

## The Hour Has Come: The Mysterious Revelation of God's Glory

Moms, Tots, and Beyond: March 14, 2019

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (John 12:23)

### Key Terms

*Glory*: manifested majesty of God's presence and character, associated with a Hebrew word that means "heaviness" or "weight"; sometimes connected with His kingly rule; God's "cascading brightness that would pour through the Messiah" (John 12:41, The Message translation); "the going public of his infinite worth, and his radiant holiness and perfections" (John Piper)

*Glorify*: To turn the spotlight on something to reveal that which is worthy of praise; to put the wonders of God's character or essence on display; to acknowledge His worthiness; to honor Him

### Big Idea

God's glory is revealed in death giving way to life, in His sacrifice of Himself for our sakes. We are called to live our lives according to this mysterious pattern as well, to sacrifice ourselves for His sake. Mysteriously, God's glory is revealed most dramatically in the shame of the cross, where His grace and justice come together.

### Primary Texts: John 11:45-57 (background) and John 12

*Overall*: Watch for familiar themes in the book of John (light/darkness, blindness/seeing). How is the glory and worthiness of Jesus expressed, or how *will* it be expressed? How do people respond to it? Who is able to glimpse or behold His glory rightly, and who remains blind to it?

### *Anointing of Jesus* (John 12: 1-11)

- This dinner is probably the first opportunity for Mary and her family to express their gratitude for Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus. Possibly at home of Simon the Leper.
- This scene appears in the gospels of Matthew and Mark, though Mary is not named. Most Bible scholars think it's a different woman anointing Jesus in the book of Luke (sinful woman whose generous anointing is contrasted with the Pharisees' lack of hospitality).
- Pure nard was an expensive exotic oil from India--was likely Mary's inheritance.
- Anointing was often used in OT to recognize a king, priest, or prophet--to set him apart as holy and to convey blessing, protection, and empowerment

1) What makes Mary's anointing of Jesus so scandalous or boundary-breaking?

2) How does Jesus interpret Mary's act? Also see Mark 14:6-9 and John 11:2.

*Triumphal Entry, or Palm Sunday (John 12: 12-19)*

- It's Passover-time, the Jewish spring festival that celebrates God's freeing His people from slavery in Egypt through a sacrifice of a lamb and the crossing of the Red Sea.
- Palm branches were used in the Feast of the Tabernacles; also a national symbol for Judah and used to celebrate military victories; linked with the historical triumph of Judas Maccabaeus in cleansing the temple and becoming king of Israel in 164 BC (reason for Hanukkah).
- Jews would have been longing for a king to smite the enemy, to free them from generations of oppression by Babylonians, Persians, and now Greeks and Romans.

3) What makes Jesus' return to Jerusalem such a high-stakes endeavor?

4) How do you see the theme of glory operating in the triumphal entry? Why are the people celebrating Jesus? How does He choose to reveal His glory (Zechariah 9:9)? How do the Pharisees respond?

*The Seed Must Die (John 12:20-33)*

5) What appears to trigger Jesus' announcement that the hour has come? You may also want to think back to the prophecy of Caiaphas as high priest (11:51).

6) Think about the image of the kernel of wheat. It falls and is buried in the ground so that the hull can split open, releasing the tiny plant embryo within so that it can push through the earth, unfurl its leaves, and bear even more seeds.

What is Jesus revealing about the means of His glorification?

How are we called into this same pattern?

How does Jesus feel about becoming a seed that will be buried to produce more life?

What encouragement is there for us in the way that Jesus works through His dread?

*People's Unbelief, and The Last Public Address of Jesus (John 12: 34-50)*

7) What are the big points that Jesus drives home one last time with the crowds of people? How would you describe His final public address?

