

THE GLORY OF CHRIST

John 17:4-5

John 8:1-11,25,29,46

Acts 2:36

DMcI I wondered whether we might have a look, with the Spirit's help, at some of the glories of Christ. What came before me particularly were the words of Moses, "Let me, I pray Thee, see Thy glory" (Ex 33:18). Surely that would be the desire of every true lover of Jesus. Moses was permitted to see God from behind. He was placed in a cleft of the rock, and God's goodness passed before him. God is glorified in His goodness, and Moses was wonderfully privileged to be on the mount and to see the glory of God shining in Christ. But, by the Spirit, we can look upon the glory of the Lord. These scriptures, and many others that could be referred to, would bring out these glories.

In John 17 we have many of the glories of the Lord. But what I particularly thought of in the verses that we read was His *personal* glory – the glory that belonged to Him, and that He set aside as coming into manhood. The Person of the Son is guarded. It has not been a subject of revelation. We need to be careful when we think of the glory of Christ before the incarnation. But perhaps the Spirit would give us a fresh touch as to that.

In John 8 we have His *moral* glory. There are many scriptures that bear on the moral glory of Christ. He was the only one in that company who could morally have taken up the stone against that woman. But, while not setting aside the sin, He acts in grace towards her. So that, in everything where man had failed, Christ excelled. Man's first sin was that of disobedience, but the Lord Jesus "learned obedience from the things which He suffered" (Heb 5:8), and was "obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross" (Phil 2:8). One's simple desire is that we should get an impression of the uniqueness of the manhood of Christ.

In Acts 2 we have a glimpse as to His *official* glory. He has been made both Lord and Christ. Psalm 2 verse 2 comes to mind: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the princes plot together, against Jehovah and against His Anointed." Notwithstanding the rejection of Christ, he says in verse 6: "And I have anointed My King upon Zion, the hill of My holiness." And so Peter says that 'you have rejected Him,' but the purposes of God in regard of Christ are

established. He has made Him both Lord and Christ. Perhaps we can get help together.

WS In relation to the matter we mentioned in John 17 as to the personal glory of the Lord Jesus, I was reminded of Matthew 11, where He says in verse 27: "And no one knows the Son but the Father, nor does any one know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son may be pleased to reveal Him."

DMcI He came to declare the Father, did He not? The Father has been revealed. But as to the Son, His Person is not revealed to us. He has come wonderfully near as the Man Christ Jesus. But as to the glory of His Person in the past eternity, it is not revealed, it is guarded. Say some more.

WS The Holy Spirit is present here and He will glorify Him, and He will help us to understand what He has done. He left His Godhead glory.

DMcI We must be guided by the Spirit, because this is holy ground. And how dangerous it is to apply the mind of man in these things. I thought that Philippians 2 inculcated this in a sense. Because there it was, He was in equality with God, but He emptied Himself. That is, He set aside the glory that belonged to Him in coming into manhood. But then as a Man He receives the glory, the glory of the Saviour, the glory of the Redeemer, the One who went to Calvary, the One who was obedient where man was disobedient. "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him."

RM How wonderful that the Lord said: "I have glorified Thee on the earth" (v4). It is as if there was no one else on earth that ever glorified God in the way the Lord Jesus did it.

DMcI Yes, Christ is absolutely unique. He came to give effect to the counsels of God, and to reveal what was in God's heart for His creature. Apart from the coming of Christ we would never have known what God's heart was.

MJC So in John 17 the verses present the Lord as coming here and going back into glory. The purpose of God is in mind, and not so much the suffering. "I have completed the work" (v4).

DMcI The wonderful thing is that He asks for this glory as a Man. It is wonderful that He came out from God. He had to do with sinners. But nothing that happened in His life could have prevented Him from receiving this glory back. He had glorified God in every

step of His pathway. And so He could demand, I think, of the Father that He receive this glory as a Man.

BED Have you an impression as to why He lifts His eyes up to heaven?

