

# Glorification Introduction

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, for nearly three years now, we've been studying salvation God's way.

! Much of our study has been centered on the Apostle Paul.! Certainly, we've looked extensively at his marvelous letter to the Romans,! spent some time in Ephesians, and Galatians.

This evening, we're going to return, but briefly, to the book of Romans, chapter 8, where we found the golden chain of salvation, recorded in verses 28 and 29 and 30.

For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Let's talk about Jesus being the firstborn, the preeminent one. And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those whom he called, he also justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified.

[ 1 : 20 ] In these two verses, we see the great themes of the salvation provided to sinners by the grace of God. God's God. We can list these parts of the golden chain as God's foreknowledge, God's predestination, God's call, God's justification, God's sanctification, and God's glorification.

Now, you may want to protest at this moment, because the word sanctification is not on the list. And that always kind of bothered me, that it wouldn't be in there, because it's crucial to our spiritual growth.

And then, I can't remember who I was listening to or reading, but they found it for me in actually verse 28, which says, being conformed to the image of his Son.

That's sanctification. We are being recreated into the image of Christ. And we go different speeds. Never criticize someone because they're further ahead of you.

Never criticize someone because they're lagging behind. We all go different speeds at that. But that is a description of sanctification. Conformity to the image of Christ.

[ 2 : 42 ] And may I say, if you're not more like Jesus today than when you were first saved, go back and examine yourself, as Paul commanded in 2 Corinthians 13.5. That's a command. I do it often.

But this evening, our attention is drawn to the last entry in the golden chain of salvation. And that is where Paul uses the word glorified.

So we've come down to glorification. And glorification is also the last item recorded in the Ordo Salutis, which is what we've been looking at for nearly three years, Latin for the order of salvation.

That has been the basis of our study these several years. That leads us to the definition of the word glorification.

Here is a sound definition for our purposes. Glorification or glorified is the final step in the process of salvation.

[ 3 : 47 ] It involves the completion of sanctification and the removal of all spiritual defects. So we can see from this that the final act in the application of redemption is glorification.

And again, I think that's why the Lord speaks of our salvation as you have been saved, you are being saved, you will be saved. It's an action over time.

Although there is a point in time when we're saved and no longer unsaved. We have to be cautious, though. There's been a lot of confusion sown concerning what being glorified means, and especially where it fits in the eschatological model of the end times.

That's what eschatological means. The last days or the end times. It does not occur in the intermediate state.

And some of you are saying, I hope you didn't call on me to tell me what the intermediate state is. I'm not going to call on you. But I am going to define the term. The intermediate state is the condition of persons between the time of their death and the time of their resurrection.

[ 5 : 15 ] And everybody's looking at a resurrection someday. Those that die will be resurrected. Some to eternal life, some to eternal death. But that's the intermediate state. Believers in Christ die and they go somewhere.

Unbelievers who have rejected Christ also die and depart to a different place. But for both groups, the place they go to is referred to as the intermediate state.

Obviously, we're going to focus on believers and where they go. Everyone who dies in the faith before the return of Christ, their souls go immediately to be with the Lord.

Immediately. It was true of Abel. He was the first recorded death, the first believer to experience death, and actually experienced it through homicide.

It is true of any Christian who dies today. The Lord Jesus told one of the thieves on the cross, Today you will be with me in paradise.

[ 6 : 33 ] He said this in the second letter to the Corinthians, We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. And Paul also said this to the Philippians, I am hard pressed between the two.

My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Now, this is an important point. Because glorification involves both the body and the soul, it does not occur in the intermediate state.

That's very important because most people in the church believe that glorification occurs when you die. You die, your soul departs, goes to be with the Lord, and you're glorified.

That's not when it happens. We're going to review when it happens. But that's not it. But that's not when we receive our glorified bodies.

[ 7 : 34 ] The first part of that statement is true. When a believer dies, he goes immediately to be with the Lord. And I'm very emphatic about that. We're talking about our spirit, our soul.

I have a real problem to believe reports of people that have had near-death experiences who claim, well, you know, I saw a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

And I started going toward the light. And they keep talking about this tunnel. Those who claim this often disagree on just what that light happens to be.

Some say, well, that's God the Father. Some say, no, it was Jesus. Some say it was an angel.

Some say it was heaven. A few have said, well, I was standing before St. Peter.

