

The Honor of God: The Weightiest Steps

The Honor of God
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The following sermon is by our Senior Pastor Grant Castleberry of Capital Community Church located in Raleigh, North Carolina. Capital Community Church is a people awakened to a holy God. If you are searching for a new church home, or from out of town looking for a church to worship with, or simply seeking for answers, please join us for worship at 9 o'clock AM every Sunday morning. If you have any questions, please email us at info@capitalcommunitychurch.com. We pray this sermon will help you grow deeper in your walk with Jesus Christ.

Well, good evening. Good to see y'all. So one of the things I think you've probably figured out coming back on Sunday night, is that the teaching is a little bit different on Sunday night. So Sunday morning it's more of a sermon, it's more applied, it's more experiential, whereas Sunday night, what we really want to do is teach doctrine and teach basically truths about the Bible to you. So it's sometimes a little, might seem a little less practical right out of the gate but I think you'll benefit greatly from learning these doctrines. So that's what we've been doing with this series that we've been doing on the honor of God. And next week I'm actually going to be out. I'm going to be preaching for my father-in-law in South Carolina next Sunday, and Kenny will be teaching next Sunday night. And then what the plan is, is to finish this doing the honor of God, and it'll be more teaching less preaching, but I'm going to finish the honor of God, don't worry, I'm not going to leave y'all hanging, after I finish John 6. So at some point later on this summer, I'm going to finish this material for you on the honor of God.

Tonight's study is called "The Weightiest Steps." The weightiest steps. I want to begin with a quote from Iain Murray. Iain Murray wrote this. He wrote a book called "Heroes," and he says, "The Bible no more knows a separate class of heroes than it does of saints. Because of Jesus Christ, every Christian is extraordinary and attains to glory yet grace so shines in some as in the portraits of Hebrews 11, that it lightens the path of many." As A. W. Tozer could write, "Next to the Holy Scriptures, the greatest aid to the life of faith may be Christian biographies." In other words, what really helps you in the Christian life is being able to look at somebody and follow after somebody's footsteps. Do you have somebody in your life who you look to? Maybe they're three years ahead of you, five years ahead of you, 10 years ahead of you, and at some point in your life, maybe when you were in junior high and you were on the junior high football team or the cheerleading

squad or whatever you were doing, you looked to somebody and you said, "Man, that person, I want to be like that person. I want to follow in their footsteps." Has anybody ever been in that type of place before? Okay, I remember, the exception might be Matthew McConaughey. Do you remember a few years ago when he accepted the Academy Award and he said his role model was himself in five years? He goes, "I want to be myself in 10 years, that's who I look up to." But that's not the norm. Most people have an actual role model that they look to. And you know, for many it's your parents. For myself it's my parents, my father-in-law, my mother-in-law. But I remember distinctly at Texas A & M there were guys that when I was a yell leader I looked up to, party time. Paul Terrell. Ryan Bishop. Tim Bailey. You know, these guys were three, four years older than myself, and you know, when you're a freshman in college, you know, they might as well have been 40. But you know, they were just a few years older and from your vantage point then, it seems like they just have larger than life presence and personalities and huge shoes to fill.

In terms of ministry, for me really three people really have stood out as models for me. I mean, I could actually go on more than these three, but the names of Martyn Lloyd-Jones, I'm sure you've heard me mention Martyn Lloyd-Jones quite a bit. He died three years before I was born in 1981. So no overlap whatsoever, but I read Iain Murray's two volume biography of Lloyd Jones over several years, so I feel like I know him, although I don't. I'm looking forward to meeting him in heaven but his ministry has served as a model for me, as has the ministries of R. C. Sproul and John MacArthur. Never got to meet R. C. Sproul either. I remember I did hear him in person once. I drove down to the Ligonier conference there at First Baptist Orlando. They hold it at First Baptist Orlando and I sat up in the balcony and I still to this day remember the talk that he did on apologetics and defending the existence of God, and really all my apologetics and philosophy can be attributed to R. C. Sproul and really just his whole winsome manner of life and in the way that he carried himself and didn't take himself too seriously.