DMcI I think the Lord did that habitually, did He not? He speaks of Himself as being in heaven. And the communion with the Father was very precious to Him. And He was filled with joy, and, I believe, by the thought of going back to the Father. But more than that; have you got an impression?

BED He lifts up His eyes to heaven, but His object was the Father, was it not?

DMcI Yes. Of course, in much of what we read in this part of John, the Lord is anxious that His own should enter into the relationship that *He* enjoyed with the Father.

MJC Where do we see the Lord's glory now?

DMcI We see it, I believe, if we allow the Spirit to occupy us with it. His glory is, of course, in the assembly. But the personal side of the glory of Christ is brought to us by the Spirit. Because the Spirit came from an ascended Christ, did He not?

MJC "We all, looking on the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18).

DMcI Well, is that not what we are doing just now?

MJC We do not see the glory of the Lord in this world, we see it in the assembly.

DMcI We do not see the glory of Christ in the world. It was only after they left Egypt and set up the tabernacle that they saw the glory of Jehovah.

MJC Separation to God is a wonderful blessing for believers.

DMcI Say more.

MJC I think what you are saying is important. They did not see the glory of God until they got out of Egypt (Ex 40:34-35).

DMcI The world is full of the glory of man. And, even as believers, we will never be free from that idea until we have appropriated the glory of the Lord.

RG In John 17:6 we read: "I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world." I think it is important that His people are outside of Egypt or the world.

DMcI He says later in the chapter, "They are not of the world, as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).

RG I think it is the manifestation of the Name of God with the holiness.

DMcI Yes, He declared the Father to them, did He not? Adam could have lived in innocence and never known what the heart of God was towards him. But the heart of God is being told out.

RM Is John 4 an illustration of John 17:6? The woman was morally freed from this world, and then the Name of God the Father was manifested to that woman.

DMcI It is marvellous how far the Lord takes her. It was a moral road, was it not? And she is taken right through to worship.

MJC And, moreover, she is delivered from the religion of the world.

DMcI Do you think the appreciation of the Person of Christ would deliver us from the world systems? There is much that bears His name abroad which has no room for Christ.

BED Why does the Lord in John 17 say little about Himself, but most about those that are His?

DMcI Well, the disciples heard this prayer, and the Lord would want to assure them of how He was praying for them. He was leaving them and going to the Father, but they were to be at no disadvantage. They were to be preserved; they were to be kept in His Name. The Spirit was to come, and they were to behold His glory. But they, with us, can understand that the Lord's desire was that His own should be with Him. So we can all draw comfort from this prayer.

BED Is it here the personnel of the assembly, and how the Lord loves His assembly and gave Himself for it?

DMcI In actuality, He had still to suffer, and, as has been said, in His mind it is complete. He had come to fulfil the will of God. And there was never any doubt that He would do that.

MJC It is interesting that chapters 14 through to 17 were His last words to His own. He does not present to them the enormity of His sufferings, but the greatness of the place He is going to, and His desire that they should be with Him where He is.

DMcI Yes, they would learn of the sufferings, would they not? They would see them, Peter and John particularly. But really what is in view here is at the centre of the purpose of God. There was no way into it apart from His sufferings.

DJG It says, "In view of the joy lying before Him" (Heb 12:2). The joy of all the glory that the assembly would give Him would, as you referred to in Philippians, give glory to the Father. So in asking for glory from the Father, He was really asking the Father to be glorified as well, was He not?

DMcI The assembly was a particular answer to the sufferings of Christ. He says earlier in John, "Now is the Son of Man glorified" (John 13:31). The assembly was there as Christ came out of death, and is a particular answer to those sufferings. The other side of the joy, I believe, was His return to the Father.

Perhaps we can just look at John 8. Man was tried by God in various ways – in innocence, in government and under law. But in every way that man was tried he failed. But here is one Man who was tried in every way and excelled. That is the moral glory of Christ.

MJC Do you think this was the Lord being tried in relation to the law?

