be. Done. And that's eternal life. To live there.

[21:50] To live in that. To live with God. Under Christ. Forever. As a family. Um. So where neither sin.

Or bodily weakness. Nor the flesh. Will ever. Hamper us. In any way. From receiving God's love. Or expressing love.

Back. To him. And so right now. As we are. We could not. This is what Paul is saying. The perishable cannot. Inherit. The imperishable.

The mortal can't inherit immortality. It. We would not be capable. Of living. As we are. In. That. World. Right now. We can't bear.

To see his glory. We can't take it in. We can't. We can't express it back to him. It's just too much. It's too much. It's too much. For us.

[22 : 44] It's too much. For the way we are right now. And what. So. But Jesus says. In John 17. I made known them your name. And I will make it known.

That the love with which you have loved me. May be in them. And I in them. Now. What Jesus is saying is. I want them to experience. This is.

I made. You known. And I'm going to make you known. Even more to them. In order that the love you have for me. And the love I have for you. Will be in them.

So think about. How. God. The father. Loves. His son. Think about. How God. The son.

Loves. His father. And Jesus is saying. This is where. Where we're going. Where that love. That is in. Me. And you.

[23 : 40] Will be. In them. And they'll be able to experience it. And they'll be able to express it. John Piper writes.

Our ability. To savor. This inexhaustible treasure. Which is the love of God. In Christ Jesus. Our ability.

To savor. This inexhaustible treasure. Will not be limited. By human weaknesses. We will enjoy. The son of God. With the very. Enjoyment.

Of his father. God's delight. And his son. Will be in us. And it will be ours. And this will never end. Because neither the father. Nor the son. Ever ends.

Their love for each other. Will be our love. For them. And. And I think this is the point. The.

[24 : 33] The process. The act. So. The act of glorification. The act of. Raising us up. And filling us with glory. And changing this. And putting. Immortality on.

It's God. It's not. In of itself. It's God. Preparing us. And equipping us. In order that. We might be able to live in heaven.

With him. Forever. For eternal. Joys. For eternal. Love. So. As it is now. It's too much.

It's too much. For us to bear. Peter. Peter saw the glorified Christ. In the transfiguration. You remember how he responded. He was. They were afraid.

They. They didn't. They were half witless. They. They were. They didn't know what to do. And they started. Peter's talking. And. It. It wasn't something. They could handle.

[25 : 35] John. When he saw the risen. Exalted Jesus. It. It wasn't something. He could. Really take in. Or handle. It.

It was like. Looking at the sun. You. You just. Cannot. Do it. But. Brothers and sisters. When we are glorified. We will be able.

To look. Into the sun. Of God's face. And. We will take. His majesty. In. And with. An atomic bomb. Of an explosion. Of love. Toward him. We will be able. To return it. Back. Because. That. That's not something. We can imagine. Doing. Now. It's not something.

We are really. Even capable. Of doing now. But we will be. Then. So. There are depths. And there are. Heights of joy.

[26 : 27] That we. We can't see now. We can't express now. But. Then. We will be able. To go. There. We will be able. To climb those heights.

Glorification. Not that we will be able. To know him. Fully. Or love him. Completely. As. As he deserves. Because he is God. And we will remain creatures. But.

We will be able. To. To be there. We will be able. To climb. Those mountains. Of delight. And joy. And love. And. Places.

We cannot walk. Now. We will walk. Then. So. That is what glorification. Is for. It is to prepare us. For eternal.

Joys. It is to prepare us. To be able. To drink in. The love. And the glory. Of God. And to return it. So.

[27 : 23] God's pleasure. And his son. Will become my pleasure. The Holy Spirit.

Will fill us. To the fullness. Of the glory. Of Christ. In the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit. Filled the temple. With that cloud. Of glory. And.

That will happen. To us. We will be filled. To the fullness. Of the glory. Of God. And there. We will be able. To live. And drink. In the joy.

And the majesty. Of Jesus. Angels. Will be our companions. Saints. All the saints.

Will be our friends. And then. We will be home. At last. In the father's house. Not as a guest. Not as someone. Who is just stopping by. But like children.

[28 : 20] At home. And so. That's where we're going. That's the end. Of the Christian life. But can I say. In another way. That's the beginning.

Of the Christian life. Isn't it? Because that's life. That's life. At its best. That's. The Christian.

Coming into his own. That's God. Finishing. What he said. I will finish. Bush. Bush. Bush Bush. And so this whole life here and this whole world will just be chapter one in a book that will never end.

Again, C.S. Lewis says it will just get better and better as you go along. Now, all of this is really, maybe in some ways, rarefied air.

You're saying, that's good. That's great. But what do I do with that? And so I want to talk very briefly about how glorification should help us now.

[29 : 33] Because everything God has written is for encouragement, for our help. It's for practical reasons. And so we want to talk about that. And so what is the practical application?

What should you take from this? Like, as this fills your mind, now what do you do with it? 1 John 3 says, everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

John says, if you have this hope of glory, if this is where you're going and you believe it, then you will be purifying yourself now.

He's saying that that hope should have a definite and certain and practical use in your life right now. That future glory should make us eager to purify ourselves. Now, in the Bible, the idea of purity, the idea of purifying yourself, is very closely related to being dedicated to God, living with God, being now able and ready to serve God.

