**Glory**

John 17:1-5

Many of us know the old catechism – what is the chief end of man? ***To glorify God*** and enjoy him forever. John Piper updated that slightly but significantly to say we glorify God BY enjoying Him forever.

***But what does it mean to GLORIFY GOD?***

C.S. Lewis made the glory and joy connection a few decades before Piper.

# “I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation… Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.” C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms*

# Lewis mentions couples in love who continually affirm each other. He talks about finding a new author and sharing how great they are. He envisions a mountain vista that stuns you and the desire to share your awe with a friend. Or learning a joke just so you can make your friends laugh.

# ***Words of praise, of affirmation***, of recognition not only EXPRESS our enjoyment, they COMPLETE it. We glorify what we love, what we truly enjoy and delight in.

# ***What do you tend to glorify?***

# Many of us love **sports** – whether we play them or watch them; we enjoy the competition and talking about a close game or a good contest; a heroic player.

# We talk about our **work** – the latest project or deadline; stresses, victories, challenges.

# One of the most common conversations these days has to do with good **shows** you are watching or recently watched. It’s fun to share with others an experience you enjoyed and then see how they like it.

# Some of us still read **books** and love to talk with others who like our genre - like fantasy adventure or history, the two best genres.

* Of course we love to talk about our **kids and grandkids**, to show pictures and videos; to share about them on social media and with our friends. 
* Even our **pets** get a lot of glory.

We know we are supposed to glorify God – to really enjoy Him and talk about Him and share about Him with others. But often the idea of glorifying God is so abstract we aren’t sure from day to day – did I glorify God today?

Here is a simple definition for us.

We glorify someone by giving them the honor, **Recognition**, and praise they deserve.

It’s about giving DESERVED honor, earned recognition, praise, affirmation, appreciation, and gratitude. ***And what does God DESERVE from us?*** Everything. All glory and honor and praise and worship and gratitude. All of it. For everything.

This was Jesus’ prayer as he prepared to go to the cross.

“When he had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.’” John 17:1

Jesus was committed to giving the glory to God the Father that was due Him – all glory, honor and praise. And the way to bring maximum glory to God the Father, was for Jesus to pray for glory, attention and recognition for the cross.

***How was Jesus glorified?*** Primarily through His death and resurrection. Through this single event the name of Jesus has been elevated, honored, appreciated, loved and praised - and the result of that has been worship, glory and honor for God the Father in return.

What we will see in this opening to the prayer of Jesus in John 17 are **five ways God the Father glorified Jesus** that correspond with five ways we are to glorify Him. Let’s jump in.

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **Authority** over the whole world

“Glorify your Son… Since you have given him authority over all flesh.” John 17:2

Jesus said in Matthew 28, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” When was that authority given? At the moment ***Jesus spoke the words, “Let there be light***. And there was light.” From the dawn of creation, Jesus – the Creator – had complete authority over His creation.

Now, that authority was challenged right away in the Garden of Eden when the serpent slithered in and asked, “Did God really say?” ***The devil has a partial, temporary authority*** over this world. He is called “the ruler of this world.” But the devil’s authority is under the dominion of the Lord Jesus.

We get a glimpse of that in the **book of Job** when God initiates the conversation with Satan.

“And the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?’ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side?” Job 1:8-10

The devil had no way to attack Job **until God allowed it**. God temporarily and in specific ways lifted the hedge of His protection over Job. ***And WHY did God do this?*** Because the suffering of a godly person who still worships and praises and trusts in the LORD, even when they are suffering, brings great glory to God!

“The Lord gives, the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.” Job said in the middle of his anguish and loss. He continued to praise God even as he questioned his suffering and grieved his many losses.

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **Authority** over the whole world

“Glorify your Son… Since you have given him authority over all flesh.” John 17:2

The first gift from God the Father to God the Son was this world and all the people and creatures in it. Second:

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **People** to redeem and to love

“Since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given to him.” John 17:2

The real gift was not the planet or even the plants and animals – it was **the PEOPLE**. In order to give the Lord Jesus the honor, recognition and praise He deserves, God the Father gave the Son billions and billions of people who, throughout the ages, have freely and joyfully chosen to trust in Him, to worship Him, to follow and serve Him.

Why did the Father give the Son authority over all flesh? “To give eternal life to PEOPLE.” To save us. Which people? The ones the Father had already set aside for the Son. Down in verse six Jesus prays:

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **People** to redeem and to love

“The people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.” John 17:6

Think about that. Before you were conceived in your mother’s womb; before you were born or had done anything good or bad… ***You already belonged to God.*** You were HIS. God the Father knew you, chose you. Ephesians 1 says that “in love He predestined us to be adopted as his sons and daughters.”

