

Christ Will Be Glorified In You

January 16, 2011

Scripture: [2 Thess. 1:10-12](#)

Series: [Staying the Course When You're Tired of The Battle \(3/10\)](#)

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We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
(2 Thessalonians 1:12, NIV)

Everyone has battles to face. There will be times in your life when you get tired of the battle. This letter was written to help Christians persevere under pressure, to stay the course when you're tired of the battle.

In the first chapter of this book, there are three strategies for staying the course. The first strategy is to exercise faith and practice love (1:3-4). The second strategy is to trust your suffering into the hands of God (1:6-9). Today, we come to the third strategy (1:10-12):

Anticipate your glorious future in Jesus Christ

Last week we looked at the hardest of all truths in the Bible. Today, we are looking at the greatest of all the promises in the Bible. When you are tired of the battle, look up and refresh your soul by anticipating your glorious future in Jesus Christ.

Paul is speaking about the day when Jesus Christ will be revealed (1:7). None of us has seen Christ. We believe in Him and we are walking by faith. But it will not always be so. One day we will see Him. Faith will be turned to sight, and you will see Christ face to face!

These verses describe what will happen on that day of indescribable joy:

You Will See Christ's Glory

On the day [when Christ is revealed, he will be] marveled at among all those who have believed. (2 Thessalonians 1:10)

Paul says to the Thessalonians, "This includes you, because you believed our testimony" (1:10). And if you are a Christian, you are included too. Try to imagine the whole church marveling at Christ, Christians from all around the world, and across every culture—Christians who've loved Christ, served Christ, worshipped Christ, and suffered for Christ. These Christians sat in church and heard about him, they sang about him, some of them rather lamely. And at times it all seemed a bit distant from them. But now they see his

glory. Christ is so much more than the best thought that any of us ever had about him. They are saying, "I knew he was great, but I never imagined anything like this!"

We live in a "What's next?" world. We're excited about watching the Bears ¹ this weekend, but when the game is over, the TV goes off and then we say, "What's next?" Nothing holds us for long.

No one will be saying, "What's next?" when the glory of Jesus is revealed. We will marvel at him, that's the word Paul uses, and that marveling will continue for all eternity.

Have you begun to marvel at the Son of God—who took our flesh, lived our life, bore our sins, died our death, rose for our justification, lives for our sanctification and will come again for our glorification? Have you begun to marvel at him? Is he marvelous to you?

There are millions of people who cannot see anything unique, compelling or glorious in Jesus Christ. What about you? When you believe in Jesus Christ, you will begin to marvel at Him. Those who believe in Christ will marvel at Him forever. But that's only the beginning.

You Will Be Glorified in Christ

Paul prays that:

the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him.
(2 Thessalonians 1:12)

You will be glorified in Christ! Not only will you see Christ's glory, you will share Christ's glory. Christ's glory will be in you. You will be glorified in Christ.

Paul says that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18). Not only is Christ's glory revealed to us. It is not just something that we see, something that remains external to us; it is revealed in us. When we see him we will be like him(1 John 3:2)! You will be in glory, and glory will be in you.

What does it mean that we will be glorified in Christ?

You will have a body like Christ

That means you will have no pain, no sickness, no disability and no weariness. You will have a body that is suited to eternal life, the gift of God for you. This glory will be internal as well as external.

You will have a soul like Christ

You will love what Christ loves, and you will love as Christ loves. You will be free from all sin and free from every inclination to sin. Will that not be marvelous? The battle that goes on in every believer will be done. You will share Christ's joy and you will contribute to the joy of heaven.

I have been greatly helped by reading C. H. Spurgeon² on these verses. The language is old, but the truth is always new:

By our lack of zeal and by our many sins we are guilty of discrediting the gospel and dishonoring His name. Happy, happy, happy day when this shall no more be possible, when we shall be rid of the inward corruption which now works itself into outward sin, and shall never dishonor Christ again...