[30 : 53] So the priest had to purify themselves before they made the sacrifice. The Israelites had to purify themselves before they came to the temple. The idea of purity is closely related to living with God, preparing yourself to live with God, to serve God.

And so again and again, in the book of Deuteronomy, you see this language, you hear this language of Moses says, you must purge, you must purify the evil from Israel. What he's saying is, we're living in God's land.

We're living with God. He's here. He's with us. We have to purify the evil from among us then. Cleanse the land so you can live with God.

So purity is about dedicating yourself to living with God and living for God, ready and able to serve him. So Paul wrote to Timothy, if a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the master, and prepared to do any good work.

So this idea of, okay, John says, if I have this hope in me, I'm going to purify myself. And so John is saying, if you have this hope of glorification, if this is what's going to happen to you, and that's where you're finally and ultimately going to go, and that's where you're ultimately going to be, you're going to live there.

[32 : 29] And you're going to live there in the way that we talked about, then purify yourself now. Line up your life with where you are going.

There are some things John is saying about our lives that doesn't match, that doesn't prepare us, that doesn't get us ready to live there in that way.

And he's saying, purify yourself from those things. Glory is what you're made for. We weren't made for sin. We weren't made for trifling, useless, dead-end, earthly things.

God didn't save us just for this little world here. He saved us to live there. And so what John is saying is, that's your hope.

Then you'll be purifying yourself. You'll be getting those things out of your life that don't match that. You'll be preparing yourself, even now, to serve God, to live with God.

[33 : 40] Purge the evil from your life. Purge all that is common and earthly and live for God now.

Live for his pleasure. Prepare yourself for God's service and begin to serve him now. So Isaiah's lips were purified.

And then he said, Lord, here am I. Send me. You want me to go to a stiff-necked people? You want me to have a ministry that is going to be hard and not well-received?

Okay, Lord, I'm ready. I'm ready for that. Send me. And so the question I'm asking myself is, what about your life now just doesn't fit?

It doesn't measure up. What attitudes? What selfishness? What things are you pursuing? What in your life now is just too little or too below the glory of God?

[34 : 43] I think of James where he says, wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Purifying yourself means getting yourself in a place where you're not double-minded.

You're not living for this world and that world. You're not thinking this and that. You're not believing God and not believing God. It's about purity is about being single-minded, single-hearted.

Unite my heart to fear your name. So if we have this hope in us, it will be more and more making us to become single-hearted and single-minded.

People of one thing. Another practical application is obviously hope. Hope.

Are you tired? Are you worn out? Are you suffering? People have wronged you. God wants you to know here's hope.

[35 : 53] All the things that are the way they're not supposed to be now will one day be the way they're supposed to be. This is not going to last. You will be glorified and live in a glorified creation.

And so maybe you feel like you'll never be done fighting against sin. Are you disheartened? Maybe you're wrestling with some besetting sin and you're getting tired of fighting.

And you're saying to yourself, if I give in, it'll just be better. At least I'll have some peace. If you're saying that and you're discouraged, take this lesson because glory is coming.

Sometimes I hear Christians say, I'm going to wrestle with this sin forever. And I know what they mean. They mean this whole life. But you're not going to wrestle with sin forever.

You are not. One day you will be sinless. And you will be beyond all temptation. And so there's hope.

[36 : 59] Are you tired and doing good? God has called some of you. God has called all of us in one way or the other to do hard things.

Tiring things. Things that we're not really given to. Things that we don't find a lot of natural joy in. And maybe you're just tired of doing and well doing.

You're saying, I do this and I do this. And there's hope. Because not every reward is and most rewards are not given here.

There are rewards in heaven. There are crowns. There is particular glories for particular saints. For particular acts of service.

A cup of cold water given for Christ's sake will not lose its reward, Jesus says. The smallest thing you do for Jesus, he writes a reward next to it.

[38 : 05] And so God promises you eternal rewards. Some people have a hard time with this. And all I can say is you're not going to have a hard time with it when you get there. But everyone's glory will not be exactly the same.

The Bible talks about crowns. Crowns of glory. He says pastors will have a particular glory in a crown.

And he uses that to motivate pastors. Yeah, your job is hard. You're called to something higher and more difficult spiritually speaking than maybe other people. But there is a corresponding crown.

And that's not just for pastors. That's not just something particular to them. There are eternal rewards. And so everyone's glory will not be the same. But according to your service, according to your work, you will be rewarded.

We will cast our crowns before him. And we'll say it's all because of him. He gets all the glory. We don't get all the glory.

[39 : 08] But brothers and sisters, we will have crowns. One person's glory will be different from another person's glory. And I say that so you don't lose heart. Because I think there is an idea that it's like sort of everyone.

It doesn't matter what you do. It's going to all be the same. So you might as well do as little as possible. That's the wrong kind of heart to have. And it's not a biblical heart.

He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly. And he who sows generously will reap generously. The Lord will reward everyone for what they do.

Now, I don't say anything like that to discourage anyone. I say all that to encourage you. To encourage you to do good works. To serve God.

To not lose heart. And I guess this is how I want to end. It is, brothers and sisters, you excel. You excel in love.

[40 : 17] You excel in service for each other. You excel in humbling yourself. And loving each other. And loving God. You excel in these things. But let the hope of that glory that's going to be ours.

Encourage us to do still more. To do even more. Not to relax. But to press on.

Press forward. Into this Christian life that we're called. And to glory where we're going. Well, I think our time's up. So we're dismissed.

Okay.