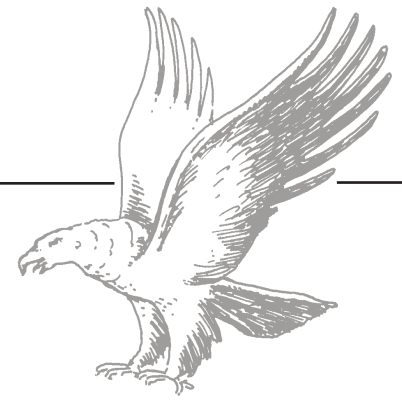


Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



February 7, 2016

To See God's Glory

Talk of “the glory of God” sounds hollow to those who are going through difficult circumstances. But even they can see God's glory—if they know how to look for it.

“I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory” (Psa. 63:2).

“Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?’” (Jn. 11:40)



There will come a day when all humanity—every single person who has ever lived—will see the glory of God. All doubts will be removed, all questions will be answered, all longings will be satisfied, all pain will be healed. The struggles of this life will be over, and those who have sought God in this life will finally rest in His tender embrace.

But that day is not yet here. In the meantime, we live with trouble and tears, wondering at the unfairness that life throws at us again and again. God's glory seems so remote, so abstract. How can we trust a God we cannot see? How can we discern His glory, when everything around us reeks of ugliness?

These two passages provide clues that show us the way. First, notice that in his time of trouble David sought God's power and glory “in the sanctuary.” It's

unlikely that David is speaking of the tabernacle at Shiloh, which was an unimpressive structure—and not accessible to him during his wilderness exile anyway. “The sanctuary” in the book of Psalms is often a metaphor for a deep spiritual connection with God, chiefly through the avenue of prayer and reflection. Meditation in a formal place of worship may serve that purpose, but so can staring at a brilliant night sky full of stars. The physical location is not as important as the concentration of thought on God and His role in our life. That exercise awakens an awareness of who He really is. David may have been in a dark place in his life, but those circumstances could not prevent him from beholding the glory of God.

Martha grieved for her brother Lazarus, who had just died. Jesus promised her that she would see the glory of God “if you would believe” (v. 40). He then raised her brother from the dead, a dramatic miracle that set all Jerusalem in an uproar (v. 45-54). Jesus was not making the miracle dependent on Martha's faith. Rather, He was encouraging her to

see this sign for what it really was: God using a human tragedy to accomplish a greater purpose. Only after the whole affair was over could Martha and the disciples finally recognize, through the eye of faith, what God was doing.

Both of these episodes illustrate how we can see the glory of God today. We behold His glory when we open our hearts to understand the grandeur of His creation and His provisions for our life. We see the glory of God when we witness the kindness of others who bring healing and comfort to the afflicted. The world may be an ugly place, but the glory of God shines as a beacon in the darkness to those whose eyes are open to see it.

When life treats us cruelly, we must train our hearts to look past the pain of the moment to the larger purpose God is working out in this world. “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen” (2 Cor. 4:17-18).

– David King