DMcI Yes, they thought they had Him trapped here. The law could show no mercy, could it? This woman was guilty. But where was the man? But the Lord meets it by stooping. He says nothing, He stoops down and writes on the ground. As we know, these two stoops represent the stoop into manhood and the stoop into death.

WS What you just mentioned, would that refer to the first and second writing on the earth?

DMcI What is your impression as to the writing?

WS I think we need the Holy Spirit to understand what the Lord has written, it is not told to us. But you referred to Him stooping down twice, His coming here and His going into death.

DMcI The Lord never left the earth the way He found it, did He? It was changed completely because of Calvary. He came into a world where there was one nation which knew what God required and ignored it, and the rest of the world was given up to superstition and devil worship. But in the stoop into manhood He brings perfection into that scene. It has been said that the Lord gained nothing morally in coming into manhood, but He brought perfection to manhood.

RG In John 1:14 we read: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we have contemplated His glory, a glory as of an only-begotten with a father), full of grace and truth." That is what Jesus brought into the world, and changed it. Law and judgement came in by Moses, but Jesus brought grace and truth.

DMcI So the law was good and just, but man could not keep it. But there was one Man who kept the law. He made it honourable, so that God is justified in giving the law to man, because Christ kept it. And on the basis of His finished work God can come out in mercy towards man.

BED He lifted Himself up, and they had all gone out. Jesus was alone with her. Have you any impression as to that?

DMcI Well, how sad it is that these men were convicted of sin, and yet they left the presence of the Saviour. So there again, the law can convict a man, but it cannot save him. And here is the One in whom the law has been fulfilled. He is able to say to this woman, "Neither do I condemn thee" (v11).

BED Do you think that when we are converted the experience is between Jesus and us alone?

DMcI There must be a personal transaction with Christ. The woman with the flux of blood just wanted to have the blessing, and perhaps the slighter way to slip away. But the Lord knew that the power had gone out of Him. She is brought in to tell Him all the truth, and she goes away with a blessing.

We must understand that the Lord is not condoning adultery here. He says, "Go, and sin no more" (v11).

BED Did the Lord have to suffer for that sin?

DMcI Surely. We need to be careful that we do not trivialise sin, because every sin we have committed had to be dealt with at Calvary.

MJC With Adam it was only one sin.

DMcI But that was sufficient. Thank God for the obedience of the one Man!

MJC Much of the Epistle to the Romans revolves around that.

DMcI I just felt that the other verses brought out the uniqueness of Christ. "I do always the things that are pleasing to Him [the Father]" (v29); "[I am] altogether that which I also say to you" (v25). There is nobody else who could say that. Christ stands morally unique as a Man.

BED Every feature that shone in Him is now shining in Him in glory.

DMcI Yes. He retains manhood, does He not? Not that we can limit the Lord to manhood. We cannot limit a divine Person to any position that They take up. But He remains a man for us.

MJC And as Man He has a bride.

DMcI That is wonderful! He has been glorified as Man.

MJC I am so thankful as to the scripture, "But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face ..." (2 Cor 3:18). If we only had John 1:14, "We have contemplated His glory," we might be tempted to think that only the disciples, the apostles, could see His glory. We know from this verse that it is open to us.

DMcI Yes; when we are with Him we shall see that glory. But we are to be at no disadvantage now, because of the gift of the Spirit. But there is no shortcut into this, is there? Our brother referred to it, "We have contemplated His glory." Do I set aside time to contemplate the glory of Christ?

MJC The opposite is that the Philistines got into the land without the shelter of the blood, without crossing the Red Sea and without crossing the Jordan.

DMcI Yes, the mind of man in the things of God brings deadness. And the last phase in Christendom we find is that they stopped the wells. The channels for the Spirit to work must be kept open.

MJC In the days of Samson they were ruling the land (Judg 14:4).

RG They came for robbery and they took the ark (1 Sam 5:1).

