

I. Seeing the Glory

A. Three Texts

1. Christmas story

- a. Shepherds Luke 2:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ *And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.*
- b. Simeon Luke 2:28 (ESV) ²⁸ *he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,*
- c. Anna Luke 2:38 (ESV) ³⁸ *And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.*
- d. The point is this:
 - (1) In each case, **those who have seen the glory of God in Jesus Christ spoke of that glory to others.**

2. Transfiguration

- a. Context (ch 16)
 - (1) 4000 fed with seven loaves and a few fish
 - (2) Pharisees and Sadducees ask for a sign of Jesus' divinity
 - (3) Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ and Jesus affirms that the Father on heaven has revealed this to Peter
 - (4) Jesus foretells his death and resurrection
 - (5) Jesus calls his disciples to take up their cross and follow him
- b. The event
 - (1) Jesus, Peter, James, and John on a mountain alone
 - (2) Jesus is transfigured
 - (a) His face shone like the sun
 - (b) His clothes became white as light
 - (c) Moses and Elijah joined
 - (3) Peter
 - (a) It is good for us to be here
 - i) It is good for us to see you in your glory
 - ii) It is good for us to have this privilege
 - (b) It is good for us to stay here
 - i) Build three tents
 - ii) Long term accessibility
- c. The voice
 - (1) This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.
 - (a) Listen to him.
 - (b) Don't listen to yourself, your own broken, wounded, imperfect heart.
 - (c) Listen to the instruction, direction, teaching, and heart of Jesus
- d. **Matthew 17:9 (ESV) ⁹ *And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."***
 - (1) He does not tell them to keep the record to themselves forever

- (2) He tells them they have not yet seen all the glory they are going to see and to wait until they see the full revelation of God's glory and then tell.
- (3) **The point again is this: Those who see the glory of God in Christ Jesus have a mission to tell the glory they have seen.**

3. **The Last Word**

- a. **Revelation 1:1-3 (ESV) ¹ The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.**
- b. God gave the revelation to Jesus to give to John to give to Christ's servants to give to the world
 - (1) "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy . . ."
 - (2) "Blessed are those who hear and keep . . ."
- c. **The revelation of God's glory propels His people into the world to share the knowledge of His glory.**
 - (1) God reveals His glory
 - (a) the glory of His Person
 - (b) the glory of His Son
 - (c) the glory of His word
 - (d) the glory of His salvation
 - (2) So that, having seen His glory and known His glory for themselves, the people of God will share the knowledge of His glory with the whole world.
 - (a) God reveals His glory so that those who are called to glory will believe and put their trust in Him
 - (b) **God reveals His glory so that those who believe and trust in Him will share the knowledge of His glory so that those who are called to His glory will believe and put their trust in Him, to the praise of His glory.**
 - i) God reveals His glory to you and through you so that others may see His glory and put their trust in Him
 - ii) This makes this Christmas season not about you and me but about Him.
 - iii) This is no season to celebrate our glory but to exalt His!

B. The Question

- 1. Do we really need to keep reminding God's people of God's glory and the mission the revelation of His glory propels us to?
- 2. It's Christmas, can't we talk about God's glory without having to make everything about Him and our obligation to Him as people who have their faith in Him?

II. The Need for Believers to See and Say the Good News of God's Glory

A. NYTimes (Pew Research Center) Report

1. Survey of 1503 adults
2. “Most respondents find the religious elements of the [Christmas] holiday are emphasized less than in the past, and few of them care about the change.”
 - a. 56% say religious aspects less emphasized; 32% (less than a third of those surveyed) said that the change bothers them “a lot” or “some”
 - b. “Seismic change”
 - (1) “The declining number of people who said they believed the biblical story of Christmas accurately reflected historical events.”
 - (2) Survey
 - (a) About four parts of Christmas story
 - i) Herald angels
 - ii) Virgin birth
 - iii) Wise men/star
 - iv) Manger
 - (b) Change
 - i) 2014 - 65%
 - ii) 2017 - 57%
 - (c) Most grievous from theological standpoint: 5% decline in the number of Christians who believe in the Christmas narrative contained in the Bible.

B. Tendency that creates the need

1. The growing tendency seems to be to think that God does all that He does for us, for our benefit, so we treat Him as we do all our possessions, without increasing boredom and disinterest.
2. But,
 - a. the reality is that God does not do all that He does for our benefit.
 - b. God does what He does primarily for His glory.
 - c. And the church that does not exult in God’s glory among themselves will not exalt God’s glory among the nations of the world.
3. So, apparently, we do need to be reminded, again and again and again, of the glory of God and the privilege seeing and knowing His glory constrains us to: telling His glory.
4. **God reveals His glory in Jesus Christ so that those who are called to glory will put their trust in Him and reveal His glory to others so that they also may put their trust in Him.**

C. What can we do?

1. Congregational outreach
 - a. Advent devotional, website, restore the LiveStream
 - b. Outreach programs and events
2. Personally
 - a. Seek God’s glory
 - b. Savor God’s Glory
 - c. Share God’s glory