And of course, remember when we all grew up, they said, well, you get to the pearly gates and you're going to be met by St. Peter. And I'm sure I could find a Catholic somewhere who claims he saw or she saw the Virgin Mary because she figures so prominently in that phase of aberrant idol worship theology.

[ 8 : 49 ] I believe in what the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians. To be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord.

I think we close our eyes on earth and we are with the Lord. I remember years ago, a man and his family, wife and daughter, were in a terrible accident.

And it was, the man and wife survived, but it was obvious that the little girl was not going to live.

Laying out there on the highway, he laid down next to her and calmed her as much as he could and she was slipping away and they were staunch believers.

And he said, honey, I want you to do something. I want you to just lay here. We've got the namelands coming, but I want you to lay here and close your eyes. And when you open your eyes, you're going to be in the arms of Jesus.

And she closed her eyes and never opened them again in this life. She died right there on that highway. And I guarantee you, she opened those with the Lord. I promise you that happened.

[ 9 : 56 ] Let me make some brief comments as to what happens when believers die. The spirits of those who are in Christ go immediately to be with Him. Their spirits are made perfect in holiness as they come into the presence of the Lord Christ.

We must have no defilements of sin as we enter into His presence. This is consistent with the words of the writer of the book of Hebrews.

I'm giving you the King James Version. We're told that the spirits of just men made perfect. Made perfect. Or we could accurately say the spirits of justified men made perfect.

And we've heard that word many times in this block of instruction. I told Don Coleman one time, I said, I woke up at 2 o'clock some morning and couldn't sleep, so I got up and read the Heidelberg Catechism.

He said, boy, you don't have much of a life, do you? Well, actually, the other night I was reading the Westminster Shorter Catechism. I'm sure, Pastor, you do that often. And I know Mike Dursham has got it memorized.

[11:07] Here's question 37. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death? And the answer, the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection.

And some people refer to that as soul sleep, but your soul is not asleep. Your body is asleep, so to speak, in the grave. But it says they rest there in the graves until the resurrection.

And that is a beautiful truth. It speaks of a glorious transformation of the people of God that occurs at their death, but that is still not final glorification.

That doesn't happen until next week, in fact, in here. But we'll... Neither is the event of our death the believer's blessed hope and expectation.

We know that Christ has secured for us redemption. We've been studying that for years. We tell people we've been redeemed. But the redemption that Christ has secured for us is not only a redemption from sin, but also from the penalty of sin.

[12:39] Or we could say from sin's consequences. Death is the wages of sin. Death is the penalty of sin. Now, we know everybody sinned, right?

Because everybody dies. That's the wage. We all die. Believers and unbelievers. Believers die. Unbelievers die. Why? Because all have sinned.

Paul is the one who spoke most eloquently about this. For the wages of sin is death. So we earn a wage for our sins.

We earn a paycheck. And it's death. We owe a sin debt and we pay that debt when we die.

Now, let me say this. The unbeliever owes a sin debt that he can never pay fully in eternity. Try as he might. That's not true of believers.

[13:41] We won't go there tonight. But this is a point that may sound a bit confusing. Death does not deliver us from death.

In fact, the very act of death is us experiencing death. So there's no this magic elixir. Well, I'm going to become a Christian because I'm not going to die. Well, in a sense, we don't die.

Jesus told, you know, in John 11 at the grave of Lazarus, those who believe in me will never die.

Well, we die physically. We don't die spiritually. We don't die eternally.

Meaning eternal in hell. But death is an experience and it's called death. Death is described as the last enemy.

It has not yet been destroyed and swallowed up in victory. But that day is coming. That day is coming. Glorification has in view the destruction of death itself.

[14:42] I love the beautiful words of John the Revelator. I have quoted these words many times at funerals. I probably quote it Friday.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

glory is coming. But not at the moment of our death, though it may be amazing when we in our spirits see the risen Christ.

There is great blessedness in this. Can you just imagine? You close your eyes and open them and you're standing before the Lord Jesus. But it is not the blessedness we receive when listen to this blessedness.

I tell you this, brothers, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

[15:53] Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. Sleep is death. We shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? That's 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 50 to 55. And that, of course, is the great passage on the rapture of the church, the snatching away or the departure of the church.

And I think those of us that are alive today can at least sense the possibility that we're in the season of that happening.

It's funny, people say, well, but no one knows, only the Father knows, and all that's true. But remember, Jesus, through Paul, said, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren.