DMcI Yes, but the ark was able to look after itself. The Philistines had no appreciation of what the ark was. And it would seem that even the house of Abinadab had little appreciation of what the ark was. It was a long time in the house of Abinadab (1 Sam 7:1-2), but it brought blessing to the house of Obed-Edom, showing the appreciation that Obed-Edom had of the ark, with the result that David brought it up after only three months (2 Sam 6:11-12). So, in that way, may our houses be places where Christ has His rightful place.

AM I find it interesting, when I read these verses in John 8, that Jesus did not speak to this woman until all the others went out. We do not read that He spoke to her before. The first time He spoke to her was when all the others went out.

DMcI Well, I think it is in one sense like what our brother said, that there had to be this personal transaction in the presence of Christ for the woman. The woman was alone with Jesus. The Lord knew what was in the hearts of these men, but He does not speak to them. He only acts towards them and they go out. What a thing it is to remain standing in the presence of the Saviour! He says to them later, "Which of you convinces me of sin?" (John 8:46). I love to think of the testimony of the men. Peter, the man of action, says, "Who did no sin" (1 Pet 2:22). Paul, the learned man, says, "Who knew no sin" (2 Cor 5:21). John, who leaned on His bosom, could say, "in Him sin is not" (1 John 3:5). The sinlessness of Christ is paramount. He could not go to the cross to be my Saviour except He was sinless.

MJC Scripture does not record her going out of the Lord's presence, does it?

DMcI Say more!

MJC I was thinking that in that sense every one of us that has come to the Lord never leaves His presence.

DMcI From the divine side we are held there. We come to appreciate that we are the Father's gift to Christ, so that we cannot be plucked from the hand of the Father and we cannot be plucked from the hand of Christ. On our side we may lose the joy of it. We were speaking last night of the two on the way to Emmaus and how

He unfolded His glory to them from the Scriptures and turned them round. Maybe there is someone here today that needs a lift in their soul. I believe occupation with the glory of Christ will do that.

The official glory of Christ is brought out by Peter, notwithstanding the fact that Israel had rejected Him. Peter makes this public announcement, "Let the whole house of Israel therefore know assuredly" Nationally they refused this, but the "remnant according to election of grace" (Romans 11:5) accepted the word.

MJC As I understand it, the composition of the church in those early days was almost entirely from Israel. This early remnant came into blessing when they accepted the Lord.

DMcI And so, in the same way, Israel nationally will not come into blessing until they accept the Lord.

BED Will it be Israel alone with Jesus, when they see Him?

DMcI Well, it says that "they shall look on Him whom they pierced" (John 19:37). I do not believe the assembly will have that view. The assembly will come with Christ and all His glory. But what will go through the souls of the remnant in that day, when they realise that they crucified the Messiah? We long for the glory of Christ, do we not? Christ will be publicly vindicated in the very place where He has been rejected.

BED So, for now, has the Holy Spirit opened the heavenly door for us?

DMcI Well, Christ is reigning in the hearts of believers. The day to come will reveal His kingly glory. The whole world will know that glory. But we are to be in the secret of it now. So what a triumph it is that tomorrow morning, if the Lord tarries, all over the world that has rejected Christ many will be gathered to own His rights and to answer to His request.

WS And we join His singing to the Father, do we not? "In the midst of the assembly will I sing Thy praises" (Heb 2:12).

DMcI There is a song begun on earth. Surely it will fill the courts of eternity!

BED Is what marks Christ personally now the brightness of the glory?

DMcI Yes, the glory shone on the mount, did it not? That glory came from within, that shining was within. The glory of God is shining out now in the glad tidings. Everything that we shall know of God we see in Christ.

TAH Did Paul see the glory of the Lord on the road to Damascus?

DMcI I am sure he did. The light got brighter the more he recounted it, did it not? That light shone right into his soul. And he was ready to be led – “Who art Thou, Lord?” (Acts 9:5). I am sure there were other times in his life when he was shown the glory of the Lord.

MJC This is a practical example of the verse we have just read. Jesus was made to Paul both Lord and Christ.

