

THE RIGHTNESS—AND REASONS—TO BRING GLORY TO GOD

Over the last couple of weeks, we've been considering the *incredibly important topic* of bringing glory to God.

How important is it for us to do that? Since God *created us to bring glory to Him*, how can there be anything **more** important? Not only that—as mentioned last week—I believe a strong case can be made for “the glory of God” being *the over-arching...the central...the unifying theme* of the entire Bible!

Why don't I agree with those who suggest that **love** is the dominant theme of the Bible?

--Because God doesn't **love the devil...or fallen angels...or sin!**

Why don't I agree with those who suggest that **salvation** is the unifying theme of the Bible?

--Because **not everyone will be saved!**

But...in my opinion—you would be hard-pressed to find historical accounts...or prophecies...or teachings—in the Bible that don't somehow or another **point back to** the glory of God!

Why does it matter that we know—and believe—that we were created to glorify God? In other words, **what good** does it do? How does it **benefit us** as individuals?

We noted last week that it gives us purpose and peace in life...and perspective regarding trials...and it prepares us for heaven. This morning, we are going to consider “The Rightness and Reasons for Bringing Glory to God.”

1. The “rightness” for God wanting to be glorified

As mentioned several times over the last couple weeks—and just a couple of minutes ago—God created us to bring glory to Him (Is 43:7,21)—and God does not share His glory (Is 42:8; 48:11).

In fact, it may surprise some of you to learn that God says He is a **jealous God**.

Please take your Bibles and turn to Exodus 20; follow along as I read vs 1-5.

In a nutshell, God is saying ‘Don't have other gods—and don't make a graven image of any thing that is in heaven...or on the earth...or under the water.’

--**Why?** Because God doesn't want us to bow down and serve them!

--**Why?** Because “I the LORD thy God am a **jealous God**...”

Question: Is a **statue of a person** in the likeness of something from heaven...or earth...or under the water?

It is, isn't it...???

This isn't the only place in the Bible where God is said to be **jealous**.

Deut 6:14-15 “Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

¹⁵ (For the Lord thy God is a **jealous God among you**) **lest the anger** of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.” Similar statements are made in Deut 4:23-24; 5:8-9.

Not only did God have Moses write that He **was jealous**—God inspired Moses to write that “Jealous” was one of **His names!** You're in Exodus 20; we see that in Exodus 34.

--Please turn there and follow along as I read verses 12-15.

The jealous God has the name “Jealous.” But although it is wrong for **us to be jealous**, it is not wrong for God to be jealous. **Why** is that?

In order to answer that, we need to consider what it means to be “jealous.” **Definitions of jealous:**

1) “a feeling of unhappiness and anger because someone has something or someone that you want:”

Does this one **fit God?** Yes...and **no!** Why is it both?

Yes, because Deuteronomy 6:15 states **God is angry** with those who follow after other gods!

No, because **no one**—and **no thing**—has anything that God doesn't have—but desires—**except praise!**

2) “extremely careful in protecting someone or something”

Is God extremely careful in protecting something? Yes; He is! What is it that God is extremely careful to protect? **His glory!** **Isaiah 42:8** “I am the Lord: that is my name: and **my glory will I not give to another**, neither my praise to graven images.” Here's one more:

3) “upset and angry because someone that you love seems interested in another person:”

Does this one fit God? Yes! Why? Because—as already mentioned—God *is angry* when His people—whom *He loves*—loves someone (or something) other than Himself!

So... is God some kind of an *egomaniac* with such poor self-esteem that He needs to be constantly affirmed and validated? That’s not it at all! The answer—in my mind—is quite simple and boils down to this:

Since God is the Supreme Being, to give glory to someone or something—other than Him—is to promote a lie!

--Is God the **Supreme Being**? Yes, He is! Hebrews 6:13 “For when God made promise to Abraham, because **He could swear by no greater**, He swore by Himself,”

--Is God **a God of truth**? Yes, He is! Deuteronomy 32:4 “He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: **a God of truth** and without iniquity, just and right is He.”

Stated another way, God desiring—and requiring—glory is not a matter *of His feelings*—it is a matter *of truth!*

So...it is obviously “right” for God to desire His glory—and not to share it with anyone or anything else!

Next, let’s consider **the reasons** for us to glorify God.

Why should we glorify God? **What are the reasons** for doing so? One man wisely wrote: “The reasons are as *infinite* as God Himself!” But since *an infinite number* of reasons would take us a while 😊, we need to narrow it down some!

We could break the reasons into smaller categories like **who** God is (His attributes), **what** God does (His works), and what **God says** (His Word). But even that would be a lot, wouldn’t it? Instead, we are going to look at **two verses** where God gives us *specific reasons* to glorify Him.

Take your Bibles and turn to Romans 15. Notice what it says in vs 9 “And that the Gentiles might **glorify** God for His mercy....” **Who** are the Gentiles? **Non-Jews**—meaning us! **Why** are we to glorify God? For His mercy!

