

“Glorification”
Philippians 3:20-21
(Preached at Trinity, May 21, 2017)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Verses 8-14** Paul described the grand focus of his life – Jesus Christ our Lord.
Philippians 3:8 NAU - "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ"
2. Although Paul was very much involved in this life he maintained an eternal focus, pressing towards heaven and joyously awaiting the return of Christ. In **Verse 17** he charged his readers to follow his example. Every Christian should have an eye upon eternity—of heaven and of the return of Christ.
3. Unlike those Paul describes in **Verse 19** who set their minds on earthly things our true home is in a different realm.
Philippians 3:20 NAU - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"
4. We live in a world of darkness corrupted by sin but when Christ returns all will be restored. We are awaiting the dawning of the new heavens and new earth. The enemies of Christ will be judged and cast forever from His presence. But for those who are patiently awaiting His return they will experience a glorious change.
Philippians 3:21 NAU - "who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."
5. We call this change glorification. It is the final consummation of our salvation.
Romans 8:29-30 NAU - "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to *become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified."
6. This morning I want to direct your thoughts towards this glorious transformation. In my 30 years of preaching ministry I have preached on the subject of glorification twice. We need to consider it more often. It is a part of our heavenly-mindedness. It is our hope and expectation. What can we expect when Christ returns: "who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."

- I. In our glorification we will receive moral perfection
 "we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory"
- A. In justification God has declared us holy. We stand before God in the righteousness of Christ.
1. The Christian, however, still sins.
 Justification affects the *state* of the sinner but does not affect his *condition*.
 Luther captured this with the Latin phrase:
 "*simul iustus et peccator*" – "At the same time just and sinner"
 2. The Christian knows well the sin that still dwells within him
 - a. He battles long and hard – Paul describes the discipline
1 Corinthians 9:27 NAU - " but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."
 - b. **Romans 7** describes the struggle in which Paul cries out,
Romans 7:24 NAU - "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?"
- B. In this passage Paul has described his life as pressing towards this perfection
Philippians 3:12 NAU - "Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
1. We strive with diligence but we will not arrive in this life
Philippians 3:13-14 NAU – "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
 2. We groan under the weight of our sin
Romans 8:22-23 NAU - "For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. ²³ And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."
- C. We look forward the new heavens and new earth when all things will be restored and brought to order.
2 Peter 3:13 NAU - "But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells."
1. In glorification we will be delivered from this body of death
 - a. Sin will be no more - We will finally be perfected!
 - b. Our hearts will be filled with perfect love –
 love for Christ and love for the brethren
 2. No more will temptation undo us. No more will we weep over our sins.

II. The second aspect of glorification is the resurrection of our physical bodies unto glorified bodies

- A. Right now our bodies suffer under the curse of sin
 1. We have been justified and adopted. We are citizens of heaven.
 2. But our bodies are still suffering under corruption
 - a. While our hearts and minds show evidence of God's transforming grace, our bodies bear no marks of adoption—of our relationship with the living God.
 - b. Unlike the teaching of Charismatic theology, we suffer the same as other men – disease and death
 3. Paul says this corruption shall be raised to incorruption
- B. Paul describes our resurrected bodies in **1 Cor. 15**
 1. **Verses 39-44** give us a series of contrasts
 - Sown with a perishable body . . . Raised with imperishable
 - Sown in dishonor . . . Raised in glory
 - Sown in weakness . . . Raised in power
 - Sown a natural body . . . Raised a spiritual body
 2. **Verse 42** – From perishable to imperishable
 - a. Because of sin the human body is characterized by continual decay – it is highly perishable
 - b. No matter how strong and healthy you are your body is deteriorating – Like all of creation your body is undergoing decay. Your bones are becoming more brittle. Your skin is growing thinner. Your eyesight is growing dimmer. Your hair is turning gray. Your cellular replacement is slowing.
 - c. We will be raised with an imperishable body
 - d. Our new glorified bodies will not age – after a million years they will be the same
 - e. There will be no death
 3. **Verse 43** – From dishonor to glory
 - a. In the resurrection we will be raised in glory
Philippians 3:20-21 NAU - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory . . ."
Romans 8:18 NAU - "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."
 - b. The word for “glory” is δόξα – It is translated in a variety of ways but all describe the splendor of the resurrection splendour, brightness, magnificence, excellence, dignity, grace, majesty
 - c. In the resurrection we will be changed to reflect God's original purpose for us.
 4. **Verse 43** – From weakness to power.
 - a. Our mortal bodies are characterized by weakness
 - b. We are naturally frail – easily injured
Our skin cuts, our bones break

- c. We are easy prey to all manner of attack from germs which cause infections and disease. Heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke
 - d. In the resurrection we will be raised in power
 - e. We will have no need for glasses, no doctors, dentists, or surgeons in heaven, no aspirin or cold remedies
5. **Verse 44** – From natural to spiritual
- a. Our physical bodies are created for life in this physical world
Our bodies have certain needs
We become hungry and need food
We become thirsty and need water
We become tired and need rest
Jesus referred to some of these **needs**
Matthew 6:31-32 NAU - "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ³² "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."
 - b. These things would have also been consistent with Adam's existence. He was created to dwell in this physical world. In our glorification we will be raised to much greater glory.
 - c. In the resurrection our bodies will be spiritual bodies, yet physical – **1 Corinthians 15:44** - "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."
 - d. We do not know precisely what this means but it is certainly to be seen in contrast to our material bodies. We will be raised into physical bodies in a physical resurrection to dwell in the new earth, which will be physical. But we will not suffer the needs of our natural body—although we may enjoy the pleasures.

III. Paul's point is how should we live in light of this glorious expectation?

- A. We should press on in spite of hardship or suffering
Romans 8:16-18 NAU - "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*. ¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."
 - 1. The Christian life can be harsh and difficult
 - 2. We live in a world hostile to God and His law.
 - a. Jesus told His disciples to expect hardship
John 16:33 NAU - "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."
 - b. Paul affirmed this truth
Acts 14:21-22 NAU - "After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

3. The suffering of this life cannot be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.
2 Corinthians 4:16-17 NAU - "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,"
- B. We should press on in holiness to the praise and honor of God
Colossians 3:4-5 NAU - "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. ⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry."

Conclusion:

1. As Christians we must maintain this glorious expectation.
 Dennis Johnson writes – “No more muscle aches, broken bones, arthritis, memory loss, indigestion, heart disease, or cancer. Best of all, no more appetites bent in on themselves in guilty self-indulgence: a body wired to desire what our Creator designed us for, what he is pleased to give us, and what he is pleased to see us enjoy through and through, forever and ever.” ¹
2. Those who have this hope of glory should live today in this hope striving for holiness and purity.
2 Peter 3:14 NAU - "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,"
3. The greatest of our eternal glory is we shall see Christ in His glory. Because He lives, we will live and we will see Him as He is.
1 John 3:2 NAU - "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."
4. The Apostle John caught a glimpse of it
Revelation 1:14-16 NAU - "His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. ¹⁵ His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters. ¹⁶ In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength."

¹ Dennis E. Johnson, *Philippians*, eds. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary, 1st ed., (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2013), 239.