

**“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,”** Glory is one of those churchy words that we kind of know what it means, but if you had to describe it, you might have a hard time doing so.

C.S. Lewis, in a sermon he wrote titled “The Weight of Glory” whose title I believe draws from this passage of 2 Corinthians, explains that glory has two aspects, both fame, and brightness. To have glory is to have recognition and honor. But to have glory is also to be beautiful, luminous, and bright. We might draw from a passage like Daniel 12:3 which teaches of those who will be saved, **“And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”**

But part of what Lewis wrestles with is that we’re not there yet. We have not yet received this glory in full. And this is the same thing we see in this section of Paul’s letters to the Church in Corinth. **“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.”** There is a wait of glory. Wait not as in how heavy something is, but wait as in waiting is the hardest part. Today we learn **THROUGH THE WAIT OF GLORY, THE LORD PRODUCES THE WEIGHT OF GLORY IN US.**

First, I. Jesus Christ achieved the weight of glory through His ministry. Paul starts our section of the text by saying, **“knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.”** We have glory because Jesus Christ first achieved glory.

The irony is that throughout Jesus’ ministry, Jesus may have appeared to be just an ordinary guy. Isaiah prophesies of Him, **“As many were astonished at you— his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—...he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.”** Many people reject Him, writing Him off as simply the son of Mary and Joseph. Even His own family at times doubts Him as we read in our Gospel lesson.

Infamy, shame, dishonor, rejection. These are the opposites of glory and in this life, Jesus faced these for you. His death on the cross was complete shame and rejection as in this suffering for sins, even His Father rejected Him. **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

But that’s not how the story ended. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and His Heavenly Father recognized Him, and gave him the glory. His glory is known as His disciples recognized Him and worshipped Him. His glory is known as He shines with the brightness of the Son. His glory is known as He is seated at the right hand of God and one day He will return **“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.**” This weight of glory belongs to Jesus Christ, and it is ultimately for the glory and honor of God the Father.

II. This weight of glory is ours in Jesus. We want glory. We want our fifteen minutes of fame. We even feel special when we spend time with local celebrities, or we win a minor distinction. We want to be liked. We want to be accepted. And taken to the extreme, this search for glory can turn into selfishness, vanity, and self-aggrandizement.

God wired us this way on purpose, but true glory consists of finding that fame and recognition in God alone. Let’s start with the opposite, the ultimate shame and dishonor. Jesus warns throughout the Gospels of those who reject Him, that He will reject them. **“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven....and then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”** What a horrible fate, ultimately to be forgotten.

However, we see a positive example of glory in the parable of the talents. The Master says to the faithful servants, **“Well done, Good and Faithful servant.”** When we receive that praise when we get to heaven, it won’t be a selfish pride that receives that praise, it will be a childlike pleasure in receiving recognition and praise from the Creator of the Universe.

Because even then, we will realize that it is to God alone be the glory. It was never our faithfulness. It was never our ability to follow God. It was all what God had done for us in Christ Jesus delivered to us through the Holy Spirit. We see this vision in the book of Revelation as those before the throne cast down their crowns and give God the glory, realizing it was never theirs to begin with.

**“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”** God is calling us to follow Him faithfully wherever His calling may lead. People may not notice you. Even worse, people may hate you. However, these sufferings we face pale in comparison to the eternal weight of glory.

This is more valuable than being loved by your family **“For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.”** This is more valuable than seeking worldly beauty for we are to be gilded rather with good works. This is more valuable than modern medicine because we have acceptance from the one who said of Himself, **“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,”** However, we haven’t arrived at the goal of our faith, this eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

III. Until then, we live life with the wait of glory. In his sermon “The Weight of Glory” Lewis remarks that it’s not that God finds our desires too strong, but too weak. “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” We as Christians are called to live a life waiting for and anticipating this glory and recognition before God.

**“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.”** The Lord is using the hardships and sufferings of this life to chip away at our outer self and all that we can’t take with in the life to come. He is using disease and tragedy to help kindle in us desires for our heavenly home, that eternal weight of glory that make these sufferings light in comparison.

For the things that we yearn for most deeply can be summed up in glory, but glory in the proper sense. We want to be recognized, but by the one who created all things in Heaven and on Earth. We want to be beautiful, and that divine beauty will not only acknowledge us, but we will be beautiful as well. In that life to come, we will see everything as it ought to be as we are not only reunited with loved ones who have died in the faith, but be face to face with Jesus Christ.

But Paul explains further why Jesus has died and rose again, we read, **“For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.”** C.S. Lewis commented in his sermon, “It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour....There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilization—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours.”

This message is too good to keep silent, and when we know we have acceptance and love from God Himself, we need not fear rejection from neighbors and friends, their eternal fate depends on it. As we consider our daily lives in this wait of glory, God is inviting us to use that wait time to share Jesus with others, to increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

The Lord wants heaven to be full, and He is sending us as messengers, in all the chaos of this life, let us not neglect to point others to the one to whom all glory is due. Amen!