And then, like I said, is the ministry of John MacArthur as well. And John MacArthur out of these three is the only one I've gotten the privilege of actually meeting in person. I was called to ministry listening to the preaching of John MacArthur, and I've gotten to meet John twice and the most recent time was this past March, out at the Shepherd's Conference. We were there, several of my friends and I, you know, there's like 5,000 pastors at the Shepherd's Conference so, you know, this is John MacArthur's conference. So you're like, you know, you're not going to meet John MacArthur. You're not going to get any time with John. You know, there's no way, right? And we were standing outside, just a few of my friends and a guy walks up and starts talking to us, and it's John's son, Mark MacArthur, and Mark turns to us and he goes, "Hey, you want to go hang out with Dad?" And so we were like, "Wait, what?" He goes, "Yeah, you want to come eat lunch with Dad up in the office?" And we were like, "Sure." So we walked with Mark and he took us up into Johnny Mac's study and we got to hang out with John MacArthur during the Shepherd's Conference. So I'll never forget that.

But anyway, these I only mention these men because, you know, John MacArthur's in his 80s now and R. C. Sproul and Martyn Lloyd-Jones have gone on to be with the Lord, but

in many ways, their lives go before me and their footsteps seem impossible to fill, but they serve nevertheless as towering giants and models to me in ministry. And even then, I know that they're not perfect. Far from perfect, they would be the first to tell you that the best of men are still men at best, but they are models of what I think is successful ministry.

Well, that being said, all of those men and any other man or woman that you could put up to follow would say the same, that their lives are dwarfed by another life; that all of their lives are insignificant compared to the life of our Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord walked with the weightiest of steps. Paul says this in Philippians 2⁹. He says, "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." That's a remarkable statement about someone who is truly man, that is a man, that he is Lord, that he is God, that he is to be worshiped, that his name is above every name.

I remember at Texas A & M, this was really impressed upon me in an interesting way. There's this building on campus called Rudder Auditorium and that's where all the plays are and the choral groups perform and it seats about 3,000 people, and I would go hide out and Rudder Auditorium so the upperclassmen wouldn't bother me on campus. And I would take my books and I would go study on the second floor and right outside the auditorium on the wall, the wall was probably as big as the back wall in here, was a whole timeline of history, a whole timeline of history, and I would sit on the benches across from that wall, and I would study, and every so often I would look up at this timeline, and on the timeline basically right in the middle is, you know, all these people and events are on it, but right in the middle was the cross and the Lord Jesus Christ dividing that timeline between BC, before Christ, Anno Domini, in the year of our Lord, everything after Christ. Christ literally, it's a picture that he dominates history, that all of history is even dated by his life. Jesus said therefore that it's his footsteps that we are to follow most. Luke 9:23, he says to everyone, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." And really, our lives as much as we say to follow us or we look to other Christians, that following of somebody else is only as good as much as that person follows Christ. So Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." He says in Philippians, "Look at me. Watch me. Imitate me." And he can say that because he's imitating Christ. The only way that somebody can say that to you or you can say that to somebody else is if you are following Christ, point being is that Christ dominates our lives. He's the ultimate model. He is the one who is heaviest in our lives.

So the question asked, well, why does Jesus deserve to be followed? Why are his steps the weightiest? Why is he the one who is to be worshiped and followed? And all these things, and the answer goes all the way back to the rule of honor. Do you remember what the rule of honor is? 1 Samuel 2:30, "He who honors me, I will honor. He who honors me, I will honor." That's the rule of honor. What did Jesus do in his life to deserve to be

honored with the highest name? He honored God. He honored God. He honored God in such a way to deserve the highest honor.

I want to show you this, if you would open your Bibles to John 8 and we're just going to be looking at a lot of different scriptures. I'm going to try and keep you turning to keep you awake. But Jesus is having a confrontation in John 8:48 with the Pharisees and they basically start fighting dirty. They accuse him of being born from an illegitimate relationship. Look what they say, this is John 8:48. "The Jews answered him, 'Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan,'" in other words, you're a half-breed, "'and have a demon?'" And look at Jesus' answer. I find this answer one of the most profound verses, I think, in the New Testament. Jesus tells them, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me." That one phrase, "I honor my father," is such a profound statement, that with his life, Jesus displayed the weightiness of God, that in everything he did, every second of time, every ounce of his strength, every moment of his day, from his birth to the resurrection to the ascension, he honored the Father and demonstrated the weightiness of God. No one has ever been more God-centered than Jesus. No one has ever glorified God more than Jesus. Jesus perfectly honored the Father.