[17:22] Anytime you read that, and Paul uses that a lot, you can mark it down, they were ignorant. That's a nice way of him telling them, you're ignorant. And he said, this is not going to take us unawares.

I liken it to our weather in Oklahoma this time of year. There's a storm coming. Big storm coming. It's called the tribulation. I'm convinced we are not going to go through the tribulation. I'm absolutely convinced of that. Not everybody in the church is. But I am.

And if you don't want to believe that, that's okay, but if you want to be right, you'll believe the way I do, of course. But in any event, that tribulation is coming.

I liken it to a huge storm. But like Oklahoma, we may feel the wind. We may hear the thunder.

[18:19] We may see flashes of lightning. I think we're seeing them now. But we're not going to experience the storm. Not going to experience the storm. But that storm is coming.

But here we have this great passage on the rapture of the church, the snatching away. And we note here the dead in Christ rise first. And, you know, the old preachers like to say, well, they had six feet further to go.

I don't know if that has anything to do with it or not. But they rise first. But I will say this. And I know this is going to sound weird to you. But Diane and I go to cemeteries.

Old cemeteries. There's a lot of history in old cemeteries. I kid you not. We go to old cemeteries. And we camp out.

I'd like to be in a cemetery when the rapture happens. You know, am I going to have time to see those graves start to open up? Because I'll probably die you know, looking at the graves opening up.

[19:20] But the dead in Christ rise first. Next, those believers who are alive at that moment will begin to rise.

And I've said before, I hope it's fast because I don't like heights. I don't want to be looking down and, you know, we're slowly going up. But I think it's fast and I'm going to try to prove that to you in a minute.

Together, we join Christ in the air and go to be with Him. Now, we're obviously talking about for the dead, it's their bodies that are being raised.

For us, we didn't experience death. Although, I may have a heart attack going up. But wherever Jesus is from that moment on, we will be with Him.

we will be with Him. And there are a lot of believers and there are good people that are preoccupied with a dread of death.

[20:22] It just preoccupies them. You know, guys, if the Lord tarries, say, a hundred years, it's going to happen. None of us are going to be in there.

Well, Derek might be, but the rest of it, we're going to be gone. Someday it's going to happen and you know what? It will be exactly on God's schedule.

No one has ever gone into the presence of the Lord and heard Him say, what are you doing here? It wasn't your time. That just has never happened.

That is never going to happen. It's going to be right on schedule. And none of our deaths will take the Lord by surprise.

Now, I've used this illustration many times. I'm sure I've used it in here. Bear with me. It's a fictitious illustration, but it makes a point.

[21:25] In the late 19th century, a very wealthy man was in downtown London. He was with a servant, rode his coach. The servant drove him to the downtown area and he got out of his coach and he looks and he sees someone staring at him as he walked by whom the wealthy man described as the angel of death.

He saw the angel of death. The death angel passed him on the street, looked at him, and the death angel seemed astonished to see him.

The man turned to his servant, said, bring up the coach and get me home right now. So, he went home, he packed his bags and he told the servant, you get me to the train station.

He booked passage to Edinburgh, Scotland on the midnight express. Diane and I have taken the train from London to Edinburgh. It was a delightful thing if you ever have the opportunity to do it. Well, as the servant got him loaded up on the train and then he left to go back to his master's mansion, he too saw what appeared to be the angel of death and he went up to him and he told him, he said, you know, my master thinks you're the angel of death and he said, well, I am.

[ 22 : 54 ] He said, well, he saw you this morning looking at him and you had this frightened expression and it alarmed him greatly and the angel of death said, well, I didn't mean to alarm him.

He said, I was amazed to see him in London because I have an appointment with him tonight at midnight in Edinburgh, Scotland and I couldn't figure out what he was doing in London.

You're not going to, you're not going to miss it. You're not going to beat it. When it is our time, brothers, we go. So, the Apostle Paul reminds us that until that time, he says in Romans 8.23, we groan inwardly as we await eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

And I got to tell you, most of you guys are real young, but at 73, I'm looking forward to the return of Christ. I'm serious. And I often pray, Lord, come back and vindicate your name in a Christ-rejecting world.

Vindicate your name. Come back. In that passage, I just read, we eagerly await for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. Paul could have just as easily said, we eagerly await the glorification of our bodies.

