

Ephesians. The Identity of the Church that Overcomes.

Part 13: Everything is for the Praise of the Glory of God

Houses of Light Church • October 20, 2024 • Pastor Netz Gomez & Ilse Marquez

Focus: Ephesians 1:5, 6, 12, & 14

"...he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.... 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.... 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory." Ephesians 1:5,6,12, & 14

I. God emphasizes that everything is to the praise of his glory.

- A. In verse 1:6, Paul concludes that the reason we are chosen and adopted as His sons and daughters is to the praise of His glorious grace. When we go to verses 7-14 we realize that we have not just been redeemed (v.7); we have obtained an inheritance (v.11), and the reason or purpose God did this is so we would be to the praise of His glory (v.12). Then, when we are sealed by the Holy Spirit as the guarantee of our inheritance it is all for the praise of His glory (v. 14).
- B. We can't lose sight of the obvious: God desires for His glory to be praised. It is not we who initiate this purpose, rather we are expected to respond to the glory that He displays in all these verses.
- C. **The purpose of every blessing in the heavenly places is that we as His people may see and praise His glory** and this is what we see throughout Scripture.
 1. God created the world so we would see His glory. — *"The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork."* Psalm 19:1
 2. God sent His son so that we would be able to behold His glory. — *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."* John 1:14
 3. God chose Israel for His glory. — *"everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."* Isaiah 43:7
 4. God sent His son to die as propitiation for our sins so He would be glorified. — *"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."* John 12:27-28
 5. God leads us to excellence in what we do for His glory and praise. — *"so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."* Philippians 1:10-11
 6. God is sending Christ to the earth for a second time as the consumption of all things to be glorified in His saints. — *"They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed."* 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10

II. Why isn't God seeking His own glory self-centered or wrong?

- A. C.S. Lewis describes it this way: *"I had never noticed that all enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise unless . . . shyness or the fear of boring others is deliberately brought in to check it. The world rings with praise — lovers praising their mistresses [Romeo praising Juliet and vice versa], readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game — praise of weather, wines, dishes, actors, motors, horses, colleges, countries, historical personages, children, flowers, mountains, rare stamps, rare beetles, even sometimes politicians or scholars. . . . Except where intolerably adverse circumstances interfere, praise almost seems to be inner health made audible. . . ."*

- B. *I had not noticed either that just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: "Isn't she lovely? Wasn't it glorious? Don't you think that magnificent?" The Psalmists in telling everyone to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about...I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation."*
- C. God is the ultimate being in the universe who sets Himself up for praise and He is loving because He knows that is what will bring us the greatest delight. If He did not seek the praise of His glory He would not love us because we were created to find our greatest joy in seeing, tasting and speaking the praise of God's glory. This is what happens in heaven:
"11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped." Revelation 5:11-14
"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18

III. If God doesn't open our eyes, we cannot see His glory

- A. In Ephesians 1:3-14 Paul simply describes all that God is and does and what He expects of us is that when we see His glory we praise Him. **The reason people do not overflow with praise when they hear such glorious blessings is because they cannot see the glory of God.**
And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
- B. We can only see God's glory when He enlightens our hearts through the Gospel. If God doesn't open the eyes of our hearts, we will not see how glorious He is. If this happens, money, great material success, business, a relationship, or a person, or anything else on the earth will become more important than the glory God releases.

IV. Praying for our eyes to be open and for the knowledge of God to turn into praise

"For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him..." Ephesians 1:15-17

- A. This prayer is for people to see the glory of vs. 1:3-14. It's so the praise of the glory of God may emerge from their hearts. The teaching that has been illuminated by God overflows into the praise of God. This is why it is crucial that there be prayer before and after a teaching about who God is.
- B. If the eyes of our hearts are not open we will never see the hope to which we have been called (1:18a), nor the riches of His glorious inheritance in us (v.18a), nor the greatness of His power towards us who believe (1:19).
- C. v. 1:16 *"I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers..."* Every time Paul prayed, he remembers them and gave thanks to God because he had heard about their faith and love for the sings. It is not so much that he thanks them for the faith and love they have, but rather that he thanks

God for what He has done in them. Paul never tells them: 'thank you for believing in God and loving each other so much.' When a person has faith and love, we should thank God because He granted them that.

- D. God transformed those who were slaves of sin into those who now wholeheartedly submit to the teaching that is being transmitted. Every time we see a Christian acting in obedience and love for Jesus, we should overflow with thanksgiving to God for having granted them understanding.

V. Conclusion

- A. One of the greatest needs of the Church in our time is to pray constantly for our eyes to be enlightened and for God to give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, otherwise we will be constantly fascinated by the world. This happened to the church in Ephesus. They had started out very well but were warned by Jesus of the danger of straying from their first love.
- B. Let us pray for ourselves and for our loved ones. If you have them there with you, pray for them. If you came alone, begin to pray for those you love and who have not been illuminated by the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ so that God may give them spiritual wisdom and insight, so that they may grow in the knowledge of God and may their hearts be flooded with light in the name of Jesus.

VI. Reflection questions:

1. According to what we learned today, why does God want everything to be for the praise of His glory?
2. Why do we need to pray for the Father of glory to give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him?
3. Take time in your friendship group to pray for one another, that God would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Announcements:

1. October 31st, we have a family festival called Hallelujah Night! We need candy donations and volunteers to help us! If you'd like to join the team, talk to our kid's ministry leaders and/or bring a bag of candy to our next service!
2. Do you want to be baptized? We invite you to take the preparation class Monday, November 11 at 7:00 p.m. in Building 2. Baptisms will take place during services on November 16 and 17. You can sign up by emailing us at hello@housesoflight.org
3. If you need more information about any of the events we talk about, or you want to get connected with a friendship group, our website is now available in English at: housesoflight.church! (You can also find all of our Ephesians series teaching videos and notes on the website!)