So if you remember when we studied the life of David, do you remember David demonstrates what it means to honor God, and we looked at 1 Samuel 17, which is the story of David's confrontation with Goliath, and there were four steps. I don't know if you remember this, four steps where David demonstrated what it means to honor God, and I'm just going to give them to you very quickly. But 1, you remember, he was obedient to his father. His father said, "Take the supplies out to the front line." David was always obedient. David saw God above the realities of the battle. Everybody else, all they did was see Goliath. David saw the reality of God and the promises of God, and that's why he wasn't afraid of Goliath. David persevered through opposition. Remember his brother Eliab was like, "Why are you here? Why are you on the front lines? You've just come to see, you know, people massacred. That's why you're here. You're in it to watch the battle." And David dismisses his brother and says, "Was it but a word?" And then goes on, you know, "How can we fight this guy?" And then fourth, David put himself in the stream of God's honor. In other words, he knew that God would vindicate his own name, and he saw that Goliath was cursing the name of God, defying the armies of the living God. So David saw the battle about vindicating the name of God, and he put himself right in the middle of that battle because he wanted to vindicate God's name. That was what his concern was. It wasn't about the territory, primarily or just the Israelites versus the Philistines. It was about the honor of God and he put himself in the stream of God's honor.

So here's the connection. Who is Jesus? Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic promise. Do you remember Matthew makes great pains in the genealogy of Matthew to show the connection between David and Jesus. Jesus is the son of David and what Jesus does is he honors God as his father David did, but only in a grander way because we all know that David ultimately failed in many ways, number of ways, just like we all do. But Jesus honored God perfectly and I want to show you how he honored God perfectly on those four spectrums. So remember what they are: obedience, seeing God above the

circumstances; persevering through opposition; and setting yourself in the stream of the honor of God.

So I'm going to be, I have so many verses, okay? So what I'm going to be doing is I'm going to be some of them I'm going to read, some of them I'm going to summarize. I'm going to be doing. Oh, if you don't have a, I have the handouts in the back. So if you don't have a handout, the handouts are there in the back. So follow along as best you can. I think I've put most the verses for you there in the handout. But if you would turn to Luke's gospel to Luke 2 and Luke is the one who records the only events regarding Jesus' childhood beyond when he was a baby. And in Luke 2:40, Luke records this about Jesus, he says, "And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him." An interesting note about that word "strong or strength," I used to just think that that meant that he became physically strong. Let me just point out a connection. Don't turn there but John says in 1 John 2:14, he says, "I write to you young men because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one." I think the type of strength that John is talking about in 1 John and the type of strength that Luke is talking about is a spiritual strength, a strength to overcome temptation, that Jesus had become strong in the word of God, that the word of God abided in him, and because of that he was able to overcome the evil one and not sin, and he kept getting stronger and stronger in both physical strength and spiritual strength.

So you remember what happened at the temple. He goes to the Passover with his family and they're in the temple, and then the whole family leaves to go back to Nazareth and Jesus is nowhere to be found. His parents go back up to Jerusalem. They look for him for three days. They finally find him and you remember what Jesus' answer is, "Didn't you know that I would be about my Father's business, that I would be my Father's house?" Right, so if you look at verse 51, they didn't understand, Mary and Joseph what that meant, but look at verse 51. "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them." He was submissive to them. He was obedient to Mary and Joseph. And Luke records and I think he interviewed Mary and that's where he had this information, he said, "And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart." So Jesus, even at the earliest point that is recorded about his childhood, demonstrated obedience to God and his parents, obeying the 5th Commandment.

Now if you turn to the right to John's gospel, I'm just going to read you these verses, I think, because there's so many of them. But Jesus highlights over and over throughout the gospel of John about how his life can be described as a life that's obedient to God. That's how he fundamentally understood what he was doing, and I'm just going to read you these verses. This is John 4:34. He said, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work." Isn't that an interesting statement, "My food. This is what I eat. This is my daily bread is to do the will of God. This is what gets me up in the morning." What gets you up in the morning when you open your eyes? What's the first thing you think about? And my my boy Patrick, the first thing he does is he comes down the stairs and he's like, "Daddy, I want cereal. I want chocolate milk," right? It's his food. The first thing he wants is food. What's the first thing you think about? Jesus said the first thing... What did you say? They're the same. Jesus says, "This is my food. This is what

gets me up is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work." John 5:30 says, "I seek not my own will, but the will of my Father." John 6:38. He says, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me." John 8:28. Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own authority but speak just as the Father taught me. So the words that I speak are words that God has given me to say." John 12:49 is next. He says, "For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment, what to say and what to speak." Then on the next page on 14:10, he says, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works."

