

God is Most Glorified in Us When We are Most Satisfied in Him

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[0:00] Well, last week we started a 10-week series study on this book, Let the Nations Be Glad, The Supremacy of God in Missions by John Piper.

! I think there's a couple of copies available on the table. I know there's at least one copy available on the table in the foyer if you're interested in reading along.

And I would suggest that some of his material, especially in this first couple of chapters, if it's your first time reading through Piper, it can be a lot to think through.

And it's hard to compact in one hour or in 45 minutes what is all in the book. And so it would do you well to get a book and read it on your own.

Well, last week we started chapter 1 and we're going to do chapter 1, continue and finish chapter 1 today. But before we move on to some new material, let's do some review.

[1:04] So here's a question for you. What is the ultimate motivation for missions? Talking about missions. What is the ultimate motivation for missions?

Roger. Right. Worship. Worship is the ultimate goal of missions. It's the glory of God. Now, here's a little bit harder of a question. Do you remember what sentence we used to sum up why we do missions?

There was a brief, nice sentence that I have said repeatedly to sum up why we do missions.

Remember what that sentence was? Exactly right. Missions exist because worship doesn't.

So remember how Piper started out this book. When this age is over and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more.

It is a temporary necessity, but worship abides forever. So there are a lot of reasons to do worship or to do missions, excuse me.

[2:13] But the ultimate reason is that God deserves to be praised by every creature, by every man. So worship is the goal of missions. But worship is also the fuel.

It provides the get up and go for missions. So let me ask you, how does worship provide the fuel for missions?

What's the relationship between those two things in that way? Yes, Dale. Worship what you adore and what you adore and you share.

Exactly right. Exactly right. We can't commend what we don't cherish ourselves. So remember, cherishing, delighting in God is at the heart of what worship is about.

And then out of that delight comes worship. So remember my Carrabba's example. I enjoy, I love going to Carrabba's.

[3:20] And so because I enjoy it so much, I have no problem commending it to others and arguing for it and trying to convince people to go there with me.

Because I love it. Well, it's the same way with God. What we enjoy, we talk about. I thought of the Proverbs in Proverbs 31.

There's the Proverbs 31 woman and it goes into such detail about all the great things this woman does. And at the end it says her children will stand up and praise her and her husband will praise her.

Why does he praise her? Because he enjoys her. He enjoys her hard work. He enjoys her attitude. He cherishes her heart and the things that she does for him and for his family.

And so in front of everyone, he stands up and praises her. And that's what is at the heart of evangelism and missions. What we are cherishing here, we are trying to convince other people somewhere else who don't cherish God to begin loving and delighting in him.

[4:35] We're sharing the glory of God. We're trying to include others in our delight. Well, then we got down. This is a long review, but I think we need to get a really good running start on this.

Then we got down to sort of the rock bottom of everything. Why must worship be the fuel and the goal of missions? Because worship is the fuel and goal of everything God does, including missions. So the foundation for our passion for the glory of God is God's passion for the glory of God. So what is the chief end of God?

Question for you. What is the chief end of God? Anyone? To glorify God and to enjoy him forever. That's what God is all about. That's what his main goal is. In other words, God is righteous. He isn't an idolater.

[5:43] He doesn't exchange the glory of God for any created thing, including sinners. He isn't an idolater. And sometimes I hear people out there saying things like this when they're attempting to evangelize.

And it sounds good on the surface, but at the end of the day, it leaves you with a very small God. It says something like this when they're trying to convince a person to come to Christ. They're trying to convince a person of the love of God.

They say something like this. God just couldn't live without you. He loved you so much. And that's why he sent his son to die for your sins. And I want to say, God couldn't live without me?

Am I some sort of drug that God has to have? Or he's not satisfied? That's the language of worship. And God is not an idolater.

God is not a people worshiper. He saves people. He saved you. He saved me to make much of himself. Not because he was just pining away because he didn't have me by him.

[6:53] Or he was pining away without his sinner fix. He does all that he does to make a name for himself. And so we went through a lot of scripture to show you that God always pursues his own glory.

That was probably the last 10 or 15 minutes of last week. We went through a lot of scripture to show you that God always pursues his own glory. So now we're moving into new material.

Let me ask you. What do you think a possible objection to that statement would be? Why might even Christians have a problem when I say that all that God does, he does for his own glory, for himself?

What's a possible objection for that, against that? Dan? Okay, what do you mean?

Okay. Seems very self-centered, doesn't it? Seems pretty selfish. What else could we say?