[ 24 : 21 ] That's really what he's talking about. Glorification represents the complete and final redemption. And we've been studying redemption for three years.

And this is the last phase, the last turn of the page of our redemption. It is that time when our body and spirit will be fully conformed to the image of our risen, exalted, and glorified redeemer.

This is the meaning of that passage in the third chapter of Philippians, verses 20 to 21. Our citizenship is in heaven. Think about that.

Our citizenship is in heaven. And from it, we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.

Another point I want to make has to do with the restoration of the earth. There is coming a time when the whole earth will be restored.

[ 25 : 39 ] creation was cursed as a result of man's sin. Remember that back in Genesis? Chapter 3? And the Lord told Adam, said, you're going to have to farm this land and you're going to grow more thistles and goat heads than you're going to grow vegetables.

It's going to be a tough existence. But there's coming a time when it will all be restored. creation will be redeemed as a result of man's redemption.

Romans 8, 20-21, For the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of Him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

There's a time coming when this universe is going to melt with fervent heat. I heard Dr. MacArthur not long ago he said, you know, the environmentalists are worried to death this thing is going to be destroyed.

He said, let me tell you, it's going to be destroyed but not by hairspray. And then John went on and said, look, spray your hair and kill a deer, you know, eat the deer, you know, he went through all this litany, you know.

[ 27 : 14 ] The prophet Isaiah saw this in fact hundreds of years before the incarnation of Christ. And this is what he said, for behold, God is speaking to Isaiah, for behold, I create new heavens and a new earth and the former things shall be remembered or come into mind.

You know, I heard a pastor just this last week. It was on the radio. I came here, I don't know who it was. And he said, you know where it says that Jesus is not going to remember your sins? He said, that's impossible.

He's going to remember them. He's just being nice. I'm thinking, you just denied something that the Lord said? He said he wasn't going to remember them. And I don't want him to remember them.

2 Peter 3.7 But by the same word, the heavens and the earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Well, that's pretty bad news, isn't it? So let's get some good news. Revelation 21.1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea

was no more.

[ 28 : 35 ] Guys, we're going to witness the uncreation and we're going to witness the recreation. Boy, I'm looking forward to that. I'm kind of into astronomy anyway, in a small way.

And the idea that it's going to be a new heaven and a new earth just amazes me. Now, we are not to confuse our glorification with the creation of the new heaven and the new earth.

Glorification refers to the final salvation of persons. It does not refer to the redemption of inanimate objects. Mountains and streams and boulders and all that.

There's another point to make concerning glorification. The divines of old taught this. They said, all believers will be glorified at the same one moment in time.

Now, you have to go way back to hundreds of years. believers, but they taught that emphatically. This is looked at today, and I think rightly so, as an error on their part.

[ 29 : 46 ] I think it was an error. They did not have the light that we have, and they especially did not have the light as it pertains to the regathering of Israel.

Most of the reformers could not see the rebirth of Israel, and that's why they put the church in place of Israel. But we know Israel can be reborn, and in fact, it has been reborn as a physical nation.

Reborn on May 14, 1948. I was alive when that happened. I don't remember it. I was five months old. It has not yet been reborn spiritually, but it will be when Christ returns, and they're going to look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only Son.

Well, the truth is that not all believers will be glorified at the same time. The first batch of glorified saints will occur on that great day when the dead in Christ will be raised.

The believers alive at the moment of His appearing will be glorified in the twinkling of an eye in the twinkling in the twinkling of an eye.

[ 31 : 05 ] Now, what the heck is a twinkling of the eye? Well, we know. Scientists have estimated that a twinkling of an eye is the amount of time it takes light traveling at 186,000 miles a second to strike your eye and bounce off of it.

It happened to me just the other night. It happened to me lightning just right outside our window and boy, it hit my eye and TVs went out and the whole thing.

The rapture of the church will take place in the twinkling of an eye. That's how we're going to be changed. How fast is that? A blink of the eye takes about one-tenth of a second.

About one-tenth. The twinkling of an eye takes about one-billionth of a second. Don't use your stopwatch to try to record a twinkling.

And we read about that twinkling earlier in 1 Corinthians 15. Now, here's the question. Why don't all believers get glorified at the same time?

[ 32 : 17 ] And it's a great answer to that, a biblical answer. an interesting answer, an exciting answer. And that answer is my teaser to bring you back next week. And I'm going to answer it.

Thank you. .