The point that Jesus is making is that everything he did and everything he said was according to the Father's will. It was a life of perfect obedience to God, perfect obedience, and he was obedient all the way to the end. Paul says in Philippians 2:8, "And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient." How far? "All the way to the point of death, even death on a cross." Hebrews says, Hebrews 5:8, "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered." So Jesus was obedient to the Father, even to the cross, and everything he said and everything he did.

When he was asked about the law in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained it to his disciples. He says in Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." What he meant by that is he came to obey all of the law perfectly, completely without blemish. Just an absolutely impossible task for us to imagine being accomplished under Adam as sinful people, to obey and fulfill the law perfectly.

There's a little anecdote in "Pilgrim's Progress." where Christian is told that he can get his burden off by going to, I think it's Worldly Wiseman's house and anyway, so he diverts from the path which if you read "Pilgrim's Progress" that's never a good thing. You never want to get off the path, you know? Whenever that happens like Christian, no, don't get off the path. He goes off the path towards a mountain called Mount Sinai, and basically what John Bunyan is illustrating in this part of the story, is how you try to justify yourself by keeping the law, and basically Christian, it's a gradual slope at first and then it gets steeper and steeper and steeper and steeper until it feels like the mountain's about to fall over on him, and, you know, rocks are falling down on him and he can't go any further, and Bunyan is illustrating that it might feel good to try to justify yourself before God by keeping the law for awhile, but eventually it ends in failure, disaster, because no one can climb Mount Sinai perfectly because the law is perfect and we're not perfect. But that's exactly what Jesus did, is that Jesus went and climbed Mount Sinai to the highest point without one false note. Not one blemish. Not one slip of the tongue. Not one naughty look. It was perfect obedience all the way through.

So that's the first circumstance of honoring God is this obedience. Secondly, seeing God above the situation. Seeing God above the situation. And Jesus, as the Son of God demonstrated this and modeled this better than anyone else in scripture. Jesus saw every

single thing for what it really is. Jesus had a laser vision focus on the reality of the kingdom of God, and nothing diverted him from that focus. He was so dedicated to these ultimate spiritual realities that he knew existed, and he never allowed anything to push him off course from this vision of God. And I think you see this modeled very clearly in how Jesus approached God and communed with God in his life of prayer. Has it ever struck you how significant it is that the Son of God spent so much time in prayer? He spent so much time in prayer and he's God himself, right? But he communed with God hours upon hours, nights upon nights, and let me just read you the verses and just show it to you. Mark 1:35. This is basically after he does some of the miracles in Capernaum. It says, "And rising very early in the morning while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place and there he prayed." You remember, after feeding the 5,000, actually probably 20,000, 5,000 men, the great multitude, Mark records in Mark 6:46, "After he had taken leave of them he went up on the mountain to pray." Before choosing the 12 apostles in Luke 6:12, Luke records, "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray," and listen to this, "and all night he continued in prayer to God, and when day came he called his disciples that should be and chose from them 12 whom he named apostles." Before the mountain of transfiguration in Luke 9:28, it says, "Now about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray." And then in the garden of Gethsemane, of course, you know that Jesus withdrew from his disciples and knelt down and there he prayed.

Jesus lived his entire life out of the overflow of this communion with God, and it struck his disciple so much that they asked him to teach them to pray because he modeled this life of communion with God. And it was out of the overflow of this time he spent in prayer, I think, that enabled him to keep his focus so narrowly attendant on the mission that God had given him. And just another demonstration of this is how Jesus throughout his ministry was focused on the divine timetable of God, that everything he did was according to the mission that God had for him, and the timing of when that was to take place. Everything he did. An example would be when Jesus' mother, do you remember, asked him that they ran out of wine at the wedding and she said to the servants, "You go listen to Jesus," and Jesus said to her, this is John 2:4, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come," talking about the future hour of his ministry and ultimately the cross. And then there's in Caesarea Philippi after Peter's confession that he was the Christ, Matthew records and Matthew 16:21, "From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised."

