

When Glory Becomes Visible

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (NLT) We pleaded with you, encouraged you, and urged you to live your lives in a way that God would consider worthy. For He called you to share in His Kingdom and glory.

I. The Thessalonians

Acts 17:1-3 (NASB 2020) Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he visited them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

At a minimum, that means he taught in the synagogue for three weeks. Some scholars think he may have stayed a few months because. Why did he leave so soon?

Acts 17:5 (NASB 2020) But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and they attacked the house of Jason and were seeking to bring them out to the people.

1 Thessalonians 2:17 (ESV) But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time... **NASB says Orphaned**

A Young Church with Advanced Teaching: What's especially fascinating is what Paul taught them during that short stay.

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These were not mature believers of twenty years. They were brand-new Christians, yet Paul already spoke to them about participating in God's Kingdom and glory. That tells us something important: Paul considered the believer's future glorification and Kingdom inheritance to be foundational teaching!

II. The Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is wherever God's will is done under God's authority. It's both Present and Future!

Present:

Luke 17:20-21 (NASB 2020) Now He was questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, and He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."

Colossians 1:13 (NASB 2020) For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.

Romans 14:17 (NASB 2020) ...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

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Future: Not Yet

- We still pray, "Your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10).
- We await inheriting the Kingdom in its fullness (1 Cor. 15:50).
- Christ's reign will be openly manifested when He returns.

The Kingdom of God is already present wherever Jesus reigns in people's lives, but it will not be fully manifested until Jesus returns and reigns over all creation.

Romans 8:18 (NLT) Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.

III. The Glory of the Father Now

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (NLT) ...For he called you to share in His Kingdom and glory.

Romans 5:1-2 (ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice **in hope of the glory of God.**

John 17:22 (NASB95) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one:

What Is the Glory? Scripture shows it is larger than any one definition: **God's presence, God's character, God's honor God's power, God's authority, God's image reflected in humanity, God's eternal life, and God's Kingdom rule!**

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NASB 2020) ...for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature.

The glory of the Father is God's own life, character, presence, honor, and Kingdom rule. Through union with Christ, believers are brought into that glory now!

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NASB 2020) But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Paul's point is profound: With unveiled faces...

Under the Old Covenant: One man (Moses) entered God's presence. He reflected God's glory temporarily. A veil covered that glory.

Under the New Covenant: "We all" have access. No veil remains. The glory is not temporary. The transformation is internal and ongoing.

2 Corinthians 3:16 (NASB 2020) ...but whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

The glory of God in believers is His manifested life, character, presence, and likeness being progressively revealed in them by the Holy Spirit until they fully reflect Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NASB 2020) ...just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

This transformation is not something we can achieve through human effort or self-discipline alone; it is the work of the Spirit within us. As we behold Christ, walk in fellowship with Him, and submit to His lordship, the Holy Spirit progressively changes our hearts, minds, and character.

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