



**BETHEL**  
PRESBYTERIAN

# MINISTRY OF THE WORD

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**The Benefits that Flow from Christ, Part 6**

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## **The Glory of God and His Temple**

In 586 BC, the Babylonians destroyed the Jewish temple built by Solomon! Now the tragedy that this represented in the eyes of the faithful Jew is hard to appreciate, until you consider a couple of passages. At the completion of the Solomonic Temple in 959 BC we read these words:

2 Chronicles 7:1-2, "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house."

This was such a wonderful and glorious beginning. Upon the completion of the temple and its dedication, the glory of God descended upon the building. So great did the glory of God inhabit the temple that the high priest entered the holy of holies with fear and trembling! That is why we are shocked to read this:

2 Kings 25:8-9, "And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire."

What a shock! And yet, as horrible as it was that the Temple lay in ruin, the real tragedy lay in the

REASON: God Had Abandoned His Sanctuary! Jeremiah explains:

Lamentations 2:7, "The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast."

Though the temple could and would be rebuilt, (in fact the Herodian Temple at the time of Christ far surpassed Solomon's temple in magnitude and expense) we are never told again that God dwelt in the Temple as He did before the exile.

Why?

Why would the glory of God not return to the temple upon the repentance of His people?

There are many possible reasons. Let me suggestion one. The Temple was a picture, among other things of the abode of God in the heart of man!

1 Corinthians 6:19, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

As a shadow of the dwelling of God in man, the temple served its purpose; it pictured God's presence among His people. And thus, when we come to the New Covenant, we find that the priority is no longer the physical temple in Jerusalem but the temple of our bodies in which the Spirit dwells!

Thus we read in the New Testament regarding the glory of God and the temple of our bodies these words:

2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

While the glory of the Lord departed from the Temple of Solomon the process of growth in the life of the Christian can be likened to the glory of the Lord descending upon the Temple. Growth in the life of the believer has the ultimate goal of the full manifestation of God's glory in the life of an individual.

## **The Glory of God in Us**

And that, brothers and sisters, is the sixth benefit mentioned in our text: The promise of the glory of God in us.

Previously we discussed the benefit of Sonship in which we read these words:

Romans 8:17, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; **if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.**"

It was this last thought, our manifesting the glory of the Lord, that launched Paul into the section we are addressing. We are going to continue in our discussion of the benefits that flow from Christ. However, I'm just going to introduce you to the sixth benefit: The promise of glory.

## The Content of Glory

What specifically is Paul addressing here when he references the fact that we “also will be glorified with Him” (Romans 8:17)? What is the Content of this Promised Glory?

Romans 8:19, “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”

This constitutes the first element of the promised glory here; the revelation of the sons of God.

What does this mean?

The word *reveal* is a word which can be translated as “uncover” or “unveil.” It references a “revealing of something for what it truly is.”

Matthew 10:26, “Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.”

To a persecuted people, Christ said, “Listen! The day is going to come when all will be seen for what they really are!” Paul writes about the mysteries of God that have formerly been hidden from mankind:

1 Corinthians 2:10, “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit...”

Peter writes this:

1 Peter 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.”

In Christ's first advent, Christ forfeited His glory.<sup>1</sup> At His Second Coming, His glory will be fully seen! That is the idea behind the word used in this text, the revealing of that which is hidden. Now used here it implies that our status as God's sons has yet to be revealed in full; which raises the question, “In what way is our sonship hidden and thus able to be revealed?”

To answer this, notice two passages.

Colossians 3:3-4, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

1 John 3:1, “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.”

See brothers and sisters, the world does not comprehend who/what Christians really are. And for that matter, neither do we! WE fail to comprehend the significance of and our WORLD mocks all who say that because God is our Father

- All that is in the world is ours!
- God is our personal Lord and Savior.
- Salvation is a love relationship between God and us.

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Philippians 2 and John 17

- We hold a unique place in the economy of God.

And yet mark it, on the last day we shall be “glorified with God” which according to Romans 8:19. This means that everyone who has ever lived on this earth will be the audience of an unveiling in which God's love for us and the blessings planned for us will become a matter of public knowledge. Christ, speaking of this final day said this:

Matthew 13:43, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Indeed! God's people will be on exhibition so that all will be able to see whose we are, and what God has wrought for and in us!

