



The Glory # 8

Hello everyone. Welcome to "Notes From The Presence." Today, as I look out my window, the leaves are turning golden and red. Our Father God has made a glorious creation. Everything is designed with such purpose and destiny. It is all part of a glorious plan that He put into place before the foundation of our earth was even laid.

We have been talking about Moses and his encounter with the glory of God on Mount Sinai. When Moses descended from the mountain, his face was shining. Then, as he communed with God in the tent of meeting, his face was recharged with glory. In the book of 2 Corinthians, Paul spends some time reflecting on the scenario we have been discussing. Listen to his words:

2 Corinthians 3:7-8, 10-11 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

Here Paul tells us that the circumstances surrounding the giving of the Law to the sons of Israel was enveloped in considerable glory. He then describes Moses face, how it would shine and fade, and then be re-charged in the tent of meeting. My question to us today is this: when have any one of us seen the actual visible glory of God? Have we ever seen it at church? Have you seen it in your own private times with God? Have you ever seen it at a conference?

There have been several occasions where I have seen the glory. I say these things not to set myself up as someone more special than the next, but as a person who daily asks the same question as Moses - "God, I pray You, show me Your glory." Anyone who will

ask this question of God, will receive. Contrary to what many believe, God loves to reveal His glory to us.

One time when I was having my devotional time, a cloud descended in my room and enveloped me as I set my eyes on Jesus. Many times in dreams at night, I have been in places where the glory of God was visible in various ways. One time at a Sunday night meeting, I was worshipping with outstretched arms and I looked up to see a translucent orb of glory about the size of a soccer ball resting in my hands. It stayed with me on and off for about two weeks. A few years ago at Bethel church in Redding, there was a period of several months where the glory cloud was resting on various gatherings. I might add that the amount of derision, hate, and slander that was unleashed from people who didn't believe it was legit was absolutely incredible.

However, according to Paul, the glory given to Moses was inferior and fading compared to the glory of the New Covenant. In fact, Paul states that the glory of the New Covenant is so much greater than the Old, that it makes the Law seem like it had no glory at all. Right from the beginning of time, God's plan was for His glory to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Why then, should it seem so strange if we, the redeemed, under a New Covenant given with radiant glory, should have consistent, visible, and tangible encounters with this glory? My hunch is that we simply do not believe it is possible, we are afraid, and we do not ask. This applies to our personal lives as well as the corporate church gatherings that we frequent week in and week out.

I would like to speak of the corporate church for a few moments. I have worked in this setting for most of my life. There are numerous problems and issues assaulting the church at any given moment. Some of these issues are external. They include pressure to conform to certain mindsets, various moral quandaries, and the like. Then, there are internal issues. These include the styles and look of the gathering. Many churches, sadly, are beset with internal differences so significant that they cancel out any effectiveness they might have. Yet, there is one great equalizer in the world - the glory and presence of our God. I have yet to see an argument that can last in the presence of God. In the presence of God, unholiness is burned up, strife ceases, sinners repent, difficult questions are eradicated, perspective is gained, power is released, sickness is healed, and wisdom is found.

So my question for the church: why do we spend so much time organizing our gatherings around things that are peripheral. We have been taught that inspired knowledge is our corporate food. However, in the New Covenant, our daily bread is actually the presence of God. If we would spend our time seeking His presence, we

would have the spiritual food we need. We would also have the answers to our questions as well as the power we need to have significant and lasting impact on our world.

Paul goes on in the next few verses of this text to describe a scenario so beautiful, it almost defies words:

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 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.

In the New Covenant, the veil is lifted in Christ. No longer is it only Moses who can behold the glory of the Lord and shine. Listen to these incredible words: "***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.***" The glory of the New Covenant is so great that each one of us now has the same access to the glory that Moses had. In fact, we are to look at the glory each day as it reflects into our lives. It is the central transformational power in our lives. It is also the central transformational and sending power for the church. The glory changes us. It changes the way we think, the way we act, the way we respond, and the way we live. If you are having problems with habitual sin, fix your eyes on Jesus - gaze intently at the glory. It will change you from the inside out. It is extremely powerful. It is our daily bread.

I would like to encourage you today - ask to see the glory. Make it a prayer of desperation. If God shows you favour, turn it into a request for more glory. Spend time in His presence. There is no shortcut to living an abundant life. There is no shortcut to the church being glorious. I promise, God is pleased when we ask to experience His glory. It is the very substance with which He is made. When He shows His glory to us, He is showing us who He is. Only in the environment of His glory can we understand Him fully. Only in His presence can we find refuge when everything around us is in turmoil. Only here can we be transformed into His image.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real - let us behold His glory - it is our daily bread!