

“The Greatness of God – Part 1”  
Psalm 115  
(Preached at Trinity, September 2, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. You have great plans and have set great goals. But what are your motives? Are you seeking recognition? Do you thrive on the opinions of men? You really love it when someone comments on your children. You want to be praised at work. You spend much energy working on your image: clothing, hairstyle, house, car, how articulate you are.
2. What about the greatness of God? Is your life God-centered? Do you give attention about how your life reflects upon Him? Your name is on the shortlist for a promotion. You’ve completed a project and have turned it in for approval. What place does God have in it? How much time do you spend talking about yourself?
3. Listen to the Psalmist:  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake."
4. As we’ve seen the series of psalms beginning with **Psalm 113** were sung annually at the Passover. They were known as the Egyptian Hallel. They celebrate God’s mercy upon the downtrodden. They mark God’s redemption that was demonstrated in Egypt but would spread to the nations.  
By custom **Psalms 113-114** were sung before the Passover. **Psalms 115-118** were sung after the Passover. So far we’ve looked at the first two:
  - A. **Psalm 113** is simply a glorious demonstration of praise. It begins and ends with praise. God is without equal.  
**Psalm 113:4-5 KJV** - "The LORD *is* high above all nations, *and* his glory above the heavens. <sup>5</sup> Who *is* like unto the LORD our God"
  - B. **Psalm 114** rises up to exalt God’s power and dominion. Everything falls beneath His infinite sovereignty. There is only one response to such majesty:  
**Psalm 114:7 KJV** - "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord"
5. **Psalm 115** shines forth to declare the greatness of God.  
Tonight, I simply want to consider the first part of **Verse 1**  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory . . .
6. There is nothing so precious to God as His own glory.
  - A. It is a glory that cannot be shared with any other being  
**Isaiah 42:8 KJV** - "*I am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another"
  - B. It was the desire of Christ to return to the fullness of His glory shared with the Father  
**John 17:4-5 KJV** - "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

7. There is nothing so dangerous for us than to seek glory for ourselves for this is to rob God of His glory.
- I. Let me reiterate briefly what we mean by God's glory
- A. First when we talk about God's glory we mean the glory that is intrinsic to His being – His essential glory.
1. This is the glory that is basic to His nature
    - a. God's glory is the essence of His divine being.
    - b. It is the manifestation of His attributes.
    - c. God's essential glory can't be added to or diminished. It is who He is.
  2. When Moses asked God to show him His glory listen to what God says, **Exodus 33:18-20** – "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. <sup>19</sup> And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. <sup>20</sup> And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."
  3. What did God mean, "I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee?"
    - a. God was telling Moses I'll teach you of my Divine essence.
    - b. Moses said, "I want to *see* thy Glory." God says I'll show you all that I am. I'll show you My goodness, My grace, and My mercy."
- B. Second, when we speak of the glory of God we are talking about the manifestation of His majesty
- Isaiah 6:3** – "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
1. What did we see when Christ came into the world?  
**John 1:14** – "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
  2. We beheld His splendor, His perfections, His majesty
  3. We beheld God--God's glory is the sum of His Divine being. His attributes of infinite power, knowledge, goodness, mercy, grace, truth, etc.
- C. It is the expression of God's glory which we give
- Romans 4:20** – "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God"
1. You cannot add to God's intrinsic glory
    - a. God is who He is
    - b. You cannot make the sky blue. You can cover it up but you cannot change it. You cannot make water wet. It is what it is.
    - c. You cannot give or take away God's glory. He is who He is.
  2. What does it mean then that we give God glory?  
We give God glory when we manifest Him upon the earth – when we reflect Him. We give God glory when we desire His glory to shine forth above all else.  
**Psalms 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"

3. We glorify God when we turn our full focus upon Him and seek to turn the focus of others to God.

D. The first question in the Shorter and Spurgeon's Catechism

What is the chief end of man?

Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

1. The chief thing a man can know is that man is for God's glory, and God is for man's enjoyment.

**Psalm 16:8-9** I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. <sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

- a. David was saying, "In everything I do I give attention to God. I am totally absorbed in Him. Therefore my heart is glad and I am filled with rejoicing.
  - b. Spiritual maturity is giving all attention to God – considering Him in all that you do. Seeking to know Him more.
2. Our life should be lived with a focus on giving God glory. It is the reason for our existence.

II. Our greatest danger

A. Pride is our greatest enemy

1. We are most concerned about what is happening to us.
  - a. When we are hurting physically we want others to know so they will set their focus upon us.
  - b. When we are grieving emotionally we want the world to know so they will focus upon us.
  - c. This isn't always wrong because we seek the strength of our brethren and covet their prayers but what are our motives?
  - d. Is our motive to be encouraged and strengthened so that our lives might be more glorifying to God?  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"
2. We tend to talk most about our accomplishments
  - a. We want others to know about our success – is it so others might glory in us.
  - b. We are very competitive – Is it because we don't want to lose our status, our position, our glory?  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"
3. God will not share His glory. He hates pride. He actually moves against those who seek their own glory.  
**Proverbs 8:13** – "The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."  
**James 4:6** – ". . . God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

- B. As God's people we must have one boast  
**2 Corinthians 10:17 KJV** - "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."  
**2 Corinthians 10:17 NAS** - "But he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord."  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"
1. We are permitted, even encouraged to boast in our Lord. In fact, the word here is in the imperative. We are commanded to glory in the Lord.
  2. Our one boast must be in our God  
**Jeremiah 9:23-24** – "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD."
  3. How do you give glory to God who is already all glorious?
    - a. We give God glory by taking our eyes off ourselves and seeking to exalt Him above all else.  
**1 Chronicles 16:24** – "Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations."
    - b. We give glory when we reveal how glorious He is. We reveal how glorious He is when He is our focus in all things. He is our full source of joy and contentment.
    - c. We give glory to God when our highest desire is to exalt Him and our least desire is to exalt ourselves  
 John the Baptist's words must be our continued desire  
**John 3:30 KJV** - "He must increase, but I *must* decrease."

#### Conclusion:

1. How about your life? Are you seeking to bring God glory or glory to yourself?  
 How much time do you spend talking about yourself as compared to talking about God?  
 What is it that you are the most passionate about?  
 What most frequently occupies your thoughts?  
 What is it that you most frequently speak of?
2. Is your greatest desire to bring glory to God?
3. You give glory to God by declaring His greatness through your life.
  - By acknowledging and speaking often of His greatness.
  - By living a holy life, a life of obedience to our glorious God.
  - By demonstrating your gratitude to Him through your life.
  - By demonstrating that He is sufficient.
    - a. Paul found comfort in Christ in all things.  
**Philippians 4:11-13 KJV** - "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. <sup>12</sup> I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

- b. For Paul, in the worst of conditions God's grace was always sufficient.  
**2 Corinthians 12:7-10 KJV** - "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. <sup>8</sup> For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup> And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."
- c. Thrown into jail and with their feet in stocks Paul and Silas gloried in God  
**Acts 16:20-25 KJV** - "And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, <sup>21</sup> And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. <sup>22</sup> And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. <sup>23</sup> And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: <sup>24</sup> Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. <sup>25</sup> And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."  
 This is giving glory to God!!  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"
4. This is the first purpose of your existence – to glorify God.  
 A failure to glorify God is evidence of not knowing Him. Remember Romans 1.  
**Romans 1:21** – “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”
5. How wonderful it is to glorify Him. We must exalt Him, praise Him, worship Him.  
**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"