That is what is being spoken about in Romans 8:18 when Paul references, “...the glory that is to be revealed to us.” On the Last Day, we will be on display as the people of God!

Now as those created in the image of God, this is important. Because God is just we have an inborn desire/need for justice! When someone is defrauded, we cry foul. When the weak are taken advantage of, we are moved to anger. In fact, the makings of a good story revolves around this theme; the theme of righteous vindication.

And that is why living in this world as God's unseen children often times can be so hard. As children of God, how do you feel when persecution comes? Tragedy strikes? Life is just plain difficult?

Often times we feel betrayed by God; even though Christ has gone before us and suffered all the miseries of this life don't we?

We think this: “We are His children and yet, we are treated like this?”

Yet brothers and sisters, learn from our text! The hand of the Lord has yet to be revealed!

Jeremiah

Jeremiah 29 was written to God’s people who had been taken in the Babylonian exile of 586 BC. Jeremiah gave this message to God’s people in a foreign land:

Jeremiah 29:4-7, “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.”

This is a beautiful picture of our status on this earth: Exiles in a foreign land. Philippians 3 says our citizenship is in heaven. Hebrews 11:13 calls us strangers and aliens on the earth. And yet, notice the promise given to God's people:

Jeremiah 29:10-11. “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at

Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

Just as the Israelite in captivity so are the people of God on this earth; in a foreign land:

- Unappreciated.
- Taken for granted.
- Used.
- Persecuted.

Yet, as a benefit of the Cross of Christ we have the promise of Glory which includes the future revealing of our true identity as God's sons! Away with the worldly focus that lives as though the present is all that there is!

- The worldly lusts that wage war against our soul.
- Depression and despair- as though now is all that there is.

Brothers and Sisters, the day of vindication is coming when our status as God's children will be common knowledge to all including and especially ourselves!

## **The Adoption As Sons**

Now this brings us to the second element of our promised glory, the adoption as sons.

Romans 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Not only are we waiting for our status to be plainly revealed, we also are awaiting our adoption. This can be rather confusing. In Romans 8:14-17, Paul addresses the issue of the Christian's adoption and there states that the person who comes to Christ becomes a son of God. And he also receives

- The spirit of Adoption, v. 15.
- The testimony that he is a child of God, v. 16.
- The promise of an inheritance as God's son, v. 17.

And yet, here Paul speaks as though our adoption is still future. So which is it- present or future?

The answer is “Yes!” At the time of salvation we are adopted by God with the understanding that there is more to our adoption than we now experience.

1 John 3:2, “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.”

Just as our salvation is not completed in this age, neither is our adoption. In fact based on our text, as children of God, we anticipate a future bestowment when it comes to our adoption; a bestowment which will bring to the fullest realization our status as sons of God.

And what is that “future bestowment”?

It is our Inheritance.

Romans 8:17, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint–heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Galatians 4:7, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

See in Scripture, sonship includes the idea of inheritance (which points to the future). If we are God's sons then we are heirs of God! And thus, though we are children of God in the fullest possible sense in this age, it will not be until the age to come that we experience the fullness of the benefits that sonship brings.

And what are these benefits?

- Final cleansing from all sin, Revelation 21:3-4.
- Full conformity to the image of Christ, Philippians 3:20.
- Participation in the judging of this world, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3.
- Immortality, 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
- Unhindered fellowship with God, Revelation 21:3-4.

That is what is being spoken about in Romans 8:18 when Paul references, “...the glory that is to be revealed to us.” According to Romans 8:23b, we will experience the fullness of the benefits that sonship brings!

What effect should this truth have on our lives?

So big deal, in the future we shall inherit the benefits that Sonship brings. How does this affect the here and now?

Notice with me a couple of passages that specifically address this question.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23, “Therefore let no man glory in men. **For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.**”

As children of God we are heirs of all things! Now, what effect does that have on our lives in the here and now?

1 Corinthians 3:21a, “Therefore let no man glory in men.”

*Glorying or boasting* denotes a deeply felt jubilation, rejoicing, or delighting. And thus, to “glory/boast in men” is to derive one’s joy and confidence from the accomplishments of another. It is the opposite of

rejoicing in God.

