

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Falling Short of God's Glory

(Michael Baker)

How would you define God's glory? It's not necessarily easy to define, yet we must understand it.

The reason it's so important to understand God's glory, is because of God's zeal to be glorified. He has a zeal for us, as His creation, to exalt Him by obedience to His will. God calls for us to “*be holy for I am holy*” *1 Peter 3:15*. He gave us a holy Law that would make us holy if we kept it. Paul says in *Romans 3:23*, “*For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*” We fell short of God's holiness when we broke His law. Therefore, we did not honor our Holy God by leading a Holy life. When we commit sin, we exchange God's glory for something less. In *Romans 1:23*, we see the Gentiles exchanged God's glory for idols. Today we can choose our own “idols” over God's glory.

The sexual relationship was not given by God as a sinful practice to be abhorred. God established marriage as the place where sexual desires were to be satisfied between a man and a woman. Today, mankind has departed from God's design concerning our desires. Men and women engage in sexual activities outside of marriage. People commonly seek affection from members of the same

sex. When living in these lusts, we exchange the purity of the marriage relationship for man's unholy ways.

Jesus counsels a rich young ruler in *Matthew 19:21*, saying that he would have glories in Heaven if he sold his possessions. This young ruler's wealth had become an idol to him, because he chose earthly wealth over the promised glory of Heaven. Being wealthy and having many valuable possessions is not wrong. Paul says in *1 Timothy 6:10*, issues sprout from the “*love of money*” which leads to all kinds of evil, not God. When we allow our focus of gaining more money to take away from our single mindedness upon God, it becomes our idol. Paul tells us what it looks like when riches have become our idol in *1 Timothy 6:17-19*. We experience changes such as becoming haughty, selfish, and focused on living for this world. Just as the rich young ruler exchanged the promise of Heaven's treasure for the immediate treasures of earth, this mindset will cause us to fall short of God's glory.

Do men today think of being a servant as something that is praiseworthy? Jesus said in *Matthew 20:26* that true greatness is

found in the service of others. This is totally contradictory to the mindset of mankind today. Here is God exalting the service of others, yet our society relates true greatness to having others serve you. Desiring to be first, with all of its power and control, can be very tempting to man. But Jesus said greatness in God's terms is found in putting one's need above your own. When we pursue being first, above all others, we have exchanged what God says is greatness for the world's standard.

In *Romans 9:21-24*, we see that though we were vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, God is longsuffering. By His forbearance, we can be saved today despite being fit for destruction, and being under the full wrath of God. The text says we can become vessels of mercy glorifying God for the richness of His mercy. *Romans 16:25-27* reveals our Creator's great wisdom in His holy plan that saves man. This plan was a product of God's wisdom. But His wisdom is unique, far above man's wisdom. Apart from revelation, God's wisdom is unsearchable. As vessels of mercy we glorify God through the Gospel that manifests His glorious wisdom. Let us never exchange the glory of an incorruptible God for the corruptible ways of men.