

# The Passing of Glory - Various

Pastor Michael Engle

## Introduction

Often in life we attempt to avoid the hard discussions. They make us nervous. We don't quite know what to say. We would much prefer to have the easier discussions. The discussions that don't cause the crowd to wince and squirm in discomfort, but cause them to stand and cheer with excited anticipation. We had the conversation that ended in cheering last week. All who know Christ will sit with great anticipation as the Gospel is preached and the glories of heaven are revealed. That is, as it should be. Never, never my brothers and sisters, get tired of hearing and saying the Gospel to yourself and to others. It is to be celebrated and heralded across the globe. Soak it up and squeeze it out. It is everything, even for those who have never heard. This person of Glory should cause us to stand and cheer.

However, there are other conversations to be had as well. For not all will make it to Glory and meet him face to face. Many, no most, will pass through the wide gate with fists raised in hatred to the God of the Bible. Today, we will talk about them. It will be a hard conversation. It will perhaps make you wince and squirm in discomfort, but don't turn off your ears. If you are a believer in Christ it is good to hear what you have been saved from and why you should have unlimited patience and grace with those who aren't. If you are an unbeliever here today, perhaps you came because you were told you had to, or you were just being nice to a friend who invited you. Please don't stop listening now. You may well be an unbeliever now, but you are not dead yet and there's good news coming at the end of our time together this morning.

Let's start out our time this morning in Psalm 29. We will be in three texts this morning. Psalm 29, Romans 3, and Revelation 20 if you would like to mark those out ahead of time. God's word says this in Psalm 29.

## Glory Ascribed - Psalm 29:1-11

### Ascribed by Heavenly Beings - vv. 1-2

*1 Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.*

David calls out the "heavenly beings" to ascribe, or to assign these attributes, to God. Think of it, all around heaven there are living beings. We see these in other scriptures, they are angels, cherubim and seraphim. All standing, flying, and whatever else they do there, around the Lord calling out to him, "glory and strength", "glory due your name". They must assign these attributes to him as they are right and he is these things! His name is glorious. He is glory and strength. He is the great "I AM". These heavenly beings, more beautiful than can be imagined, the same kind who at the birth announcement of Jesus caused the Shepherds to be "filled with great fear" - terrified (Luke 2) and who caused the women who went to care for Jesus' grave to be so "frightened" that they "bowed their faces to the ground" (Luke 24). These majestic, terrifying, beings are made plain when compared to the Lord of Glory, and will live out eternity calling out to God his worth. How much more should we?! How much more will we?!

So to what end does this ascribing Glory to God come? Look with wonder at the end of verse two. "Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness". This is what happens when they see God as He is and respond to who he is rightly. They worship! All of heaven crowds around it's glorious Kings and worships!

Look down at your Bible again in verse 3, God's word says this,

### **Demonstrated in the storm - vv. 3-9**

*3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over many waters. 4 The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. 8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"*

We come to these next six verses and we see God's power demonstrated on the earth through a storm. David points out just what the voice of God can do. When God speaks, it is thunderous, powerful, full of majesty, it breaks the cedars, flashes forth flames of fire, shakes the wilderness, makes animals give birth, and finally it strips the forest bare! Wow, this is a display of power we humans can only imagine having. God is the bringer and sustainer of the storm that is gloriously beautiful and terrifying all at once. But what I want you to zero in on is the final piece of verse nine. What does all of this powerfully terrifying beauty of God lead all in his temple to do! They cry out "Glory"! This is the proper response to the power of God in heaven. When all of you faculties cannot come up with anything but to holler out at the top of you lungs, "Glory!", you know you have seen God for who he is and certainly these heavenly beings saw for exactly what he is, glorious!

Let's see how David brings our song to an end. God's word says this in vv. 10-11.

### **Poured Out on the Earth - vv. 10-11**

*10 The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever. 11 May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!*

God will be glorified, even in the near termination of mankind. A flood that only left eight people alive brought our King glory and David wants to make sure we know it. He also tacks a little word on there at the end of verse ten that I want you to pay attention to. The word, you see it, is "forever". God, the glorious, power, almighty King sits enthroned "forever". He had no beginning and he will have no end. His glory stretches from the farthest east to the furthest west and to it there will be no end.

David sees that people are hopeless, as in the flood without his glorious God and he ends with the request that God would give his people strength and bless them with peace. Only he can. The heavenly beings know it, David knows it, and now, you know it.

Glory is forever ascribed to the Lord our King enthroned in Heaven!

“What about us?”, you might say. What has this glory to do with man. Please turn in you Bible to the third chapter of Romans 3 vv. 20-23. This is what God says about his glory and how it relates to you and I.

### **Glory Unreached - Romans 3:20-23**

*20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Paul starts off in verse twenty letting us know that our works amount to less than nothing. All of your works will never earn you a right standing before God. And isn't this the perfect comment for our day. How many times have you heard someone answer the question, “Why do you think you'll go to heaven”, with, “I'm a good person. I mean, I think if you weighed all of my good and bad deeds, the good would tip the scale in my favor”. God disagrees and he plainly says so here. Your works will never make you right with God. The law only serves to show you your sin, not to show you worthy to God.

