

Title Beholding God's Glory
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A black preacher from Texas came to the White House, feeling it an honor to be there. He observed there was more dignity per square inch than anywhere in the world. That's how I feel this evening. There's more dignity here than anywhere in the world right now. I say that honestly. It's a privilege to speak. But I'm aware that within America there is a moral decay destroying this nation, and it's not politics that's going to change that, not Washington, DC, or the branches of government; I believe it's men and women like these here that are present, working at the grass roots level working in local communities within churches. That's where the transformation will take place, if it happens. This group has been called to present to every man perfect in Christ. We are to lead God's people, demonstrating the truth of the Word of God, and if those truths are not being represented, then we must lead our people to repentance. There is one hope for this nation, if those truths are brought back. Two things we need to watch for major threats. One is our gifts, we can depend on them too much... Second, our experience, when we think we have done it a number of times, it's easy that we think we have the recipe for what works, and forget it's not our gift or experience that will bring people to repentance. One of the big issues is to look and behold God's glory. I think of an example in Alaska. There were missionaries there having VBS and they were flying children out to an island and the water around was rough. These men were experienced pilots. One made three successful trips, having made three flights, but on his fourth flight he pulled three children into the cockpit, looked at the gas gauge: it showed full. But, he did not do the basics. He did not do what every pilot is trained to do. Not just looked at the gas gauge, but did not look down into the tank and see what is there. He took off, but he was flying out across, thinking everything was okay, but his plane began to sputter and go down. He realized what had happened. He picked up his mike. The tape on his airplane recorded the words: "I thought I knew what I was doing." He left that mike on as he turned to the children; he told them: "I'm sorry. You trusted me. You need to put your sleeping bags in front of you. We are going to hit the water." The tapes came to an end as you could hear the ripping as the plane hit the water. Many people in our churches are trusting us, to pilot them safely, showing them the way. Unless we realize we must always get a fresh look at the glory of God or we will fail at our efforts.

Open to Isaiah 9. We'll call Him--Jesus. He will save us from our sins. When our heart is full of joy, we'll call Him wonderful. When you have almost lost your way, you'll call him Counselor.

When you're all alone, you'll call Him Emmanuel, God with us. We have these words here in verse six [read verses]. What a blessing to be able to look back and realize the Son of God is answering to this work, this prophecy, the Son of God is here, is all of these things and more. There is only one book God has authored. I want to ask a question: if there is only one book He has authored, is any other book more important. [No.] And yet, I will tell you now, since September of 2011 when we hit U.S. soil, and I began looking for a job, going to work, trying to put in 40 hour weeks and pay those bills, keep up with that, I'll tell you I am having a tough time spending time in the Book. 66 books are there for our reading, consistent with one another, and the books, because of how they were spread out, they are evidence in themselves of the authenticity of the Word of God. [Quotes several Old Testament prophecies about Christ.] Inspired men wrote, and we do ourselves a favor to get in the Book. It holds the key to the prosperity of the nation, to behold the glory of God. Henry Ford makes two observations, at the Detroit museum that gave two observations by him. How can people be educated and not know the Bible? He believed the Bible was central to the right working of a nation. Even in business principles. His second observation, you can only wear one pair of pants at a time, no matter how many you have. That's interesting. In a day we are enamored with things, we can still only wear one pair at a time. That's interesting coming from Henry Ford. The first is where we are today. We need missionaries in the U.S. There are people today who do not know what you are talking about. There are those being led astray by those called shepherds. Hopefully not from our own congregations. We're seeing the standard God has for His people, but more importantly for me. When we get talking about me, we're not as confident as when talking about others. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 [Reads verses.] When we behold the glory of God and allow it into our lives, we are changed into that likeness. I will be very fond of admitting that I have a lovely wife. Every time when I get up to preach, often prior while sitting in the top, I'm scouring the crowd, looking for that face. As time has gone, it has been my desire to become more like her gentle person. God would like to do the same thing. When we were leaving Kenya and it was time to say goodbye, one of the senior national pastors said, "We will always remember your wife. She's quiet, but faithfully doing what needs doing." If there's something, she comes and quietly says a word. (She didn't know I was going to say that.) We need to be acquainted, familiar with what God is like to reflect Him. That's what God wants of us, and it's the way we want to go. In the Old Testament, the law was given, but there wasn't an open to all; they had to wait until it was read to them from the Scriptures. But the Bible says we are able to look into the Word of God, see the glory of God and are changed into His likeness. Praise the Lord. What will the glory of God do to us?