With this I hope you see that knowledge of the inheritance we have in Christ takes our focus off of the things of this world and places it solely in Christ! And thus, when we read in our text that the promise of glory includes the consummation of our adoption; ALL THINGS ARE OURS IN CHRIST, our affections and desires for this world should wane! After all what is

- A Large house?
- A great job?
- Success by the world's standards?
- Happiness?
- Good health?

When these things are compared to the inheritance that already is ours in Christ they are nothing! In the words of Christ:

Luke 9:25, "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"

Paul speaks of the inheritance that is his in Christ

2 Timothy 4:8, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Now notice what affect this had on Paul's life.

2 Timothy 4:6-7, "For I am now ready to be offered (as a drink offering), and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Knowledge of our inheritance leads to selfless, self-sacrificing service in the Lord! It led Paul to being poured out as a drink offering.<sup>2</sup> It led Paul to fight the good fight of faith.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the greatest example is that of Christ.

John 13:3-5, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

Notice the affect that Christ's knowledge of His inheritance had on our Lord. It led to an incredible act of sacrificial service.<sup>4</sup>

So does having an understanding of the inheritance we have in Christ affect the here and now?

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<sup>2</sup> Compare 2 Timothy 4:6

<sup>3</sup> Compare 2 Timothy 4:7

<sup>4</sup> Compare John 13:4-5

YOU BET! It places the things of this world in their proper perspective. As one man put it, contrasting the eternal with the temporal things of this world:

I counted dollars; God counted crosses.  
I counted gains; He counted losses.  
I counted my worth by the things gained in store;  
He sized me up by the scars that I bore.  
I coveted honors, and sought for degrees;  
He wept as He counted the hours I spent on my knees.  
I never knew until one day by the grave, how vain are the things we spend our lives to save.

### **The Redemption of Our Body**

Now this brings us to the third element of our promised glory: The redemption of our body.

Romans 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, **to wit, the redemption of our body.**”

Now from the perspective of the culture of Paul's day, this is a concept packed full of meaning. Recall that to redeem literally means “to buy back.” This is one of six terms taken from the field of law and used in the Bible in relation to salvation. Now notice the background of the word.

In the Old Testament, “redemption” referred to the release of a captive under a sentence of death by the payment of a price.

Exodus 21:29-30, “But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death. If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.”

Yet in the New Testament “redemption” became more common of a term on account of its societal context. In the Apostolic age the Roman Empire had as many as six million slaves, and the buying and selling of them was a major business. And thus if a person wanted to free a loved one or friend who was a slave, he could buy that slave for himself and then grant him freedom, testifying to the deliverance with a written certificate. The word used in this certificate to designate the freeing of a slave was “Redemption.”

Now whether you reference the Old Testament or the culture behind the New Testament as the background for this term in our text, the result is the same: Redemption carries the idea of purchasing out of slavery! And thus, an element of the promised glory that we receive in Christ is the buying of our bodies out of slavery.

Now this raises the question, “In what way is the Christian's body in slavery?”

Romans 7:14, “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”



Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. . . "

Romans 7;23, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Galatians 5:17, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

In each of these texts we see a common theme; though we have been saved by the cross of Christ, we nevertheless still dwell in a world which is under the dominion of sin. And though we no longer are bound by the power of sin such that we are its slaves, nevertheless our flesh is still weak such that if WE choose to give sin an opportunity, it can and will control our bodies; the flesh. In other words, the only beach-head left for sin in the life of the child of God is their BODIES!

Now this leads to the conclusion that though we have been redeemed by the cross and thus have received new life in Christ, our BODIES still await their final redemption in which they once-for-all will be purged of sin. What a glorious thought!

Isn't our lifelong bane as children of God or fleshly lusts?

Christ saved us and for that we love Him. But then we turn around and trample underfoot His cross again and again!

Who here can't identify with Paul's words, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death" (Romans 7;24)?