## Going Deeper

“Hating one’s life in this world” doesn’t mean hating oneself or the gift of life that God has given you. “Love” vs. “Hate” is a hyperbolic contrast that is typical of Greek idiom. Instead, God is calling us to utmost loyalty to Him, which will be costly, and to organize our lives around Him. We can never out-give God. We choose to recognize that honor will come to those who humble themselves. Jesus says, “The best thing you can do for yourself is to forget about yourself.” It is seeking the honor of God and letting Him take care of honoring You. It sounds crazy. In the eternal scheme of things, it is the right-side up world of eternity. There will come a day when people will encounter the eternal judgment of God. One day people will acknowledge that they’ve been living upside down, hang their heads. One day, followers of Jesus who have felt deemed crazy by this world will be justified—will be shown as right-side up.

–From “Upside Down,” 2015, sermon by Pastor Walter Kim, formerly of Park Street Church

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** We can distort “dying to self” in many ways. Becoming a buried seed *doesn’t mean* self-loathing, enduring an abusive relationship, sacrificing our desires so that other people like us, serving others in order to control or manipulate them, capitulating to avoid conflict, giving to others to enhance our reputation or improve our self-image, or neglecting to set boundaries

Model of Jesus laying down His life for the sheep. “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord” (10:18). He feels pain in anticipating His death and acknowledges the cost of His sacrifice, yet the motivation of glorifying God carries Him through. He focuses on the life and fruit to spring forth.

- How are you are experiencing God’s call to become like a seed that is buried so that you can sprout life? What are the tensions and joys that you are experiencing? What feels terribly hard? When have you glimpsed the beauty of dying to self?
- What might it look like to live in God’s upside-down ways, motivated by the Holy Spirit?
  - Giving up your sleep, cleanliness, and freedom to keep your newborn alive
  - Stepping out of a career to parent your young children, or stepping into a career because your family needs the income, even though you always dreamed of staying home with your kids full-time
  - Caring for children so that your spouse can participate in church ministry, perhaps in ways that seem more “important” than your work
  - Abandoning your agenda in order to make a paper airplane with your child
  - Doing something the way your mother-in-law likes it, rather than your way
  - Letting go of the need to prove yourself right in an argument with your husband
  - Slowing your place to sit and listen to an elderly parent or relative
  - Seeking reconciliation when it’s not your fault
  - Seeking the betterment of your colleague at the expense of your own career
  - Seeking out a friendship not on the basis of compatibility but to help someone else thrive
- How might God be calling you, like Mary, to worship or glorify Him in an extraordinary or extravagant way? How might God be calling you to submit in this particular stage of Your life to His mysterious ways of bringing Himself glory?

### Recommended Reading

“Die to Yourself Without Losing Yourself” by Josh Squires. <[www.desiringgod.org/articles/die-to-yourself-without-losing-yourself](http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/die-to-yourself-without-losing-yourself)>: May 31, 2017.

- “When we allow God to shape and define our worth, we are free to empty ourselves without the fear of losing ourselves.”
- “Sacrifice which doesn’t start with Spirit-dependent prayer and trust should not be expected to yield spiritual satisfaction.”
- Know your own heart when it comes to self-sacrifice: “Too often our self-denial is little more than window dressing on our desire to please people or control them.”
- Set boundaries with God’s help. “If the relationship is with someone who makes a profession of faith, then they too are required to show love and respect, as well as sacrifice” (Eph 4: 25).

### From Andrew Peterson’s “Remember Me” *Resurrection Letters, Volume I*

(I highly recommend as wonderful listening for the Lent season, especially if you could use some encouragement on a cold, dreary day of spring.)

Just days ago the sky was stone  
The trees were standing stripped to the bone  
You could hear creation groan

But I write these words on an April day  
And the earth is drinking the early rain  
The hills remember green again

And we’ve heard this story all our lives  
Still, we feel the pain of the crucified  
And the end still comes as a surprise

But before the breath there in the tomb  
Before our joy sprang from the womb  
You saw a day that’s coming soon

When the Son will stand on the mount again  
With an army of angels at His command  
**And the earth will split like the hull of a seed**  
**Wherever Jesus plants His feet**

And up from the earth, the dead will rise  
Like spring trees robed in petals of white  
Singing the song of the radiant bride  
And we will always be, always be, always be with the Lord