This is the wonderful doctrine of **ELECTION**. You were chosen, before time even began, to belong to the Lord Jesus. You were part of the global gift from God the Father to God the Son and back of people – redeemed, bought by the blood of Christ, transformed and filled with the Spirit of God to be living sacrifices presented in worship.

If you think about election related to other people you will hurt your brain and maybe your heart. It is not for us to know or understand the mysteries of God in terms of whom He chose and whom He did not and why. Those things belong with the sovereign mercy and wisdom of God and are beyond us.

Our job is not to understand those mysteries but ***to PRAY for our loved ones*** and reach out to them in love. We cannot know who is elect and who is not, so we reach out to everyone we possibly can. More on that in a minute. Third.

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By presenting Him as the full **Revelation** of the Godhead

“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” John 17:3

Jesus was given authority over all flesh to give eternal life to those appointed by the Father to inherit eternal life. And here we see ***a beautiful definition of eternal life***, as Jordan reminded us last week – it’s not just about “going to heaven when you die.” Eternal life starts NOW for all who know and love Jesus.

To know God; to truly know the Creator, the King, the Lord of all things – THAT is eternal life. So for those of us who have put our faith in Jesus, **we HAVE eternal life right now**. We have already stepped across the line of spiritual transformation. You WERE dead in your sins but now you are alive in Christ, filled with all the fullness of God.

This is ***our great privilege***, to know God in a real, present, personal relationship. This is the wonder of PRAYER – to close your eyes and commune with the Creator. This is the joy of reading the Bible – to hear the voice of God as He speaks directly to your heart. This is the blessing of worship – to gather with other believers and lift up the name of Jesus, singing praises to the One who is worthy of all of our glory, honor and thanks.

Jesus is the full and final revelation of the person and nature of God. To know Jesus is to know God. To not know Jesus is to not know God. “Whoever has the Son has life, whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” Colossians one says:

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By presenting Him as the full **Revelation** of the Godhead

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Colossians 1:15

And this poetic praise opens the book of Hebrews:

“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.” Hebrews 1:1-3

This is our God: King Jesus. The fullness of divine nature in a fully human body. The Lamb of God. The Alpha and Omega. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The One most worthy of our praise. Two more ways God the Father glorified God the Son.

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **Work** to accomplish

“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” John 17:4

Jesus had an assignment on earth called saving the world. Thankfully, ***He accomplished that mission with flying colors.*** He lived a life of perfect righteousness, being tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. He completed His obedience by praying in the Garden, “Not my will, but yours be done.” Then he went to the cross, scoring it’s shame, “for the joy set before Him,” to the point that He could say, “It is finished.” The debt was paid in full. Your sin and mine could be washed away. The work was accomplished.

Do you see the ***beautiful back and forth*** of how God the Father glorified the Son and how Jesus, in turn, reflected that glory back to the Father? The Father gave work to do. The Son did the work. In the process, people who belonged to the Father were redeemed so the Son could present them back to the Father forgiven, free and transformed from the inside out.

***Obedience and submission are acts of WORSHIP,*** of honor. Jesus glorified the Father by submitting to the plan and doing the work. And so, Jesus was glorified – lifted up in history as the Savior of the World who made atonement for sinners like us. One more way the Father glorified the Son.

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **Life** after death

“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.” John 17:5

The whole plan would have come to nothing if Jesus had died and that was the end of it. We know that His sacrifice of atonement was sufficient because Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Justice was satisfied and death itself began to work backward.

And here was ***the crowning moment of Jesus’ exaltation***: He walked out of the tomb on the third day as the final proof that He truly was the Son of God, the Sovereign ruler of all things, including death.

Philippians 2 shows us that Jesus, the most exalted being in the universe, ***embraced the path of downward mobility***, humbling himself by taking on a human body and accepting the identity of a servant. He lowered himself all the way to the cross. But then, God the Father exalted Jesus to the highest place, giving Him the name above every name.

And so **the Name of Jesus** is the most revered, most loved, most glorious name that can be known or uttered. He has been honored, recognized and praised as He deserves. At least it’s a beginning. We will continue to worship and adore Him through the endless ages of eternity.