Turn to James 1. "Lay aside all...of person he was." [Reads verses.] It's important we see Christ in the Word of God, how God would like us to change us into His likeness. We've taken a glance at the Word then go to work, we forget what we read, and come back home and do not remember at all. James 2:25 [Reads verses.] Every one of us has two words in our vocabulary for this week: either "amen" or "ouch." I just know that before these meetings are up, and I've already had to say "ouch" while studying for this evening. I have not reached what I want. As we are transformed into the image of God, how much we'll have to hear those words.

Exodus 13, the glory of God in the impossible. Every one of us has come to straits in our life, and we wonder what the next thing God wants us to do. All of us in our ministry have come to a place where we wonder, God, why did you lead me to this spot. Why have I been called to do

this work? I cannot carry it. There's no way out. You feel like throwing in the towel and getting out. One day I was sitting with a local brother in Kenya. He was having Bible studies in the community and said, "The other night I was thinking how hard it is to lead these people. I felt like getting up and running, telling no one where I'm going." Exodus 13, ridiculous situation, you can say. None of us have been in this situation, 600,000 people hoping to leave Egypt; they're following God's leading in the cloud; they're going down that way; and what do they find? They are up against the sea. A mountain on either side and in front of one mountain was a military outpost guarding for invaders and a pagan temple on the other side guarded heavily. [Reads from verse three on.] Can you imagine the glee when Pharaoh realized that the children of Israel were boxed in on three sides? There was no place, but to God. Leaders, have you ever felt that way? Blocked in, can't go left, right, ahead, and the back is blocked. What happened? People will say, "Moses, why did you bring us out here? Were there no graves in Egypt?" Moses realized a cloud had been there that they followed, and that though there was no recourse, they were in the right place. If you felt God's call on your life, have followed God's cloud, God will take you through. There were no boats; they were not going to cross on your own strength. Pharaoh just came in and camped. But God stepped in. The cloud goes to the other side. Moses was told to move forward. Forward? Put your rod out. God brings an east wind and less than overnight there was a dry path. Walls of water on the left and right, they walked right through. Think of the arrogance of what happened next, that Pharaoh forgot what happened in Egypt. He walked right through it, took his whole army, and when he did, their wheels came off--they popped off. They realized, God is fighting for Israel--let's get out of here!--but it was too late, the water washed back in. It was a protection for God's people and destruction for those who were against His purpose. Keep your eye on God, He put us here for such a time as that. If God will use you, in times when things seem impossible, and you give yourself to Him---The glory of God: if we could just see that. Moses told the people to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Don't look at me, look at the God who put us here.

Turn to Psalm 19. This one you may not have expected to come up this evening, but I have to bring it in. The glory of God in creation. I love creation, I am an observer of nature. There's a reason I believe we should never forget what God would like to tell us through creation. There are three witnesses to the authenticity of the Word. One is Old Testament versus new. The second is creation. This nation has lost its moorings, denying the God of Creation...There is no speech, no language where that voice is not heard. When you begin to speak to anyone on the street about the laws of physical laws, there is something there that strikes a chord. We know that no matter who throws the ball, it stops. But the ball we call earth, that we walk on, is not stopping. It keeps right on going. The sun is rising somewhere 24 hours a day. If you would be following it around for 24 hours, you could watch it rise for 24 hours. Why? There's something that keeps it going. The witness of creation speaks volumes and they cannot be denied. There has to be something bigger than man. Every 24 hours, there is a witness that will not be put to silence. Stop, and allow it to minister to your hearts. I just want it to be a tremendous blessing; no matter what the schedule, catch your breath, look at creation, no matter how small, and allow God to speak to you of His faithfulness through that part of creation. Just stop, pause, let that aspect of the glory of God minister to your heart. When the disciples were on the boat, they awoke Jesus. Jesus gets up and calms the sea. The disciples said, what man is this that even the waves and winds obey him? God is shouting to us through storms, floods, earthquakes. What is God doing? If man will not listen to the still voice of creation, He has to bring it in a way that cannot be