[8:05] Okay. Mark? Yeah. It seems to make God's love smaller.

And I think it's both of those things. I mean, because selfishness is essentially lacking love for others. And so it sounds like it makes God essentially selfish.

The merciful, kind, loving God of the Bible seems to get swallowed up, or it goes missing in this passionate fog of egotism, where he is only thinking about himself.

And doesn't the Bible say, 1 Corinthians 13, 5, love seeks not its own. Love is not self-seeking. So how can God be loving?

And he seeks his own glory so passionately, so completely. And that's an extremely important question. It's an extraordinarily important question, because missions is about preaching the good news.

[9:06] And a selfish God is not good news. It's not good news for us that God only cares about himself, and he lacks love because he's only thinking about himself.

So, we're going to attempt to answer that objection, and meet that objection head on, and find out why actually God's pursuit of his glory is the most loving thing for him to do.

So, we're going to find out how that is. First, we're going to do it by thinking specifically about 1 Corinthians 13, 5. I won't ask you to turn there, because it's just four words, and you can hear it. Love, it says, it's in that chapter on love. Love is not self-seeking. It does not seek its own. And it seems to be unloving for God to be so God-centered.

Because it makes God to be, it seems like it's making God self-seeking. Well, how do we answer that? I'm going to have to ask you to turn on your thinking caps and think hard about this.

[10:16] And I think the best way to answer that is to realize that Paul is not condemning every possible way of seeking your own.

Now, he doesn't, he's not condemning every possible way of seeking your own. He didn't mean, for example, that if doing good for someone makes you happy, then it ceases to be love.

In fact, the opposite is true. The heart of love is seeking your happiness and someone else's good. It's seeking your happiness and someone else's happiness and joy.

So listen to Jonathan Edwards. Love seeks not its own. It's not a person loving his own happiness, but in placing his happiness where he ought not.

And in limiting and confining his love. Some, although they love their own happiness, do not place that happiness in their own confined good, but more in the common good, in the good of others.

[11 : 27] And when it is said that charity seeketh not her own, we are to understand it of her own private good, good limited to herself.

So let me explain that. You seeking your happiness is not the problem. You seeking your happiness is not the problem.

It's where you put your happiness, where you find your happiness, that either makes you selfish or loving. So for example, when you husbands, you buy flowers for your wife, or you wives, you make a special dinner for your husband, or you surprise them in some way, that makes you happy, doesn't it?

It should. It makes you happy. So as I'm buying flowers, as I'm going to the florist, or I'm going to the store, and I'm buying flowers, I'm thinking, Stephanie will really like these.

She's going to be so happy when I get this. I haven't done this for a while, and she'll be so surprised. And as I'm driving home, I'm thinking, oh, what is her face going to look like? And as I'm thinking about that, it's making me happy.

[12 : 37] And all those thoughts are enjoyable to me. Now does that mean, because I'm being happy about it, does that mean that I'm not loving?

That I'm not loving? Not at all. Not at all. Wives, how would you feel if your husband came in with those flowers, and you said, oh, thank you, dear. Oh, I'm so surprised.

Thank you. And inside, you're feeling his love for you. But then he said, oh, honey, don't mention it. I'm just doing my duty. I'm just doing what I'm supposed to.

I didn't want to spend the money, but I did. And I didn't like wasting the time of going and picking them out, but I did. It made me miserable.

But here they are. Would you feel loved? Not at all. Not at all. Why not? Because his joy wasn't in your happiness.

[13 : 43] His joy wasn't in your happiness. Love is when your happiness is in another person's good. So when you're happy because another person has done good, that is what love is, essentially.

So before, let's go back to God. Before we condemn God for seeking his own glory and pursuing this so passionately, he's after his own joy and his glory, we have to ask, how is God pursuing his glory?

Does his pursuit of glory exclude us or does it actually include us? And the answer is, God's pursuit of glory includes us.

It brings us in. It makes his glory, his joy, to be our joy. So he is glorified as he blesses his people. So his joyful pursuit of glory doesn't come at the cost of his people's good. It comes in his people's good. So as he pursues his people's good, he is glorified.

[14 : 57] And so it's the most loving thing to do. So here's the next most important sentence for this study. God is most glorified in us.

You've probably heard this, but God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

So there's two sides to this sentence. There's God's glory and our satisfaction. God's glory and our joy.