So he basically and when you read the Synoptic Gospels, he basically starts sitting his disciples down over and over and over again, and tells them, "I'm going to Jerusalem and I'm going there to die. You need to know this. And I'm going to be crucified. And the chief priests are going to be the ones to do it. But in three days, I will be raised again from the dead." This happened numerous times. When he comes into Jerusalem, I was reading this the other day in John 12, right after the triumphal entry, John 12:27. It says Jesus says, "Now my soul is troubled." So you know, he's there in Jerusalem. You can just picture it all. The crowd has been shouting, "Hosanna, hosanna!" And Jesus knows a lot of those people are going to be the same people yelling, "Crucify! Crucify him!" on

Friday, and he's there in Jerusalem and his soul, his human soul is troubled thinking about everything that's about to transpire. And this is what he says to himself, this is him preaching to himself. He says, "What shall I say? What shall I say in this moment?" And he says to himself, "Father, shall I say save me from this hour?" And he says, "No. But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." It was all on this, he had this laser focus on God's plan for his life and he wouldn't allow anything to divert him from it.

One more example of this is when he's in the garden of Gethsemane when the temple guard comes to arrest Jesus, and Peter takes his sword and cuts off the assistant to the high priest, he cuts off his ear. I can promise you he wasn't aiming for his ear, but he cuts off his ear and Jesus reattaches the ear and Jesus says to Peter, "Peter, put away your sword into its sheath. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" In other words, put away your sword because it's necessary that I be arrested and go to the cross. It's all about this divine mission he's on, this timetable he's on to the cross, and what Jesus does is he points us to the same thing, to live for the kingdom of God, to live our life the way that he lived his life, with our vision on God above the realities of this world.

Just look at the Lord's prayer. Look at how the Lord's prayer starts. "Father." What is that? It's immediately, "Lift up your eyes. Get your eyes off you. Get your eyes off the circumstances of this world. Get your eyes on God. Father." Where is he? "Who art in heaven." Okay, kingdom realities. "Hallowed be your name. Your name is to be honored. Your name is to be glorified." So the Lord's prayer is a picture of how he lived and he's teaching us to live this way, that when we pray, we need to get up before we start talking about our daily bread, that's important, but it comes later in the Lord's prayer, the most important thing is that we see the transcendent that God's name be honored, his name be hallowed, and that he's in heaven, and that his will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven. That was his vision. That's how he saw the world. He saw the world as God sees the world and that's what we should strive to do, is to see the world the way that God sees the world and the only way you do that is by having your mind transformed by this, have your mind transformed by scripture, to have your mind conformed to the image of Christ.

So he saw God above the circumstances, first, he was obedient, and third, he persevered through opposition. He persevered through opposition. Remember, we talked about if you're going to honor God, you will encounter incredible opposition, massive opposition because Satan does not want you to honor God. And if you look at the Lord Jesus' life, you know, I'm turning 38 this month, it's remarkable to think about how he endured the opposition that he did as a 30 year old, 33 year old man because what happens, what happens if you're going about your work and you get an e-mail and it's an e-mail that opposes something that you've done or said? Think about how what that does to your day. Has anybody ever gotten one of those? Okay, maybe I'm not the only one. Or maybe somebody, maybe one of your parents says something to you. "You know, I've seen this in your life. I don't like it." What does that do to your day? Or what if somebody important called you? What if you walked out of here and you got a call on your cell phone from an unknown number and you pick up the phone and it's the President of the United States, and they say, "I'm really disappointed in you." Alright, maybe that's not

the best illustration, alright. Somebody that you really respect, let's say for me, what if it was somebody I mentioned earlier, right? What if it's somebody that you respect and they say, "I'm really disappointed with this aspect of your life"? Or what if to a degree all the authoritative figures in the town of Raleigh stood up and said, "We oppose you, your church. We oppose what you're doing. What you're doing is wrong." Man, you know, Mike Tyson said, he said something along the lines of, you know, you never know what you're going to do until you get punched in the face. What do you do when you encounter that opposition? That's when it gets tough. That's when you have to really endure, right?