2. Reason #1 to glorify God: Because of His mercy! (Romans 15:9)

Sadly, we often take the mercy of God for granted. Why is that? One reason is *because we don’t fully understand* the mercy of God. Another reason is because—in our minds—the mercy of God has *always been available* to Gentiles. If we know our Bibles, though, that has *not always* been the case.

First, let’s consider, A. The expansion of mercy

The first part of vs 9—“that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy”—will *not have the impact* on us that God intends if we overlook what God through Paul is telling us in the surrounding verses. Notice the **emphasis** Paul places on **the Gentiles**. Verse 9 has the word “Gentiles” twice.

Notice what it says in vs 10 and 11. And in vs 12, it refers to the Gentiles again—twice. **Why** all this **emphasis** on the Gentiles? Because mercy *was not always available* to the Gentiles!

Paul spells that out in verse 8: “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision...” “Minister” means “servant” and comes from the Greek word that we get our English word “deacon” from. **Who** was Jesus a servant to? **The circumcision**. Who is that? The Jews! How do we know?

Because Jesus Himself told us that His primary mission was **to the Jews!**

Notice what He says when He sent His disciples out. **Mt 10:5-6** “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not** into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶ **But go rather** to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Jesus said the same thing *of His own* ministry: **Mt 15:24** “But He answered and said, **I am not sent but unto the lost sheep** of the house of Israel.”

When did Jesus expand the gospel—and His mercy—to all peoples? Just prior to His ascension into heaven! **Mt 28:20** “Go ye therefore, and teach **all nations**...”

Mk 16:15 “And He said unto them, Go ye into **all the world**, and preach the gospel to **every creature**.”

Luke 24:47 “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name **among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem.”

Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and **unto the uttermost part of the earth.**”

Did the Jews ***embrace this idea that non-Jews*** were now able to receive God’s mercy and forgiveness? ***Not at all!*** God had to appear to ***Peter in a vision***—the Bible calls it a trance—and let him know that it was okay for him to go to the Gentiles! Notice what Peter says upon arriving at the home of Cornelius, a Roman soldier. **Acts 10:28** “And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an **unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew** to keep company, or come **unto one of another nation**; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.”

Peter then preaches the gospel to Cornelius and his family and a number of them trust Christ and are saved. Notice the response of the Jews that were with Peter. **Acts 10:45** “And they of the circumcision which believed **were astonished**, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.” **Why** were the Jews astonished? Because God had ***granted forgiveness and mercy and the gift of the Holy Spirit*** to the Gentiles in the same way He had done to the Jews!

Was God ***required*** to expand His mercy to the Gentiles? No; He wasn’t! God is not ***required*** to extend His mercy ***to anyone!*** He does it of ***His own free will***—and told Moses that very thing in Exodus 33:19 “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.**” Paul reiterated that truth in Romans 9:15. ***Are you thankful*** that God has expanded His mercy to the Gentiles? I sure am!

Not only should we glorify God—praise and thank Him—that His mercy has been expanded to include us, we should also be thankful based on ***what mercy is***. I mentioned earlier that we sometimes take mercy for granted because we ***don’t fully understand what mercy is***.

B. An explanation of mercy.

What is mercy? Mercy is often defined simply as “the withholding of judgment.”

But let’s not overlook what is implied in that simple definition.

--In order to have judgment, there needs to be a ***judge***...and people to ***be judged***...and ***a standard*** to determine innocence or guilt.

--If judgment ***is withheld***, it means the judge determined that someone was guilty and deserved punishment.

--And, if the judge ***withholds judgment*** to someone who is guilty, he/she usually has a reason for doing so.

Now let’s put this in the ***spiritual realm***.

--God is the ***Judge of all the earth*** (Gen 18:25; Eccl 12:14; II Tim 4:8; Heb 12:23) and has ***the right to Judge us*** because He is our Creator and because there is no one greater than Him!

--His ***standard***—the laws which we are measured by to determine innocence or guilt—***is the Bible***.

--As an ***all-knowing Judge***, He knows each and every commandment we’ve broken. None are ***forgotten...or missed...or thrown out*** due to a lack of evidence or a technicality.

--We are ***all guilty*** (Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:10, 23) because we ***have all broken*** God’s commandments. Even if we have broken ***only one***, we are guilty of breaking them all it says in James 2:10 “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

--And, as a perfectly ***righteous Judge***, the only reason God ***can justly withhold judgment***—and maintain His holy perfection—is to have ***someone else*** take the punishment in place of the guilty!

And ***that Someone***, of course, was Jesus! **II Corinthians 5:21** “For He [God] hath made Him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made [might have] the righteousness of God in Him.”