denied. Not just in this nation, but the world.

The glory of God is holy. Turn to Isaiah 6. [Reads verses.] Friends, when Isaiah saw the King and saw the holiness of God, he said “Woe is me.” Such will be the response of the individual when they see God. When we see the glory of God, and God allows us to see more of Him, we will ever respond, “Woe is me, for I am undone.” When we come to that place we can then say, “Here am I, send me.” As Isaiah sensed the work of God, he saw what He is doing. A coal on his lips cleansed them, and Isaiah said, “Here am I, send me.” Moses asked God to see His glory... We cannot comprehend the full image of God, though we can see parts of His beauty.

The glory of God through the submitted servant. Job: we have the submitted servant. As Job is living out his life, everything was being taken away from him. His wife said, curse God and die. Job later says this—“Shall we not receive good at the hand of God and also evil. When God answers a prayer and things are going well, I can see the goodness of God, but Job had the vision of the sovereignty of God that we need. We are like checkers in the hand of God; we are disposable. If the purposes of God are disposable at the expense of us, God is still good. Stephen had that vision in Acts as the stones were flying. What did Stephen say? “Lay not this sin to their charge” and as he looked up, he saw the glory of God. His life was disposable for the purpose of God. What a difference that will make when things don’t go the way I would like it to be. When everything you planned goes to pieces in your hands, all life seems against you. Can we not receive bad at the hands of God even as we receive good. We have come to comprehend a bit more the sovereignty of God. The three Hebrew children said to the king before being thrown in, Daniel 3:16-17 [reads verse]. God is able to deliver us. They said something more, “He will deliver us out of your hand.” They threw those three men in, and Nebuchadnezzar in astonishment said, “Didn’t we throw three in? But there are four in there: the fourth like the Son of God.” How did he recognize Him? The three children referred to Him. We will stay faithful to our God, not worship your gods. Nebuchadnezzar when Daniel was put in the lion’s den said God would be able to take care of him. How did he know? Daniel was faithful to God, God’s glory came through His submitted servant.

As we submit ourselves to God, God can do glorious things, the glory of God at the Cross. In Luke 23: Do thou not fear God? He came to the place where he feared God. Seeing that we are in this same condemnation, and we justly... As he saw and feared God, he realized the wages of sin is death. Tonight, you and I must keep what Christ did at the cross every day. What a terrible sight! At the same time, what a wondrous sight. It is the most magnificent manifestation of love ever existent in the history of the world. The love of God: beholding the glory of God--you and I will never behold the glory of God until we see it there. Have the purposes of man been accomplished? If the redemption of man was lost in bloodshed..., but He gave His life. When Jesus said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit,” He said it in a loud voice. Those soldiers there knew it to be the call of the conqueror, not one out of breath. When He said that, He quit pushing and bowed His head and gave His life. When they came to break the legs of the right and left, Jesus was gone; the work was finished. Jesus’ life was not taken, it was given. That’s the glory of God. The glory of God in the resurrection in Matthew 28: the women wondered who was going to roll away the stone. The tomb was empty. This day the Jews worked with a façade of a story. It would be easy to squelch the rumor if they could just bring the evidence of the body. He’s not here, He’s risen. You see the glory of God--we come with an open

face--we do not have to be afraid of God. Let me read, "My King." [Reads text. Jesus is king of many things, is many things to many people, and is almighty.]