And when you look at the life of Christ, this is one of the most remarkable things is just his perseverance through the opposition. Every step of the way. His ministry begins, he fasts 40 days. Turn to Matthew 4. He fasts for 40 days. Do you know why he fasted for 40 days? Because what Jesus is doing is he's recapitulating Israel's history. How long was Israel in the wilderness? Forty years. Israel goes into the wilderness after what? Going through the Red Sea. Jesus goes to the Jordan River, he's baptized in the Jordan River. Israel is baptized in the Red Sea. Israel goes into the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus goes into the wilderness 40 days. Did the children of Israel honor the Lord when they became hungry in the wilderness? No, they did not. They grumbled. They complained. They cursed God. And God eventually gave them manna from heaven.

Now you see what's happening with the temptation. Jesus is hungry and Satan comes to him says, "Well, you're really hungry. You know what? I don't think God's going to take care of you. I think you're going to have to make some bread yourself. Turn these rocks into bread. You can do it." And Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8. He says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." In other words, don't doubt that God, that God's word is true, that God will keep his promises, that God will not abandon me, that God will take care of me. Second temptation, Satan tells Jesus to throw himself down from the Temple Mount and what's interesting is he quotes Psalm 91, Satan does, that God will take charge of his angels concerning him. He quotes scripture, but actually if you read Psalm 91, the psalmist talks about how Satan will be overthrown in that Psalm. Satan doesn't quote that verse. He misquotes Psalm 91 and he says that God "will command his angels concerning you and on their hands they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone." And Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test." In other words, we have faith in God. We don't say, "O God," you know, "if you do this, I'll believe in you." That's not our posture towards the Lord.

And then the third and final temptation was a temptation to have the kingdom without the cross. There was a temptation to have the kingdom without the cross and again, what's Jesus' focus? It's on the mission of God. He knows he's there for the cross. And Satan says, he takes him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory, Matthew 4:9, "And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him."

So Jesus withstood Satan's opposition at every step. So, Israel fails in the wilderness to honor God. They fall into temptation. Jesus succeeds. Adam was in a garden fails to honor God. Jesus succeeds. Do you see what's going on here against all the opposition? What do you do if your mom, whom you love, comes and rebukes you, and your brothers, your family? How does that change your day? Well, it happens with Jesus. If you turn to Mark 3, Mark 3, Jesus not only was opposed by Satan, our most fierce enemy, at times he was also opposed by his own family. Look at Mark 3:21. This is very early in his ministry. Listen to this. "And when his family heard it," talking about the miracles he was doing and what he was claiming, "they went out to seize him, for they were saying, 'He is out of his mind.'" He is out of his mind. He's not thinking clearly.

If you turn the page and look at verse 31 of Mark 3, Jesus is doing ministry. He's inside a house and it says, "And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him." This is this is basically an intervention that they're putting on, they're saying, "We're going to have an intervention in your ministry. We're going to bring you home and basically set you aside and make sure that you're thinking clearly." "And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.' And he answered them, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.'" Notice how he doesn't even flinch. No flinch. Opposition from his own mom. He doesn't miss a beat. "These are my mother and brothers and sisters." I just find that so remarkable. Nothing is going to stop him from carrying out his mission. He's willing to defy the opinions of mother and brothers.

Let me give you several more examples. Jesus' own disciples opposed him. Turn back to Matthew 16. I always find this just amusing and stunning what happens with Peter. Peter, remember they're in Caesarea Philippi, which is in the northern part of Israel. They're there and Peter makes this great pronouncement about the Lord Jesus. This is in Matthew 16 and Peter says, this is verse 16, Matthew 16:16, "Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" And Jesus commends him for this statement. He says, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter," you are petros, "and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ." So basically he commends Peter. Says, "Peter, you're blessed that you understand who I am, that I'm the Christ." And this is a remarkable statement, and to Peter he says, "You're the rock, Peter. You're the one, the first of many, but based on you and your witness, the church will be built." That's my interpretation. I don't think it's just Peter's confession. I don't think that there's a long line of papal succession coming from Peter as Roman Catholics argue, but I do think Peter was honored as the the apostle on whom the church would be built.