So here is our first half summary:

**How God the Father glorified Jesus:**

1. By giving Him **Authority** over the whole world
2. By giving Him **People** to redeem and to love
3. By presenting Him as the full **Revelation** of the Godhead
4. By giving Him **Work** to accomplish
5. By giving Him **Life** after death

Jesus was given authority over this whole world that He made. He was given billions of people to die for and to love as His own. He was presented and elevated as the full revelation of God’s divine nature and loving character. He was given work to do called salvation. And to prove it was all for real, He was given life after death.

Honor. Recognition. Praise. All completely deserved. ***Jesus is worthy of all of our praise.*** All of our gratitude. All of our joy. All of our glory.

So how do we glorify the One most worthy of glory? Five ways.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Exercising** the authority He has given to us

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Matthew 28:18-19

We have been commissioned by the King. ***We are His ambassadors to our neighbors and the nations.*** The One with all authority over all things has sent us out, with His authority, in His Name, to continue His work.

Jesus came to announce and inaugurate HIS KINGDOM. Now we carry the good news of the Kingdom to the ends of the earth. This is the message that there is a King who cares for all of us.

As we go about the business of the King, we have His full resources and power at our disposal.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Exercising** the authority He has given to us

“Whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:23-24

This was the fifth and sixth time Jesus promised to answer the prayers of His followers. In just three chapters Jesus said this six times over. If we pray In His Name, according to His will, Jesus has promised to answer our prayers. This is why followers of Jesus can do the same things Jesus did and even greater things because ***Jesus is our High Priest and advocate***. He intercedes for us and pleads our case before the Father.

***So what are you PRAYING FOR these days?*** Remember how Jesus sent out the 12 and then the 72 with His authority to heal and drive out demons? They were amazed when they came back that demons submitted to them and all kinds of illnesses were healed in Jesus’ Name.

***Who are you praying for?*** How are you praying for the Name of Jesus to be exalted and glorified? He has given you His authority and commanded you to pray in His Name.

As we pray for people, the second way we glorify Jesus is by reaching out to those people.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Reaching** the people He has positioned us to reach

“From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live.God did this so that people would seek him.” Acts 17:26-27, NIRV

God has determined the seasons of our lives and the boundaries of our lands for the express purpose that the people around us would seek HIM. Exactly when you should live. Exactly where. Your neighbors are no accident. God placed them near you so you could show them what His love looks like and so you could tell them.

**Outreach is both show and tell**. If all we do is talk, talk, talk people won’t know what love looks like and our words will ring hollow. But if all we do is show, show, show, people will think we are super nice but they won’t know why. People need to see what the love of Christ looks like lived out. And they need to hear a reason for the hope that we have. It’s the combination of the two that is most powerful.

Who has God placed near you right now? ***Who is YOUR NEIGHBOR?***

What does it look like for you to obey the second great commandment to love your neighbor as yourself? You glorify Jesus by reaching out in His Name to the people He has uniquely positioned you and designed you to reach.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Reaching** the people He has positioned us to reach

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Notice this is **phrased as a PROMISE**. You WILL BE. The time will come when you will be called up to testify. The Holy Spirit will give you the words to say, you just have to say them. Don’t be like Peter who, under pressure, said, “I don’t know who you’re talking about,” or “I don’t know the man!” Rather, don’t be like Peter after Jesus’ arrest; be like Peter after the resurrection and the outpouring of the Spirit. That Peter said, “we must obey God rather than man,” and testified to the good news of Jesus for the rest of his life.

Pray for your neighbors. Pray for opportunities to show and share the love of Jesus with them. And pray for boldness to follow through. Third way we glorify Jesus:

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Presenting** Him as the full revelation of the Godhead

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Colossians 1:15

The gospel accounts present Jesus as the fully divine Son of God. The NT letters explain the glory of King Jesus. He was fully human but He was also fully God. “We have seen His glory,” the disciples said, the glory of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

***Have you also seen the glory of King Jesus?*** Have you experienced His love and power in unique, personal ways?

A helpful practice as we reach out to our neighbors is to have some **conversational appetizers** ready to share – some quick stories about the goodness and faithfulness of God in our lives. How has Jesus come through for you recently? How has He helped you? How have you “tasted and seen that the Lord is good?”

* Maybe with a health issue that the Lord brought you through.
* Maybe through a hardship or loss, that the church family helped you navigate.
* Maybe through a special provision or blessing with a home or car repair.
* Maybe through a specific Bible verse that was particularly meaningful to you recently.
* Maybe just with a sense of peace even in the face of worry, busyness and fear.

I’m not saying we should spiritualize everything. But we shouldn’t NOT spiritualize everything either.