What a day that's going to be! Think about what it will mean for you to fully reflect the likeness of Christ! Spurgeon makes these observations:

a. You will see the likeness of Christ in yourself

You will be saying, "Is this really me?"

"Every saint will be a wonder to himself, 'I thought my bliss would be great but not like this... How glorious is my Lord, who has wrought this miracle upon me?'"³

You will be so like Christ, so full of glory, so without sin, that you will find it difficult to believe that it is really you.

b. We will see the likeness of Christ in each other

You'll look around and say, "My, is this really you?"

"The saints will also admire Christ in one another... You will be free from all envy there, and therefore you will rejoice in all the beauty of your fellow saints... You will see the Lord in all your brethren, and this will make you praise and adore Him world without end with a perpetual amazement and ever growing delight."⁴

Christ Will Be Glorified in You

[Christ comes] to be glorified in His holy people... This includes you, because you believed... (2 Thessalonians 1:10)

Not only will we be glorified in Christ, but Christ will be glorified in us. You find the same statement again later on in chapter 1 where Paul prays that "the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you" (1:12).

What does that mean? How is it possible for Jesus Christ to be glorified in us? I can see, and begin to understand, how I could be glorified in him.

The apostle John was given a marvelous vision of what is to come, and it is recorded for us in the book of Revelation. John saw God's people in the presence of Jesus, and he recorded what was most striking to him. In his words, we learn how Christ will be glorified in his people:

Christ will be glorified...

a. ...by the vast number of the redeemed.

I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people and language. (Revelation 7:9)

The first thing John writes about is the sheer number of these people. Christ has redeemed people from every corner of the planet. They have been drawn from every generation of history. John is given a glimpse of the day of their gathering and he says nobody could possibly count them!

This brings great glory to Christ. Isaiah speaks about how, on the last day, Christ will see the fruit that came from all his suffering and he will be satisfied (Isaiah 53:11)—not disappointed, satisfied.

I'd been a pastor for two years when I received a letter inviting me to speak at "The Greater Clacton Convention for the Deepening of Spiritual Life." The letter sounded very grand. I showed it to Karen and I said "This sounds like something! I think we should go."

We drove 100 miles and arrived at a rather grand looking church in the town of Clacton. It was closed. So we drove up and down the street, until we spotted a narrow lane going off the main street. At the end of the lane was a little wooden hut, and on the door of the hut was a sign that said, "The Greater Clacton Convention for the Deepening of Spiritual Life."

We went inside, and including the two of us, we found a grand total of five people. My wife reminds me of this story often, and says it's for the purpose of promoting humility!

We've all been at events when only a few people showed up. We say, "Is this it?" On the authority of the Word of God, no one will be saying "Is this it?" in the presence of Jesus.

This will be larger than any gathering you have ever seen or imagined in your life. And every person there will have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

b. ...by the unique difficulties His people have endured.

These [people] have come out of great tribulation. (Revelation 7:14)

Christ is glorified by the unique trouble that his people have endured. It is a vast company, but let's move a little closer:

Here is someone who has struggled with depression all her life, but not now. There is a light and joy in her face that she never knew, not one day of her life in this world.

Over there is someone who lacked confidence. He battled against fear all his life, but not now. There's no fear in him—he stands certain in Christ.

You look further and you see someone who was scarred by a great evil inflicted on them by another person. It troubled them, it haunted them, it dogged them all of the days of their life, but not now. There they stand in the presence of Jesus, and every tear has been wiped from their eye.

Each of these people has faced unique difficulties in life. Some have endured a lifelong struggle that arose from their temperament or from their background, but in every case Christ has brought them through. That's what we're to think about when we're in the middle of the battle.

c. ...by the complete transformation of inveterate sinners.

I use the word inveterate not only because I like the sound of it, but because I want you to remember our sins are not a small thing. Inveterate means long established, deep rooted or habitual, so it is a good word to describe the human condition. By nature we're inveterate sinners.

Think about it. Last time we saw that sinners are "shut out from the presence of the Lord" (1:9). But these people are all in the presence of Jesus, and they were sinners too. So, why are they here? What are they doing in the presence of the Lord? Why are they all dressed in white?

