

Studies in Glory #4: Peter's Words on Glory

In reading 1 Peter, I was struck by the number of references to the word "glory", since that is the subject of these lessons. So this lesson is mostly from the words of Peter.

The Father Glorified Jesus in the Resurrection

Ac. 3:13-15 – "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. ... And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we all are witnesses."

1 P. 1:11 – "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

1 P. 1:21 – "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

Jesus will be Openly Glorified at His Coming into His Kingdom

1 P. 4:13 – "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy"

His glory will be revealed at his second coming (Rev.19, etc.), but also in his millennial reign out of Jerusalem, and ultimately in the new Jerusalem, where his glory will outshine the sun and moon.

The Glory of Man is Temporal and Fading

1 P. 1:24-25 – "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. ..."

This is a quote from Isa. 40:6-8 – "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is as grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Isaiah and Peter are showing the insignificant and fleeting, mortal nature of man, and that only God and his word are by nature eternal. Our souls have an eternal future, either in glory or in torment, but that is derived from God who is himself eternal by nature.

James uses this same figure to show that the things we use to distinguish men of high and low degree, like wealth, education, and accomplishments, are really nothing.

Jas. 1:9-11 – "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways."

Men of low degree can rejoice because even though they are unknown or even despised by the world, they are personally known by God. Rich believers can rejoice in the realization that their standing with God is by grace, and their riches make them no better than the least of God's own.

We can Experience God's Glory Now, in This Life

1 P. 1:8 – "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." The Christian life should not be a drudgery, but a life of joy, and a glorious life! Even in the midst of horrible persecution, as Peter addresses in this first letter, we can experience the internal peace that comes from knowing God and having a daily communion with him through his Spirit, and the Word.

We will Experience God's Glory Later

1 P. 1:7 – “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: ”

We will participate in the glory of Christ when he comes. He shares his glory with those he has redeemed. No matter how low we are seen in the eyes of this world, when Christ comes it will for a reward of our patient faith and endurance. “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (1 Cor. 15:19) But our real hope is in the future life, sharing in Christ's kingdom, and even reigning and ruling with him in that kingdom! Rev. 1:6, 5:10

In the future we who are counted worthy of that kingdom will actually and literally shine with God's glory. Mt. 13:43 – “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. ...”

1 Jn. 3:1-3 – “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. That we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

1 P. 5:10-11 – “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

We Glorify God by Doing Good Works

1 P. 2:12 – “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

We are not saved by works, but good works are the evidence of real saving grace. Eph. 2:8-10 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

We Glorify God by Ministering Our Gifts Faithfully

1 P. 4:11 – “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

We all have different gifts and callings, but whatever they are, we are to do them to the best of our ability, and for only two purposes – God's glory (not our own), and the good of others. If we do that, there will be rewards (crowns) for us at His coming.

1 P. 5:1-4 – “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ... And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

We Glorify God by being Faithful through Suffering and Persecution

1 P. 4:13-16 – “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy, If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. ... Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”