Now things change on the dime, okay? So the verse that we already read, verse 21, "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many

things." He tells his disciples this, his apostles, and look at verse 22. "And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.'" Peter rebukes him, the very apostle that he literally just said, "Upon you, I will build my church," then presumes to grab him by the collar, take him aside and rebuke him and say, "Jesus, this will never happen to you. You will never be crucified. You will never be beaten by the chief priests and the scribes and all that business that you were just talking about. That's not going to happen to you." And what Peter is telling Jesus is the exact same thing that Satan was telling Jesus earlier when Satan promised Jesus a kingdom without a cross. And that's why Jesus then says to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

So Satan stood in his way. His family stood in his way. His own apostles, whom he's going to build the church on stood in his way. And then the entire religious establishment of the day opposed him. And we could just look at verse after verse of opposition and confrontation with the Pharisees. I'll just read you a couple examples. The first from John 8. Listen, listen to how they oppose Jesus and how they mocked him, they schemed against him. This is John 8:39. "They answered him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are doing the works your father did.'" And by that he's talking about the devil. "They said to him, 'We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father--even God.'" They're claiming Jesus was born in immorality. "Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.'" And then they keep opposing him over and over and over again and eventually you read read ahead, they try to stone him. Verse 59, "So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple."

But eventually they do arrest him. They do bring him to trial and the gospel writers all record little glimpses of what happens in that trial. Matthew says in Matthew 14, I have the wrong reference there. Mark 14:53. "And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none." They couldn't find anything against him but they're trying to find something against him. "For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, 'We heard him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" Yet

even about this their testimony did not agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?' But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' And Jesus said, 'I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' And the high priest tore his garments and said, 'What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?' And they all condemned him as deserving death. And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, 'Prophecy!' And the guards received him with blows." No one ever withstood so much opposition. No one. He did it as a young man, contra mundum, against the world. The religious leaders, authorities, his own apostles, his own family, and Satan himself all stood against him and he never flinched. All for the honor and glory of God.

Now last, so that's he persevered through opposition. Second, we saw that he saw God above every circumstance, first was his obedience. And then fourth and lastly he put himself in the stream of God's honor. He put himself in the stream of God's honor, and I'm just going to give you two examples of this but the drumbeat of his heart was the glory of God. Yes, he came to save sinners. He had such compassion on sinners. He desired to seek and save the lost. But his highest desire and the greatest passion of his heart was for God's name to be honored, and us being saved is an important part of that but his passion was the honor and the glory of God. And I'm just going to talk about two examples. We don't have time to study the passages. But one, you see this in the cleansing of the temple. In John's gospel, you don't need to turn there I'll just read it to you it says in John 2:14, "In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there." And the reason why this upset Jesus is because they weren't supposed to be doing that in the court of the Gentiles. It's fine to money change, it's fine to sell animals because people needed the animals for the sacrifices and people needed to pay a temple tax and they had to do it with a Jewish coin, so they needed an exchange, the problem was is that they brought all those filthy animals and put them in the place where the Gentiles were supposed to come worship. And so what Jesus does when he clears the temple is he's vindicating the honor of God's temple. He's motivated by a desire for God's worship to be revered. That's what's motivating him, and you see this in the following verses. It says, "And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables." And listen to this, "And he told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.'" He was consumed with the honor of God's name. "His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'" Zeal for your house will consume me. That's what consumed Jesus was the honor of God.

And then in terms of thinking about the cross, Jesus understood the cross to be the greatest demonstration of the glory and honor of God because on the cross the grace of God and the mercy of God and the love of God would all be displayed. And so when Jesus talked about the cross, and I'll just give you an example, this is John 13:31, he talks about God's name being honored. He says, "When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now is the Son of Man glorified,'" talking about the cross, "'and God is glorified in him. If God

is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once." So Jesus understands the cross as the apex of both God's glory and his glory, where the character of God is displayed. Yes, he goes to the cross to save us. Don't hear me not say that. He goes to the cross to save us, but he also goes to the cross to vindicate the name of God and to demonstrate the glory of God.

That's the drumbeat of his life. Every step the glory of God, the weightiness of God. And he put himself in that position, in that stream, where God's name would be honored, and he did it like nobody else ever did it before him and like no one else ever will after him. There's only one perfect life and he lived it. That's why he has the weightiest steps. That's why, at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of who? God the Father.

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