

Entering into Glory

2.27.2022

Message 47 total from Exodus, starting in 2020.

Message 1 in 2022.

Opening:

A. As we approach our next passages of Scripture, I confess to you a change or stirring in my heart.

1. I feel a welling up within me of a desire to see God move like never before.

2. I have prayed this before, but not with the expectancy and urgency that I have now.

B. I am presently captivated by the theme of "God's Glory".

1. As we finish the last messages of Exodus, we will focus upon the theme of God's Glory.

a. What it is.

b. What brings God glory.

c. What distracts and detracts from God's glory.

2. Today's message hopes to accomplish a few aims:

a. When we are done today, I want us all to have a better understanding of what is meant by God's glory.

b. Then, I am praying that the Holy Spirit will create in you such a desire for God's presence that you will find yourself unhappy, discontented, and disappointed with our low expectations of God.

c. In the days to come, I want us all to be positioned to experience God's glory.

C. This morning is one of those rare instances where I preach the same passage twice.

1. As we turn to Exodus 24, I express to you that this time the passage feels different.
2. I believe that is because I'm different.
3. My life is being marked by an increase in fasting, prayer, and devotion.
 - a. As I draw closer to God, I want to take you all with me in this journey.
 - b. This week, I read of a story that illustrates well what I am experiencing.

On a beautiful evening in 1901, a cowboy working in New Mexico named Jim White noticed something strange rising out of the ground up into the sky. At first he thought it was a column of smoke, but there was no fire. What was it?

As Jim would later recount: "During my life on the range I'd seen plenty of prairie whirlwinds, but this thing didn't move: it remained in one spot, spinning its way upward. I watched it for perhaps a half hour until my curiosity got the better of me. Then I began investigating."

What Jim White found was a large hole in the ground and a countless number of bats flying up into the night sky. "I ... sat for perhaps an hour watching bats fly out. I couldn't estimate the number, but I knew that it must run into millions. The more I thought of it the more I realized that any hole in the ground which could house such a gigantic army of bats must be a whale of a big cave. I crept between cactus until I lay on the brink of the chasm, and looked down. During all the years I'd known of the place, I'd never taken the trouble to do this. There was no bottom in sight! I shall never forget the feeling of aweness it gave me."

The "aweness" of peering into the mouth of the large cave grew exponentially when he was able to climb underground. What Jim White saw below the surface changed the course of his life.

"I returned to the cave with some crude tools and a kerosene lantern. I cut sticks of wood from nearby shrubs and built a rope ladder in order to descend into the mouth of the cave." When White ran out of rope, he lit his lantern and saw a tunnel off to his right about 20 feet down. Holding onto the wall, he descended into a huge chamber.¹

"I explored the tunnel to the left first, finding the bat cave. Returning to the large room, I headed for the tunnel to the right where I saw a wonderland. Enormous stalagmites rose from the floor, clusters of stalactites in a variety of colors hung from above and onyxlined pools full of pure water sparkled brilliantly on the floor."

¹ Edwards, J. Kent. 2009. [*Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons That Go beyond the Superficial*](#). Nashville, TN: B&H Books.

Jim White had discovered the Carlsbad Caverns. He came back to the caves again and again, often staying as long as three days within the caves. In time he decided to devote his life to exploring their beauty. The years he spent in their depths made Jim the foremost authority on the caverns.

But the cowboy didn't want to keep his find to himself. The more he saw below the surface the more he wanted to show others.

He built and installed a series of ladders and pathways that made the caves more accessible. He even invented a "bucket elevator" to give visitors an opportunity to fully access the wonders that lay below the surface. And those who had no money got their tour for free. Jim White couldn't help himself. He felt compelled to show people the beauty he had discovered below the surface, to help people appreciate the grandeur beneath their gaze.

c. More and more, I am feeling compelled to invite all of you to stop staring at the surface and to go deep.

d. Many of us have been on the surface of a relationship with Jesus for a long time, and now God is asking you to dive in and go deep.

e. **Ephesians 3:14–21** (CSB)

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. ¹⁶I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, ¹⁹and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Scripture

Exodus 24 (CSB)

24 Then he said to Moses, "Go up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of Israel's elders, and bow in worship at a distance. ²Moses alone is to approach the LORD, but the others are not to approach, and the people are not to go up with him."

³Moses came and told the people all the commands of the LORD and all the ordinances. Then all the people responded with a single voice, "We will do everything that the LORD has commanded." ⁴And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early the next morning and set up an altar and twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel at the base of the mountain. ⁵Then he sent out young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD. ⁶Moses took half the blood and set it in basins; the other half of the blood he splattered on the altar. ⁷He then took the covenant scroll and read it aloud to the people. They responded, "We will do and obey all that the LORD has commanded."

⁸Moses took the blood, splattered it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you concerning all these words."

⁹Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of Israel's elders, ¹⁰and they saw the God of Israel. Beneath his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as clear as the sky itself. ¹¹God did not harm the Israelite nobles; they saw him, and they ate and drank.

¹²The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay there so that I may give you the stone tablets with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction."