***How can you glorify King Jesus this week?***

He deserves all the praise, glory and honor from everyone on the planet. Think about a story you could tell this week that would give credit where it is due. Two more.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Doing** the work He gave us to do

“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

***There is custom work for you to do in Jesus’ name.*** Specific good works God uniquely designed YOU to accomplish. Just as God the Father sent His Son to accomplish a job, so He has sent YOU to fulfill a particular assignment.

It’s not a question of whether there is work for you to do. ***It’s a question of whether you are about your Master’s business or your own.*** Jesus told several parables about a master going away and leaving his servants work to do on the farm. If they did the work assigned to them, the master was pleased and rewarded them. If they neglected the tasks and fought with one another, they were appropriately disciplined.

It’s important to see that this part of **our calling is CORPORATE**. WE are His workmanship. Together we have work assigned to us to do. We are parts of the body of Christ and each of us has a role to play, but we cannot accomplish the good works God has for us without each other. We are a team. We have to work together. And when we do work together, within our church and with other churches around us – that ***unity amplifies our message*** even more. And lack of unity distorts our message. How can we preach about love if we don’t truly love one another and work together as a family?

There are opportunities for this kind of service both within Oakwood and beyond Oakwood. You just need to find your place, find your team. ***Within Oakwood*** you may be called to work with kids or teenagers, investing in our next generation and helping them come to know, love and follow Jesus. You could also get involved with our small groups, helping to welcome new people and to care for others. We have the full age spectrum at the church, so if you want to help care for and love our seniors, there are people you could visit, meals you could bring. And if you are skilled with your hands, there are always projects to be done in our three buildings and on our 11 acres to care for the property the Lord has entrusted to us.

**Outside of Oakwood** there are literally hundreds of ministries you could get involved with. We partner with Oasis pregnancy care centers, coming alongside women facing unexpected pregnancies. We support Love Is ministries to young immigrants and refugees through Bible clubs and soccer teams. We send teams to Cuba a couple of times every year to bring encouragement and resources to our brothers and sisters there who are facing chronic shortages of supplies and great discouragement. And this time of year we always participate in Operation Christmas Child, collecting supplies to fill over 1,000 shoeboxes that get sent all over the world, spreading the love of Jesus where it otherwise would not easily go.

***How are you involved in kingdom ministry?*** What good works are you already doing in our community? We have been gathering input from everyone at Oakwood through a little survey. If you haven’t responded yet, please do this week. We want to clarify and focus how we serve our local community as a church. To do this we need to know what you are already passionate about, investing in and working toward. So share your heart with us this week!

One more way we glorify King Jesus.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Trusting** Him for life after death

“Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” Romans 6:8

The Christian life is ***the daily process of dying to ourselves and living for Christ.*** Notice how Paul says it in Romans 6. “IF we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” As we take up our cross and follow our crucified Savior we experience the truth He taught us that “everyone who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Many of us were taught to put our faith in Jesus so that when we die we will know for sure that we will go to heaven. That is certainly an important reason to believe in Jesus and a wonderful, comforting promise that “to live is Christ and to die is gain.” But we believe in Jesus not just for a ticket to heaven or a “get out of jail free” card. We believe in Jesus because He is the King and is worthy of our lives. So we die daily in order to give more of ourselves to Him.

For He deserves everything.

That’s ***what it means to glorify Jesus*** – to give Him the honor, recognition and praise He desires – along with the service, the obedience, the sacrifice, the devotion, the diligence, the commitment to our wonderful Master.

**How we are to glorify Jesus:**

1. By **Exercising** the authority He has given to us
2. By **Reaching** the people He has positioned us to reach
3. By **Presenting** Him as the full revelation of the Godhead
4. By **Doing** the work He gave us to do
5. By **Trusting** Him for life after death

**We exalt Jesus** by exercising His authority, praying in His name. We glorify Him by reaching the people He has positioned us and designed us uniquely to reach. We honor Him by presenting Him to everyone we can as the true Son of God, sent by the Father to show the world the nature, goodness and glory of God. We glorify Jesus by doing the work He gave us to do and by dying to our own comforts and pleasures and trusting Him to give us life after death; to exalt us as we humble ourselves.

God the Father glorified Jesus and Jesus reflected that glory right back to Him. Now Jesus has given us His own Spirit, filled us with His power and love so we can reflect that glory right back to Him. Everything we do – everything good, everything that makes a difference – we do in Him, through Him, for Him. ***It is Christ working through us as we abide in Him.***

So, we give Him all the glory, which is precisely what He deserves.

Let’s pray.