DMcI We need to accept Him as Lord, do we not? We need to come under His authority. Our wills have to go.

MJC I think that is very helpful, because we need to know Jesus first as Lord before we can appreciate Him as Head.

DMcI Yes, headship is more influence, is it not? It really relates to the assembly. But you get the impression here that the purpose of God is in this. There is nothing that can interfere with the purpose of God.

MJC That would encourage us in a difficult day.

DMcI No thought of God has ever been given up. This Jesus has brought all the counsel of God into effect. And it is the counsel of God that He should be glorified.

DJG It is wonderful that *God* has made Him both Lord and Christ. At the very beginning, Adam and Eve experienced the grace of God in the coats of skin. And, then, do we not see the grace of God when He gave the law, that man should know his situation before Him? And then we see the ultimate grace of God, when He gave Christ Himself. So God has made Him both Lord and Christ. In Philippians 2:13 it says, “For it is God who works in you both the willing and the working.” Do we not see that everything that we have through the knowledge of Christ comes from God Himself?

DMcI Yes, the ultimate thought is God. The kingdom will be handed back in order that God may be all in all. But we get glimpses of His mercy in the Old Testament. He says to Moses: “I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy” (Ex 33:19). He never

says 'I will judge whom I will judge.' His glory is seen in the dispensation of grace. And this is the God they claim to know, despite rejecting Christ. And so it is God who "has made Him" – they have to come by way of God's Man.

AM I was thinking about the verses in Ephesians 1:17-18, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, being enlightened in the eyes of your heart, so that ye should know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." I think we see some important things there: first of all, we spoke of the Holy Spirit, whom we need to see the glory of the Lord Jesus right now. I think it is a wonderful expression in verse 18, where it says, "being enlightened in the eyes of your heart." That is the way we can see the glory. Young Christians often ask themselves how it is possible to see the glory of the Lord. I think here we find an answer, "with the eyes of our heart" and the help of the Holy Spirit.

DMcI Our hearts, that is to say our affections, must be engaged if we are to see the glory of Christ. It is no accident that the man who was closest to the Lord in manhood is the man who opens up His glory the most. But the place that John took in the bosom of Christ is open to every believer.

AM A non believer may think he has to leave so many things behind, but you have to see it from the other way, that when we turn to Jesus we receive a lot.

DMcI I think Paul touches on that when he goes over the fact that he suffered the loss of everything. But what he had gained was "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord" (Phil 3:8). Paul was a man of great influence and wealth, but he never regretted losing all that through coming to Christ.

MJC In Hebrews 11:26 it says Moses "had respect to the recompense." I was thinking of what our brother has just said.

DMcI The Spirit is the earnest of that now. Paul was not permitted to speak of the things he saw. But you get the feeling that his ministry was coloured by it.

MJC "King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

DMcI He was there in chains, but he was the freest man in that building! A young martyr once said, 'He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain that what he cannot lose.' Every impression of Christ that we have received is retained by us. So heaven will be full of persons who have a unique appreciation of the glory of Christ.

AM It is wonderful how Jesus is preparing His assembly through the Holy Spirit.

RG Earlier Acts 9 was referred to, and it says there in verse 8, "and his eyes being opened he saw no one." He thought that he was zealous for God, but had to realise that he was persecuting the assembly of God. He had to learn his failure, and he had to become aware of his sins before the Lord.

DMcI Yes, and he was blind for three days. It was a time when he was alone with the Lord, do you not think? And then he meets Ananias, who welcomes him into the family of God. How he must have reflected upon that, you know, that one of the Lord's people, whom he had come to slay or to put into prison, comes to him and says, "Saul, brother!" Paul never ever forgot that sense of mercy.

Well, the anointed Man will be owned universally. All shall know the Lord. You can hardly think of it in the world in which we live. Well, I believe, as Christ has His rightful place in our hearts, we will be among those who love His appearing.

Cologne
6 March 2010