¹³So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua and went up the mountain of God. ¹⁴He told the elders, "Wait here for us until we return to you. Aaron and Hur are here with you. Whoever has a dispute should go to them." ¹⁵When Moses went up the mountain, the cloud covered it. ¹⁶**The glory of the LORD** settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day he called to Moses from the cloud. ¹⁷**The appearance of the LORD's glory** to the Israelites was like a consuming fire on the mountaintop.

¹⁸Moses entered the cloud as he went up the mountain, and he remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

1. What is glory?

A. The glory of God means the sum total of all that God is and does.

“Glory” is not a separate attribute or characteristic of God, such as His holiness, wisdom, or mercy. Everything that God is and does is characterized by glory.ⁱ

1. More simply, in many instances we can say that “glory” is Divine Presence.
2. That doesn’t work in every instance; for example when the Psalms tells us to give God glory, we aren’t giving him presence.
3. Yet, in many instances where God is present, His presence is described as “glory”

B. Moses was well acquainted with God’s glory and presence.

1. He was in God’s presence when the bush was on fire but did not burn.
2. All of Israel was led by God’s glory that manifested in Cloud by day and Fire at night.
3. Exodus 24 tells, yet again, of another instance of Moses entering into God’s presence and this is certainly not the last time.
 - a. Soon Moses will again go and receive tables of Law.
 - b. Moses will ask to “see God’s glory” and will do so.
 - c. Then, everyday Moses will enter into the tabernacle and spend time in God’s presence and glory.
4. All of this points to several important truths about God’s glory.

C. As we discuss some of those truths, what saddens me is that we, God’s people, are unacquainted with God’s glory and presence.

1. Habakkuk 2:14 (CSB)

¹⁴For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD's glory, as the water covers the sea.

2. God's presence is central to the Biblical story, and yet many of us are ignorant of what this entails.

3. Furthermore, we don't desire to see God's glory and thus are missing out on encountering God in an amazing way.

2. Scriptures is consistent in the description of God's glory.

A. When I wanted to dig deeper into this theme, I knew where to turn for pictures of God's glory.

1. I turned to the ancient prophets to see if what they experienced was like what Moses experienced.

2. Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Daniel all shared similar experiences with similar imagery.

Ezekiel 1 (CSB)

VISION OF THE LORD'S GLORY

⁴I looked, and there was a **whirlwind** coming from the north, a **huge cloud with fire** flashing back and forth and **brilliant light** all around it. In the center of the fire, there was a gleam like amber.

¹³The likeness of the living creatures was like the appearance of blazing coals of fire or like torches. Fire was moving back and forth between the living creatures; it was bright, with lightning coming out of it. ¹⁴The creatures were darting back and forth like flashes of lightning.

²²Over the heads of the living creatures the likeness of an expanse was spread out. It gleamed like awe-inspiring crystal, ²³and under the expanse their wings extended one toward another. They each also had two wings covering their bodies. ²⁴When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings **like the roar of a huge torrent, like the voice of the Almighty, and a sound of** tumult like the noise of an army. When they stopped, they lowered their wings.

²⁵A voice came from above the expanse over their heads; when they stopped, they lowered their wings. ²⁶Something like a throne with the appearance of lapis lazuli was above the expanse over their heads. On the

throne, high above, was someone who looked like a human. ²⁷From what seemed to be his waist up, I saw a gleam like amber, with what looked like fire enclosing it all around. From what seemed to be his waist down, I also saw what looked like fire. There was a brilliant light all around him. ²⁸The appearance of the brilliant light all around was like that of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day. **This was the appearance of the likeness of the LORD's glory.** When I saw it, I fell facedown and heard a voice speaking.

A few truths about God's glory.

B. #1 God's glory and Presence is real.

1. God does show up in ways that humans can comprehend.
 - a. We understand clouds, fire, and sounds of wind.
 - b. These are senses we can see, touch, and hear.
 - c. The Psalms tells us to "taste and see that the Lord is good".
2. When you receive salvation, you receive something that is very real.
 - a. You are not participating in a mass delusion or hysteria.
 - b. God is real, and He makes himself known in ways that we can relate.
3. At times, God makes His presence "tangible".
 - a. For Moses, it was a tangible cloud on a tangible mountain.
 - b. Ezekiel saw the Lord in visions, and even though he may not have been able to touch the glowing amber like fire, it wasn't any less real.
 - c. I get a laugh that the IRS makes us write "no goods or services were exchanged except non-tangible religious benefits." On our tax documents.

d. What they do not realize is that what you and I receive with Jesus is far more real than the “digital” money in our bank accounts.

4. The greatest expression of God making His presence tangible was the incarnate of Jesus.

a. Throughout the Old Testament, we read about instances of THE ANGEL OF THE LORD; moments when God came to Earth.

b. But in Jesus, He took on flesh.

c. At the crucifixion, that flesh was beaten, bloodied and bruised.

d. At the resurrection, the body was raised from death to life and someday, that will be true for you.