But hang on, verse twenty-one seems to be bringing some good news. The righteousness of God has been made plain to see apart from the law and your works, even while the “Law and Prophets” point to this righteousness. How? Verse twenty-two. The law and the prophets point to faith in Jesus for all who believe.

Paul then states that it doesn't matter whether you were under the law or not, “there is no distinction” you have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. No one, no one under the law or outside of the law can gain any sort of hope from the law for all have sinned and fallen short. This is us. This is the unbelieving world. We will one day stand before the gloriously worthy King of Heaven we talked about in Psalm 29 and God will put to us the question, “did you live up to my glory”? Your scale of good and bad is worthless here. Throw every good deed you can think of on your side of the scale and watch as they are thrown from the scale as the weight of God's glory is place on the other side. Humanity, all men and women for all of time are without hope for the fall short of the Glory of God.

Glory is forever unreachable for people under the law!

We will come back to the last part of our Romans text in a minute, but first we must move and see what happens to people, unable to reach glory on their own. Turn in your Bibles to Revelation 20 vv. 7-10. This is what God's word says.

### **Glory Taken Away - Revelation 20:7-15**

*7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

We see in these verses Satan and his armies, numbering as the sands of the sea, will surround the camp of the saints but God will send down fire from heaven to consume them. God's people will be saved while Satan and his army will be consumed. But that's not all. Look at verse ten. "the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." How long will they stay in the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and false prophet were? Forever and ever! God's glory is at stake here and the devil and all who follow him would like to steal it away. They would love to have his glory as their own and God's punishment for this usurpation an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire and sulfur. Hell is forever and there is no escape. God's glory is so great, so bright, so heavy, so worthy of praise that nothing but a forever and ever punishment would right for try to steal it away.

Our text goes on. God has dealt with Satan and his army and you might be thinking yes, but that is not you and I. That is only him and them. Look down at your Bible in Revelation 20:11-15 and we'll read about what happens to those attempting to reach God's glory of their own efforts. This is what God's word says,

*11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Again, wow! Look at the picture of our Lord Jesus we have here in Revelation. There he is, seated on a pure white throne. Our God we saw in Psalm 29 was the ruler of the weather. It showed his power and glory to the nations, but now at the earth and the sky simple flee from his presence as if they no longer belong here. Think of it! You and I cannot imagine anything but a world with earth and sky and yet in these last days our familiar, if not taken for granted, earth and sky run away from God on his throne. This is power. This is majesty. This is the King of Kings and Lord of Lord!

This would be enough to make you turn and run wouldn't it, but somehow "the dead, great and small, are standing in his presence and there are opened books there as well. What could this be? We read on and there is the "book of life". Then something occurs that should cause anyone who believes you die and there is nothing more, to be very afraid. The sea, Death, and Hades give up their dead and all of them are judged "according to what they had done". Remember what we said about the weight of God's glory compared to the glory of your works. This is the moment for all who believe themselves to be "good enough" to reach God's glory. What happens? We said earlier that all who want to put their good works up against God's glory would be thrown from the scale. Now we know where they will land, for God has told us here, they are "thrown into the lake of fire". How long will they stay in this lake of fire, this second death? As long as the beast, the false prophet, Satan and his army...that is forever and ever. Only eternity can pay for so great an offense against so great a God.

Glory will be taken away from those who hate God, and their punishment will be forever.

Remember now with me that we did not read through that entire paragraph in Romans chapter three. We have three verses left. As we stand, in our imaginations, on the shore of so awful a lake, let's go back to our paragraph where we left off having fallen short of the glory of God. God's word says this in Romans chapter three verse 24-26.

### **Glory Given - Romans 3:24-26**

*24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

Time to stand and cheer all you sinners and saints! Yes, we have fallen short of the glory of God, but we either have been, or could be, "justified by his grace as a gift". Think of that word justified as being "made right" before God. You, Church, have been made right before God by Jesus as a gift. How so you sinners might ask, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus". You see, you were sold off into slavery with your father Adam and the only one who can redeem, or purchase you back, from that slavery is Christ. Jesus is the one God "put forward" as a substitute sacrifice for you. He bled and died on a cross two thousand years ago that his blood shed might be the currency with which he bought you back.

You see God's glory will never be stolen and your rebellion against him, your attempted thievery, is treason of the highest kind. You would have, if you could have, ransacked heaven. God had to buy you back with something as glorious as your crime was horrendous. The only one who could pay for your sin was someone completely righteous before God. He has allowed you to live in your sin. He will pass over your sin until that final judgment day comes. Then you will be called to account, and you can stand there with your pittance of glory to be tossed on the scales, or you can stand behind Christ Jesus the Savior of mankind. Calling on God to give the

answer to your eternal problem. Oh God, won't you accept the glorious righteousness of you Son on my behalf.

Glory can only be given by Jesus Christ on your behalf.

### **Reflect and Respond**

Believer, rejoice in the glory that will be yours. That of your Savior and King Jesus Christ.

And if you are hear and this all sounds very strange to you and you know you have never bowed your heart to Jesus Christ the King of Heaven, please hear me. Don't run from Hell. You will never run fast enough or for enough to escape the Devil and his armies, believe me, I tried. But run to Christ for he has given up his life for you that you may partake in Glory as