John gives us the answer: "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb" (Revelation 7:14). That's why these people are here, not because they have lived some perfect life, but because they have been washed by Christ.

Look at who's here in this crowd: David the adulterer, Moses the murderer, Peter the denier, Paul the persecutor, you, me and all the stuff that we have done.

This crowd will be there because they have been washed in the blood of the lamb. Christ has cleansed them, and look at them now! They are dressed in the white robes of his righteousness; they are holy as God is holy. They are in his presence, without fault and with great joy. The complete transformation of inveterate sinners brings glory to Jesus because only he could accomplish such an amazing transformation.

Spurgeon was a wonderful evangelist, and he uses this marvelous truth to give hope to people who have done terrible things, people who would say, “I feel so bad, that there is no hope for me.”

I put it to you... If Jesus Christ is to be glorified in saved sinners, would he not be glorified indeed if he saved you? If he were to save such a rebel as you have been, would it not be the astonishment of eternity? ...What if my Master were to make a saint of you?⁵

If your sins are many, you have every reason to come to Christ today: Your salvation will bring great glory to Christ. Put your trust in Christ and he will be glorified in you, forever.

If you are a believer in Christ, this is your future. This will help you to stay the course when you're tired of the battle. Lift up your mind and see what is yours in Jesus Christ.

In the middle of these massive truths about their glorious future in Christ, Paul prays for these believers, “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you” (2 Thessalonians 1:11). What he asks of God is very significant. What should we pray for in the light of our glorious future in Christ?

Plan, Act and Persevere

Persevere

...that God may count you worthy of his calling. (2 Thessalonians 1:11)

The apostle Paul is praying that the Thessalonians will finish the race of the Christian life and receive God's commendation. And this commendation depends on their persevering in faith, “In the light of your glorious future in Christ, I'm praying that you will persevere!”

Plan

...that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours.
(2 Thessalonians 1:11)

This is an astonishing statement. I would expect it to say, “that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of his.” But he says, “every good purpose of yours!” Don Carson comments:

God's people have been so transformed through their conversion to Jesus Christ... that they now develop new sets of goals. Prompted and shaped by goodness and faith, they inevitably formulate new purposes, decidedly Christian plans, Christian goals.⁶

Do you see the force of this? Paul says, “I want you to look at the glorious future that lies ahead of you! Look at the eternal future of people without Christ. Put these two things together. I’m praying that you will live in the light of that!” That’s what He is praying.

It’s not enough to drift through your life saying, “I’m open to whatever the Lord wants me to do.” That sounds much more spiritual than it is. That can become an excuse for doing nothing. What will you do? What’s your plan? What is your good purpose?

The Christian life is not passive. God invites us to take the initiative, to formulate plans and to act in faith. That’s why, here at The Orchard, we have a ministry plan. Some people will look at it and say, “Oh, yes, that was just written by humans, wasn’t it?” Yes, and that’s the point, “every good purpose of yours.”

What good purpose will you pursue this week? Who can you reach out to? Who can you visit? Do something

Act

...every act prompted by your faith. (2 Thessalonians 1:11)

If you’ll indulge me with one more Spurgeon quote, he ends his sermon with these words:

Now, get at it all of you! You that are doing nothing for Jesus, be ashamed of yourselves, and ask him to work in you so that you may begin to work for him.⁷

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¹ NFL playoff game: Chicago Bears vs. Seattle Seahawks. Bears won 35-24 to advance to the NFC championship game vs. the Green Bay Packers.

² C. H. Spurgeon, from the sermon, “*Jesus Admired in Them That Believe*,” 1879
Read the sermon online: <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols25-27/chs1477.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ D.A. Carson, *"A Call to Spiritual Reformation,"* p. 56, Baker Academic, 1992
<http://www.amazon.com/Call-Spiritual-Reformation-Priorities-Prayers/dp/0801025699/>

⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, from the sermon, *"Jesus Admired in Them That Believe,"* 1879