So when is God most glorified? It's when we are most satisfied in him. And so here's the wonderful truth. That as God pursues his own glory, as he's after his glory, like we saw in all those texts, the way he pursues his glory is in the satisfaction and in the joy of his people in him, in him.

So God's drive to exalt his own glory doesn't leave me on the outside. It doesn't leave me out there. It brings me in.

[16 : 12] It's the exact opposite. For those in Christ, God's pursuit of glory means our everlasting joy. The more God glorifies himself, the happier I get to be.

And so God pursuing his glory is completely the loving thing to do. So we go back to giving our wives flowers or our husbands surprising them.

Isn't it precisely because it makes me so happy to bless her? It makes me so happy to give to her that she feels loved and honored.

So your husband comes in with flowers and you say, oh, thank you, dear. I love them. And instead of saying, oh, don't mention it. It's just my duty as a husband.

He said, oh, I'm so glad that you like them. I was hoping that you would like them. I couldn't wait to get home to give them to you. And I just love surprising you. I love blessing you. Now, you wouldn't say, wives, you wouldn't say, oh, you rotten, selfish man.

[17 : 15] All you care about is loving yourself. All you care about is making yourself happy because this makes you happy and you're just, you wouldn't say that. You would feel honored that his joy is found in your joy.

You would feel loved. And why is that? Because when someone finds their happiness in you, you are honored. When someone finds their happiness in you, you are honored.

And it's the same way with God. When I am satisfied with all that God is for me, Lord and Savior and friend and advocate and sovereign and king, when I am satisfied in that and I am joyful in that, then God is honored.

He's glorified. And so, he is most glorified in me when I am most satisfied in him. The higher he exalts himself in my heart and life and the more satisfied I am in him, the more he's glorified.

So, hopefully you can see God's pursuit of his glory is a pursuit of our satisfaction. If it makes us happy in him, he's glorified.

[18 : 34] And so, his pursuit of glory and his pursuit of my joy are not two things. They're the same thing. They're one thing. So, listen to how Piper puts it.

This, then, is the answer to why God is not unloving to magnify his glory. God is glorified precisely when we are satisfied in him, when we delight in his presence, when we like to be around him, when we treasure his fellowship.

He's most glorified in us. And this is an utterly life-changing discovery. It frees us to pursue our joy in God and God to pursue his glory in us because they are not two different things.

God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. So, let me ask you, do you have any questions? It's a little complicated.

yes, Roger? Or comments? Yes? Yes? I, I'm thinking of the realm, I guess, but, I'm very conscious of, you know, well, for people, when they say, God, he is, he's not, right, he's the only one worthy of self- glorification.

[20 : 05] He is not like us and we just need to be careful because he's hiding to prove together that I can bring down to our level. Right. That he's like us and this makes it okay.

I mean, without us, he can glorify himself. He's the only one worthy, the only one fully righteous. He's God. Right. Right.

In the, for the sake of time, there was a whole section in that book about how God is different than we are and that is part of the answer of why it's, it's, it's fine for God to glorify himself because he is different.

The same rules don't apply to him necessarily as applies to us because our status is different. I wasn't able to bring that out because of time constraints and I had to, I had to leave out a lot of things but that is a very good point.

Yes, Jim. I believe Isaiah sums it up quite well. Jason, when he says, my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are my ways your ways. Sorry, I don't remember the reference in Isaiah but I pretty quickly that sums it up.

[21 : 16] Right. It's the perfect verse for Roger's comment. Okay, let's, and you can talk to me afterwards if you have questions or issues.

Now, there's another way to see how God's passion for his own glory is loving and not narcissistic or selfish or egotistic and this is where the supremacy of God and missions becomes explicit, this connection.

And here it is that God, the glory God seeks is supremely the glory of his mercy. The glory God seeks is supremely the glory of his mercy.

as far as missions goes, the glory he is seeking is primarily and supremely the glory of his mercy. So turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 15.

Romans 15 and we're going to read verses 8 and 9. So, Romans 15, 8. Now, I want you to notice three things about these verses.

[22:46] First, that zeal for the glory of God motivated Jesus' world mission. Zeal for the glory of God motivated Jesus' world mission.

So, look at the text. There's three things. Why did Jesus become a servant of the Jews? There's three reasons that he became a servant of the Jews. Do you see what they are?

To bring praise to God's mercy. To bring glory to God's mercy. To confirm his promises. The third one was right before that.

On behalf of his truth. On behalf of his truth. So, Jesus became a servant in order to show God's truthfulness.

To show off his truthfulness. And in that, he confirmed God's promises. And that the nations would glorify God for his mercy.

