

Resurrected Glory (Series: Living on the Resurrection Side of Life)

John 17:1-5

William Barclay says, “It was in their death that the great ones found their glory.”

Abraham Lincoln had his enemies in his lifetime, but even those who had criticized him saw his greatness when he died. Martin Luther King, Jr. was ridiculed as a radical, a rabble-rouser, and a dangerous communist in his lifetime, but is hailed today as a prophet.

Maybe that’s what Jesus had in mind when he turned his eyes toward heaven and prayed, “Father, the time has come; glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.” The one who endured the shame of the cross brought salvation to a broken world. It was in their death that the great ones found their glory.

On our way to Holy Communion today, I want us to think about “Glorifying Christ,” lifting Christ up and offering Christ our finest acts of praise. Our text today says there are two good reasons.

First in Verse 2 – “For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given me.” Eternal life, quality life, abundant life, life that has no end.

Our first thoughts of eternal life are along the lines of everlasting life, life without end, in the presence of God. And we do believe in the “resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.”

Eternal life for John was different. It had to do with quality more than quantity. Eternal life is life as God designed it to be.

Christ has given us eternal life, because Christ has shown us the NATURE OF GOD. In his prayer Jesus says, “This is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God...” Some say all religions are the same, but they’re not the same. If you are a Hindu, God is pure Spirit with no personality whatsoever. If you are a Muslim, God is the Final Judge whom you must please to enter Paradise. If you are a Jew, God is Elohim, the Holy one with a glory so bright that humans cannot see God’s face and live. If you are a Christian, God is our Parent who loves God’s children unconditionally and provides for them continually. Jesus said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” Jesus came to show us the true nature of God.

What a relief it is to know that God is not hostile to humanity. God is loving. Everybody needs to know WHO God really is. For when we discover who God is, we become a better people.

We can glorify Christ by the LIVES WE LIVE. How do you put it into practice?

I am always a little leery of people who advertise their business as a Christian business. They certainly have a right to do so, but I am just a little suspicious. Integrity to me does not consist of words, but actions – I’d rather see integrity in action than hear about it any day. When I live an ethical life, I glorify Christ.

The most abused commandment of our day must surely be “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Who keeps a Sabbath anymore? Are we paying a price for it personally, relationally, spiritually, and socially? I know we are busy people. Our work hours and stress levels are up. Our sleep and family time

are down. If God stopped to “take a breath” one day in seven, why do we think we can ignore this fundamental principle of life?

Not because you must but because you need to, why not set aside one day a week for rest, worship and interaction with family?

Another way we glorify Christ is in caring for “the least of these.”

Some families pack lunches that they keep in the car to give to the homeless begging on the street corner. It is a caring, concrete, compassionate thing to do. Some of us volunteer to prepare a meal and serve it at Bangor homeless shelter, some of us volunteer at the Free Bean Lunch feeding and handing out clothing those in need, some of us volunteer at the Ecumenical Food Cupboard distributing food to families with food insecurity, or other random acts of kindness. Find your own way to serve the least of these.

I asked a publisher, “How do you sell books?” His reply was simple – “Word of Mouth.” All the catalogues, promotions, advertisements, and marketing in the world do not replace the simple statement of one person to another, “I read a really good book the other day, you ought to read it.”

What is true of books is true of the gospel. I like to define evangelism as one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. Have you learned to incorporate the mighty acts of God into your normal conversations? There is no need to be pushy or proud, just honest and genuine. One way to do that is to put in a good word for Christ whenever a good word would help the situation.

Jesus ends his earthly life with a prayer. This prayer in John 17 is really the Lord’s Prayer. He prays for himself. He prays for his disciples. And he prays for us that we may be united together as one. As we gather at the Communion Table, let this prayer ring true as we glorify Christ and seek to serve Christ with our undivided devotion.