Yet behold! The third and final element to the promise of glory that awaits us in Christ is the redemption of our bodies! There will come a time when we will love Christ with a love untainted by sin! When Christ returns He will

Philippians 3:21, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

2 Corinthians 5:2, "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven [our glorified bodies]."

That is what is being spoken about in Romans 8:18 where Paul references, "...the glory that is to be revealed to us." And according to Romans 8;23, our bodies will be redeemed!

Now this leads to an important conclusion: God places a high priority on our bodies. According to some of the philosophical schools of Paul's day the physical realm was evil and distinct from the spiritual realm, which was good. And thus, what you did in the physical realm with your body had very little affect on your spirit. These Gnostics would say

- You want to join yourself to a prostitute? NO BIG DEAL.
- You want to live in a drunken state? NO BIG DEAL.

To these Gnostics the spirit was all that mattered, not the body! Against this backdrop, we read a radical truth in Scripture.

- Our bodies are the vessel of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.
- If therefore we unite our bodies with a prostitute, we unite Christ in the act of harlotry, 1 Corinthians 6:15.
- Based on this we are called to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, Romans 12:1-2.
- In fact, our bodies are so important that the redemption that Christ accomplished at the cross included our bodies, Romans 8:23c.

And thus we conclude that just as in the case of our soul, God has a plan for our bodies! This leads to the exhortation given in Scripture, "...therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Let me ask you some important questions. How many of you would willingly take the life that God has given you and use it to

- Bolster your own cause?
- Labor for the things that perish?
- Worship Satan?

There are few if any of us who would willingly do these things. And yet so many of us use our bodies unto the same end. Again, this is our bane! Either we neglect our bodies in the name of God because we don't think they really matter. Or we worship our bodies in the name of God thinking that they are all important. Listen, what we do with our bodies is of great importance for it will directly affect our ministry; as ones who have received new life in Christ, and our ability to glorify God.

In view of the teaching of this text, let us therefore use our bodies to the glory of God. Let us

- Be good stewards of them.
- Give them their due.
- Serve God with and by them.

And this NOT because that is what we're supposed to do as Christians BUT because we love God and want to use our vessel for His glory! Listen to the heartbeat of the child of God in what Lancelot Andrews wrote:

"Thyself, O my God, Thyself for Your own sake, above all things else I love. Thyself I desire. Thyself as my chief end I long for... always and in all things I seek with all my heart and marrow, with groaning and weeping, with unbroken toil and grief. What will You give me therefore in the end? If You give me not Thyself, You give me nothing... If I find not Thyself, I find nothing... [And] if You deny me Thyself, whatever else You give me, if You frustrate [this my only] hope, and that not for a little while but forever, shall I not always languish with love, mourn with languishing, grieve with mourning, [and] bewail with grief... Shall I not sorrow inconsolably, complain unceasingly, be wrung unendingly? [Yet, this] is not [Your plan], O best, most gracious, most loving God. In no way is this congruent [with Your will for me]. Make me therefore, O... God, in my present life always to love You... before all things, to seek You in all things, and at the last in the life to come to find and to keep You forever."<sup>5</sup> (Taken from *A Passion for God*, pg. 115)

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr. *A Passion for God: Prayers and Meditations on the Book of Romans*, Good News and Crossway, ISBN-10: 1581344503, October 2002, page 115.

You've received a glimpse into what we shall be as children of God! May this glimpse make us all more passionate for the Savior in the here and now!

## **About Bethel Presbyterian Church**

*The Bethel Presbyterian Church Ministry of the Word* is published regularly.

### **VISIT US WHEN IN Broomfield, COLORADO**

Feel free to visit Bethel Presbyterian Church when in Broomfield, Colorado. Bethel Presbyterian Church meets at Broomfield High School, Eagle (10<sup>th</sup> Street) and Main, Broomfield, Colorado. The telephone number of the church is 303-469-6912. The worship services are at 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. each Sunday. Bethel Presbyterian Church is a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

All our sermons can be accessed via the World Wide Web. The recording for this sermon and these notes can be found [A Glorious Future](#). The web address for all sermons at Bethel Presbyterian Church can be found out as follows: <http://bethelpresbyterian.sermonaudio.com>

### **About the Preacher**

Greg Thurston preached this sermon on September 29, 2008. Greg is the preacher at Bethel Presbyterian Church