

## Colossian 3 Series #6

### *“The Path to Glory” Part 2*

#### **Introduction**

Those of you who watched the Super Bowl on Sunday afternoon experienced several displays of glory. Many missed it because either they did not have access or simply chose not to “tune” in. The concept of glory describes the radiance that emanates from a person or thing that dramatically grabs our attention, generates awe, inspires wonder or stimulates praise. On a human level, Seahawk fans marveled at the ability of our team to stop the all-time number one offense in the NFL the Denver Broncos and to score points. That kind of makes the Seattle Seahawks the all-time number one defense in the NFL. At moments, the glory of the play drew spontaneous shouts and cheers. That was a “glorious” play.

Everything and everyone radiates varying degrees of glory out of the substance of their nature. The tides, an ant hill, a baby’s little fingers and toes, a voice, an instrument, a painting. Acts of kindness grab our attention. Self-sacrifice, gifts of kindness, love, forgiveness, patience, forbearance, mercy, humility, gentleness. These stir something in the depths of our soul. The substance is the personal character that radiates the image of God the source of all glory.

The nature and character of God radiates a glory that captures our attention. Sometimes that character radiates in such a way that fills, a room, spreads across the heavens, transforms a heart, glows like fire, or shakes the earth. The Old Testament recounts numerous times where God’s glory dominates the moment. The demonstration of God’s glory so terrified the Israelites that they asked Moses to intercede. The glory radiating from God’s true nature often powerfully manifested from the temple.

The scriptures refer to the coming of Jesus as His GLORIOUS Return. As we mentioned last week, God intends that the glory that radiates from the Trinity also radiate from the sons of God.

*Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ (and you have), keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.*

*For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Colossians 3:1-4*

In eternity past, He determined that every child of God will be conformed to the image of His son. We will BE like Jesus. We can only live like Jesus by becoming like Jesus. He didn’t say would just do what Jesus did. Jesus is not just our example. He is our LIFE! We will be like who Jesus is at the core of our being. There will be a fundamental change at the core of our nature that radiates glory. God made us to reflect His nature in a dark world. Only a change in being produces a change in living. The divine Jesus took on humanity. The human takes on the divine.

Every transformed follower of Christ should endeavor to continually pursue and ponder things above, eternal things, spiritual realities, and intimate connection to the Trinity.

Our core passage mentions a present and future state not often realized in our daily living. A present spiritual connection to the presence of the Trinity.

*For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

He also mentions a future hope of the full recognition of our Christ-like nature.

*When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Colossians 3:1-4*

Last week we explore God's glory. Today I will focus on the glory that radiates from our transformed core. The problem is that we still live in a vessel not yet fully transformed. How do we get to there from where we are now?

Two advantages to pursuing and pondering God's glory.

The more we fixate on the glory radiating from God's nature the more like Him we will live. The more we dwell on the glory of God in the face of Christ, the less troubling the failures of men. We will live differently. We will serve differently. Paul drew from the example of Moses to make application to us today. Moses petitioned God to see His glory just after the tremendous failure of Israel to remain true to God. Moses was furious. Moses needed a new glimpse of God.

He probably wanted to see God's wrath, justice, truth declared. What he got was a dramatic declaration of God's goodness. He returned with a transformed perspective and powerfully interceded on their behalf.

*Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. He said, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession." Exodus 34:8-9*

Moses' time with God not only transformed his perspective but his physical appearance.

*It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai, that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him. So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers in the congregation returned to him; and Moses spoke to them. Afterward all the sons of Israel came near, and he commanded them to do everything that the LORD had spoken to him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him. Exodus 34:29-35*

No one stays the same after encountering the glory of God. Not only did the experience change Moses' perspective but his physical appearance. His very face glowed. He became "radioactive". He was "glorified" by the glory of God. There were two reasons Moses put a bag (veil) over his head.

First, he didn't want to panic the people.

Second (revealed here in Corinthians), he didn't want the people to notice when the glow faded.

For us, perhaps there might be a third. We don't want people to notice that we stopped glowing.

Many people wear veils. It could be activity. It could be super spirituality. It could be an office. It could be a position. It could be a system of religious ritual rather than the reality. We want people to notice us rather than the fact we have been with Jesus.

*Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. Acts 4:13*

Moses asked that the Lord not to refuse to go with them.

*"For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?" Exodus 33:16*

Joseph succeeded because God was with him and he was with God. David succeeded because God was with him and he was with God. We succeed when God is with us and we are with God. Personal transformation comes from frequent encounters with the God of glory. God wants us to experience and reflect His glory without veils.

God glorifies every regenerated follower of Jesus Christ. We become new at the core of our being as He imbeds His own glorious nature at the core of our being. This new nature radiates the very nature of God.

Just as the heavens declare the glory of God...

Just as God's glory radiates from everything He has made...

The new creation radiates glory.

Love, kindness, joy, long-suffering, forgiveness, music, encouragement, comfort, selfless service, self-sacrifice, peace, gentleness

Paul mentions many of these things a bit later. The reality is that we do not always demonstrate the nature of Jesus. It is our destiny as God ordained that every child of His will be like Jesus. Our initial glorification establishes the base from which the rest of our being is glorified. The second stage of glorification deals with our soul which includes our brain, our emotions and our will. God embedded new longings for godliness and relationship with Him in our spirit. That reflects God's glory. Now, the soul experiences transformation out of our regenerated core.

How does it happen?

*But to this day whenever Moses is read, (the Old Covenant), a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:15-18*

Several observations to note here.

**First**, there is no need for a veil. There is no need to "fake it till we make it. Even though we may not have perfect vision of God, we have vision of God.

**Second**, this has nothing to do with law-keeping. God's way of doing things is now written on our heart. As the heart continually becomes conformed to the image of Christ we not only find ourselves doing God's pleasure but having a desire to do so.

*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13*

How do we work out our salvation? By reflecting the nature of Jesus in our everyday actions. He mentions "do all things without grumbling or disputing."

**Third**, transformation comes about by pursuing and pondering God's glory. Here he wrote that it is like looking, beholding, staring at, fixating on God's glory as seen in Jesus Christ. As we focus on Jesus, we experience a transformation in the soul. It is a life time of encounters with the glory of God. "From Glory to Glory"

**Fourth**, transformation is a function of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings renewal to our soul just as we are born again by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's work comes through trust in God's promise.

*I only want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now going to be made complete by the flesh? Did you suffer so much for nothing—if in fact it was for nothing? So then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law or by hearing with faith? Galatians 3:2-5*

The most practical source of discovering the glory of the Lord is in His word.

*So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. 1 Peter 2:1-3*

*Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. Romans 12:1-2*

Keep looking at the mirror of God's glory found in the word. The scriptures act as a mirror to show us what we should look like as well as clearly expose the things that don't radiate God's glory.

*Putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls (transformation). But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. James 1:21-25*

Hebrews 12 instructs us to keep engaged in this transformation process by fixating on Jesus.

*Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that lay before Him endured a cross and despised the shame and has sat down at the right hand of God's throne. For consider Him who endured*

*such hostility from sinners against Himself, so that you won't grow weary and lose heart. In struggling against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. Hebrews 12:1-4*

It is a struggle but transformation takes place a little at a time as we focus on the glory of Jesus.

Eventually as we persevere, the light of our life reflecting His light gets brighter and brighter.

Don't allow the black paint of sin diminish the glory of the light that God has put in you. Just because our new life resides in a clay pot, doesn't mean it ceases to radiate glory.

God starts His renewal project with our spirit at conversion. Stage two is the transformation of our soul; our mind will and emotion.

The final stage of glorification has to do with our physical body. God made us as immaterial/physical beings. It was His design. It was good. After death we exist temporarily without physical bodies although a temporary visual body is provided. At the return of Jesus there will be a reuniting of our immaterial and physical. Paul told the Philippians to not be like those who set their mind on earthly things.

### **Why?**

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. Philippians 3:20-21*

Not only will the immaterial part of us be like Jesus but also our physical nature.

*Now I say this, brethren, that (untransformed) flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:50-53*

All creation groans in anticipation of that day.

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. Romans 8:18-23*

Today, realize who you are. Cooperate with the Spirit I who you are becoming. Set you hope on who you will become.

For you have been predestined to be completely conformed to the image of Jesus.

Focus on Him.

Purse and ponder the eternal.