C. #2 God’s glory is often described in terms of fire, wind, and a voice.

1. Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others saw fire, felt and heard the wind the voice in their encounters.

a. Fire can signify God’s holiness.

b. Wind can signify God’s overwhelming power.

c. The voice can signify God’s desire to speak to and through His people.

2. Why is this significant for you and I?

a. These are the same signs that God used on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

b. On that day, there were cloven tongues of fire that sat upon each person’s head.

c. There was the sounds of a rushing, mighty, torrential wind.

d. Then the people spoke in a heavenly and earthly languages, proclaiming the Good News of God.

3. If we understand the Glory and Presence of God only in terms of Old Testament events, we rob the New Testament Church of that same experience.

a. Although we aren't supposed to expect real fire and the sound of a mighty wind every time we encounter God, we are encouraged to participate in God's glory by speaking in tongues.

b. This is a gift that all of God's people are invited to.

D. #3 The Presence of God is invitation only.

1. In Exodus 24, only Moses and Joshua were invited to step up and into God's presence.

2. The prophets experienced God's glory while their colleagues were excluded.

3. But the Good News is that, through Jesus, we are all invited into God's Presence.

a. Acts 2:17-21 (CSB)

¹⁷ **And it will be** in the last days, says God,

that **I will pour out my Spirit on all people;**

then your sons and your daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

and your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ **I will even pour out my Spirit**

on my servants in those days, both men and women

and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ **I will display wonders in the heaven** above

and signs on the earth below:

blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.

**²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.**

**²¹ Then everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.**

b. The glory that was once experienced by a select few is now made available for all who call upon the name of the Lord.

c. God is inviting all of us to participate in what He has in store for us.

d. I'm not sure what your experience with God has been like so far, but I can assure you there is still more you haven't explored.

1. The more you explore, the more you find.

2. The presence of God is inexhaustible.

E. #4. Experiencing the Presence of God requires preparation.

1. Moses in Exodus 24 waited until the 7th day before he was called up into God's presence.

a. Then he was there for 40 days and 40 nights.

b. The next time Moses goes up, it's another 40 days and nights.

2. In Acts 2, the 120 were there for 10 days before their experience.

a. It wasn't 10 days of playing games, watching videos, or hanging out.

b. The assumption is that it was 10 days of worship, prayer, and fasting.

3. It is no wonder that Christianity is so disappointing when we believe that spending 7 minutes with God during our devotional time is enough to experience God!

a. The Church is often weak and unsatisfied because we have reduced our relationship with God down to a matter of minutes.

b. We want all of God we can have in 3 minutes, or 7 minutes, or in an 80 minute service.

c. Yet, I can't help believe that God is calling us to so much more than this.

4. The past couple of months, I am hearing many of you talk about what God is doing in your life.

a. Some of us are praying like never before, and it shows.

b. Some of us are fasting, worshipping, and seeking God.

c. And the more we chase after God, the more of Him we want.

d. I can understand why Moses would, after all he had seen and done, still ask God "show me your glory."

3. I believe God is calling us to more because of what Pentecost represents.

A. I'm sure you've noticed I have compared Exodus 24 to Acts 2 already.

1. How do I justify this?

2. The reason I compare the giving of the Law and the experience of God's glory in Exodus 24 to Acts 2 is because that is what the Jews themselves believed.

B. By the time of Jesus, the Jews had equated the giving of the Law to the Feast of Pentecost.

1. Passover celebrated the night that the Destroyer Angel saw the blood of lambs and passed them over.

2. 50 days later, the Law was given on Mt. Sinai.
3. The 50th day is the Feast of Pentecost.
4. Therefore, for hundreds of years, the Jewish people celebrated what happened in Exodus 24 with the festival of Pentecost.

C. It was not by accident that Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit upon the gathered Christians on the Day of Pentecost.

1. But instead of receiving the Law, the 120 received the earnest deposit of the Holy Spirit.
2. In other words, they received a taste or measure of God's glory.
 - a. The Apostle Paul used the language of an earnest deposit.
 - b. An earnest deposit is a portion that is given with the expectation that there is more to come.
3. Someday, all of God's children will be in the presence of Jesus.
 - a. Someday, we will sit at eternity's table and eat of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
 - b. Someday we will live in a world without need of a natural sun because the glory of Jesus will be so strong that there will be no need for created light.
 - c. Someday, we not have to fear war, or pain, suffering, or death because we will be forever in the presence and glory of God.
4. In the meantime, we are invited to participate in God's glory and presence now.

Altar: Prayer for those who long for me.

A. This morning, I want to lead us in a prayer focused around God's presence and glory.

1. This morning, I want to invite everyone of us who is desiring more of God in our lives to come to the front to pray.
2. Do you realize that on most Sundays there are more people in this room than there were on the Day of Pentecost?
3. What would happen if we sought the Presence of God for real?
4. What would happen if we expected and anticipated God's glory?

B. Prayer

ⁱ Wiersbe, Warren W.. Be Hopeful (1 Peter): How to Make the Best of Times Out of Your Worst of Times (The BE Series Commentary) (p. 12). David C Cook. Kindle Edition.