I Pet 3:18 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God,”

Do you glorify—do you honor and praise and thank God—for the mercy He has extended to us through Christ? We certainly should, shouldn’t we? Understanding how ***great God*** is...and how ***holy His standards*** are...and how much we have ***broken them***...and the ***price that was paid*** for us to be forgiven, certainly ought to make us marvel over the mercy of God!

You're in Romans 15, please turn now to I Corinthians 6. I Corinthians is the next book toward the back of the Bible so it shouldn't be too hard to find. Notice what it says in vss 19-20. Here we see...

3. Reason #2 to glorify God: Because of His mastery (I Cor 6:19-20)

--**What** is mastery? The authority—and control—of **the master!** **Who is our master?** God!

--**Why** are we not our own master? Because God **paid for us**—He bought us—and we now **belong to Him!**

--Is God's ownership of us **debatable?** No; it's not!

--Is God's ownership of us **difficult to understand?** Again, no; it's not!

What's difficult to understand is why we are **so reluctant** to let God be our master—and why we have such a hard time **giving glory** to Him! We will talk more about what **it means** to glorify God—and **how to do that**—in a couple of weeks, but for now I want us to consider these two things: **the "reasonableness"** of God's mastery over us and **our response** to God's mastery.

A. The reasonableness of God's mastery over us

Why is it reasonable for us to submit to—to surrender to—God as our master? Two reasons:

1) The greatness of the price paid

Jesus said in **John 15:13** "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The greatest love **a man** can have is his willingness to **give up his life** to save someone else's. We were reminded of that just a couple of months ago when Corey Comperatore literally gave up his life to save the life of his wife and daughter. His daughter Allyson wrote: "He threw my mom and I to the ground... [and] shielded my body from the bullet that came at us" (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cv2grvznd4jo>).

Not to take away from what this man did, but **what Jesus did** was even **greater love**, wasn't it?

Why? Because the **infinite God** took on the form of man to die a **torturous death** not for those who loved Him—but for those who **hated Him!** But Jesus' death was more than just **physical**, wasn't it?

In my opinion, the **greatest pain** Jesus suffered was not the **physical** torture of being crucified, but the **spiritual agony** of being forsaken by the Father. In a mystery beyond our comprehension, God the Father **poured out His wrath**—and the required payment for **our sin**—on Himself as God the Son! How else can you explain Jesus' words, "My God, my God; why hast thou forsaken me!"

Why is it reasonable for us to submit to God as our Master? Because of the **greatness of the price paid!** A second reason is this: **2) The goodness of the Price-payer**. How do you even **begin to describe** the goodness of God? **Stephen Charnock**—one of the great Puritan theologians in the 1600's—wrote nearly 150 pages of fine-print expounding on the goodness of God. I haven't read all he wrote, but here are a couple of truths he points out:

God is **only good**, meaning He can't be bad.

God is **infinitely** good, meaning there is no end to His goodness.

God is **unchangeably** good, meaning He always has been good—and always will be good!

The Bible simply puts it like this in **Psalms 119:68** says, "Thou art good, and doest good..."

Think for a moment of the different "authority" figures we have throughout our lives.

--Were our **parents** always good—and only did good?

--Were our **teachers** always good—and only did good?

--Were our **bosses** always good—and only did good?

--Are our **politicians** always good—and only do good?

--Are **husbands** always good—and only do good?

The only Being that is always **good**—and **only does good**—is God!

Lastly, let's consider... B. Our response to God's mastery over us

How **have you responded**—and how are you **now responding**—to the One who paid such an **incredible price** for you—and who is **always good** and **only does good**? We know how we **should respond**, don't we?

--We know **we should do** what it says in Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Have you done that—and are you daily doing that?

--We know that we "should **not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him** which died for us, and rose again" like it says in II Corinthians 5:14, but are we doing that?

--Instead, I'm afraid too many of us respond to God the way Laban responded to Jacob. Jacob worked seven years for Laban's daughter **Rachel**—but Laban gave him Leah instead!

--Too many of us are like the people during the time of Malachi who sacrificed **blind, lame, and sick animals** to God—instead of ones **without blemish** like He required!

--And too many of us are like the rich young ruler who **chose his riches** over following Jesus!

Why these examples? To emphasize the point that God should have mastery over **our entire life**, but too often times we just give Him what we are **willing to part with**—and not our all!

What about you? Have you given your all to God? If not, why not?

So, what is it that God wants **us to do** with what we've heard?

1. First, God wants us to be honest about our surrender to Him. We need to make a "once and for all" decision to surrender to Him as our Master—and we need to renew that commitment **daily**.

--If you have not done that—and are not doing that—that is what God wants you to do.

2. Second, do you appreciate—and are you thankful for—the mercy of God? If so, we should praise Him for it—and be willing to share it with others.

3. Third, are you a partaker of God's mercy? God has extended mercy—the withholding of eternal judgment—from us through Christ. That mercy is available to all—but you need to personally receive it for yourself. Have you done that?