[23:49] And so, Jesus became a servant. That's talking about incarnation. That's talking about coming down. He became a servant to make much of God. To make much of his truthfulness.

To make much of his mercy. And so, Jesus came on this missionary trip to this world in order because, excuse me, because he was zealous for the glory of God.

Now, secondly, notice, mercy was at the heart of Jesus' mission. It was at the heart of what Jesus was doing. Why he came. You notice, he became a servant.

He put himself under people in order to do them good. And, remember Isaiah 53. That servant's heart took him to a cross until he sacrificed himself.

And with his blood, he ransomed men from every nation, tongue, tribe, people. So, mercy. Jesus came to show mercy to become a servant.

[24:57] So, it was at the very heart of Jesus' mission. Now, thirdly, notice that the first truth that God was, that Jesus was zealous for God's glory, and the second truth that mercy was at the heart of his mission, it's one truth.

They're tied together. They're linked together. So, how was God, or how was Jesus going to seek God's glory? By showing mercy.

By becoming a merciful servant. So, why did Jesus become a servant? That the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. And so, do you see it?

As Jesus was pursuing God's glory, he was pursuing mercy. It was the one and the same. There are two sides to the same coin.

As Jesus pursued mercy, he was pursuing God's glory. The very way that he was going to honor God was to show mercy by helping the Gentiles.

[26:02] He was going to help them in such a way that they would praise God for his compassionate heart. Now, we see the same connection between God's glory and our salvation in Ephesians 1.

So, turn over to Ephesians 1. We're not going to read this entire passage, but hopefully you're somewhat familiar with it.

Ephesians 1. And you know this is all very much doxological. It's doxological.

It's praising God. So, in verse 4 and 5, it's talking about God's predestining, adopting love.

And then you see why does God do that in verse 6? To the praise of his glorious grace. And Paul talks about how God the Father sent his Son to redeem us.

[27:04] And he calls us and he gives us faith. Why? Why does he do that? Well, look at verse 12. In order that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be for the praise of his glory.

Then it goes on. Then God gives us the Holy Spirit and he puts us in Christ and he promises us an everlasting inheritance. Well, why does he do that?

look at verse 14, the last phrase, to the praise of his glory. Now, do you see the glory of this, the wonder of this?

God's pursuit of glory, God's passionate pursuit to glorify himself means salvation for sinners. It means salvation for sinners.

God's pursuit of his own glory is the only hope we have. It's the only hope we have. He's connected his glory and our good, so now the wonderful thing is he can't pursue one without the other.

[28:14] For all those who are in Christ, he cannot do anything else but to do them good because he so tied them together that his glory and their good are now undividable.

They can't be separated. And so the more God pursues his glory in us the better it is for us. The more he pursues his glory in us the more we are satisfied in him.

We're called to him and we love him and we grow in our love and affection for him and we find more and more joy in him as he exalts himself in our life. And so his glory and our everlasting joy are tied together.

Now this truth that God God's love and God's pursuit of glory God's loving us and God's pursuit of glory are now completely tied together has implications for all sorts of things.

But we want to talk about implications for missions. And I want to talk about three implications that this picture of this God who does everything for his own glory and at the same time as he's doing that he is loving his people.

[29 : 34] What does that say about missions? First this is the great hope that we have that missions the missionary endeavor will succeed.

When we look at the situation humanly speaking Christians are a small part they're a persecuted section of humanity there are so many unreached peoples the task seems so great as we as individuals think about it but this is the hope that we have that the missionary endeavor will succeed that every nation tribe and people and tongue will indeed people from all those places and languages will fall down before God and worship it will succeed because God is absolutely committed to glorifying his mercy in Christ there's more to this to the get up and go than what we can supply God is behind this missionary endeavor he sent Christ Christ sent the disciples he sent the spirit in order that we could succeed at this mission he is behind it and so God is zealous to honor his mercy he's more passionate about making his mercy known and received and loved than we are preaching it he's more zealous and so missions will succeed because

God is wholeheartedly behind it and we could talk about reasons that should give us reasons to pray and that should give us ammunition as we pray and arguments we remember we talked about Psalm 1-12 and how David used all the arguments with God as he prayed and pleaded with him God is passionate about his glory use that in prayer because you know missions will succeed second this idea that God exalts himself supremely in mercy motivates missions in another way and it's this we don't have a God that needs us to work for him because he's helpless and he's needy remember the words of Isaiah from of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear no eye has seen a God besides you who works for those who wait for him God is so great he doesn't need us to work in order to show how great he is but instead he magnifies himself by working for those who wait for him now there's all kinds of problems when it comes to missions there's all kinds of hardships and difficulties that we face and needs where will these workers come from how will we pay for them to go what about their protection and we can go on and on there's all kinds of needs and all kinds of places where we run into mission and when we're doing missions where we find that we don't have what it takes we're inadequate for these things but we serve a God who is passionate about showing the glory of his mercy so he's ready to help he's ready to help us in our effort to plant a church in Warsaw he's ready to provide money he's ready to provide people because he is committed to glorifying his mercy to show that he is the strong one that his mercy would have praise and so this should encourage us to reach out more because God is passionate about showing the riches of the glory of Christ the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus now before we get into the last implication of this lesson I want to sum up some things to hopefully crystallize these ideas in your mind so that you can hear what I'm about to say in the right way because if you don't hear it the right way it's going to sound really bad so you need to have the right ideas in your mind so far

I've said that God is the most God centered being in the universe all he does this for his own glory and then I try to show you that God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him when we're delighted in him and enjoying him and enjoying all that he is for us then he's glorified now that leads us to the final implication and it's this that the gospel is ultimately the most shareable news the most shareable message in the world the gospel is the most shareable easily shared message in the world and that probably doesn't sound right for a lot of reasons to us but I'm talking on the ultimate level it is the most shareable so what are we calling people to in the gospel well at the very bottom of things we're telling them to be happy in

[35 : 02] God to turn away from their sins and to find everlasting joy in God through Christ so we're telling them the message of God's mercy what God has done in Christ to save to reconcile sinners to bring sinners into God's family so that now they're not only justified but they're adopted and they have a place in God's family and they're heirs of an eternal inheritance and so we're ultimately we're summoning them and commanding them and inviting them to find satisfaction here and isn't

that what Jesus said isn't that how Jesus preached come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest and if any one of you is thirsty let him come to me and drink now the gospel is the most shareable message in the world we're telling people to be happy to find joy and satisfaction in

God and that was how the that was how the Psalms put it that was the missionary call of the Psalms just listen to a few passage the Lord reigns let the earth be glad let the distant shores rejoice may the nations be glad and sing for joy for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth the poor will see and be glad who seek God may your hearts live and then may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you may those who love your salvation always say let God be exalted!

the core of the message of the gospel what God has done in order to reconcile sinners to himself to bring them to the place where they find God to be their all in all so listen to Piper the liberating fact is that the message we take to the frontiers is that people everywhere should seek their own best interest we are summoning people to God and those who come those who come to God say in your presence is fullness of joy and at your right hand are pleasures forever more and God glorifies himself among the nations with the command delight yourself in the Lord and so his first and greatest requirement of all men everywhere is that they repent from seeking their joy in other things and begin to seek it only in him and so brothers and sisters sometimes we don't feel like sharing the gospel because it seems so harsh in some ways so hard we have to talk to a person about sin we need to talk to a person about hell and punishment we have to talk to a person about the exclusiveness of

Jesus Christ that there is only one way to come to the father and it's through Jesus Christ and in our day and age and probably any day and age! sometimes that doesn't feel like good news for that person and even to us they aren't going to want to hear it and that's true all that I said is true but remember that this gospel at the bottom when you get past that because when you get past the bad parts of your sin and hell and judgment and they just can't do whatever they want to be saved they have to come to Christ and when you kind of start narrowing sinners down and you get to the bottom of things there's a plea for the sinner to find his everlasting joy in Jesus to be happy in Jesus and isn't that exactly what Moses proclaimed to the

Israelites at the end of Deuteronomy he said so I've set before you life and death now choose life and that's what we're doing with the gospel message we're asking we're pleading with sinners to choose what is best for them and that what is best for them is to find life in Jesus and you know that from experience sometimes I think we take the gospel privileges too lightly you know from experience where real joy is the vain things that charm me most I now sacrifice them to your blood the pleasures of the former days the pleasures of our sinful days when we were in darkness were empty they were small they were petty fleeting things but in Christ is everlasting joy and so the gospel message is come come and drink and be satisfied here's hope here's peace here's joy and it's all in

[40:33] Jesus and so the gospel really is the most shareable message in the world people should want to hear what is for their own final good and sometimes it's going to take some arguing and some pleading and some prayer for them to see that but at the end of the day the gospel is the most shareable message in the world well we are out of time we are dismissed!