

Session 6 The Most Glorious Life: Empowered to Glorify God (Jn. 15:7-8)

“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty.” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)

I. THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF LIVING TO GLORIFY GOD

A. The most glorious life possible is to live being empowered to glorify God by bearing fruit and by engaging in breakthrough prayer through intimacy and intercession (15:5-7).

B. In 15:7-8, Jesus applied the “parable of the vine” in 15:1-6, emphasizing the promise and privilege of answered prayer that glorifies God. John 14 highlights the grace available to us, while John 15 highlights the responsibility of a believer with an emphasis on “you” which occurs 22x in John 15.

⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done...⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (Jn. 15:7-8)

C. ***If you abide in Me***: The main activity of a believer related to growing in God is to abide in Christ. It involves three things: *talking with God*, *applying His promises*, and *obeying His leadership*. Abiding in Christ speaks of our on-going dialogue with God with active trust in His Word (promises, warnings, doctrines, etc.) and a spirit of obedience flowing from mutual affection.

D. ***My words abide in you***: Jesus’ “words” refer to His teachings and what He speaks to us by the Spirit. We are to be absorbed in conversation with Him related to His teachings and promises. The greatest pleasure available to the human race is when “God reveals God to the human spirit” as the Spirit reveals and writes the Scripture on our heart (Heb. 10:16; cf. Lk. 24:32; Eph. 1:17).

¹⁶t...I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them. (Heb. 10:16)

1. Jesus’ word abiding in us empowers us in several ways including the following:
 - 1). To sustain an *on-going conversation* with Him (that we might love, serve, and obey Him);
 - 2). To boldly and clearly speak His word as *faithful witnesses* in the cultural wars (Ps. 2);
 - 3). To be better *understand and equip others* in Jesus’ end-time plans (Dan. 11:33; Rev. 10:8).

2. David said that the Scripture is perfect and has power to transform and delight our heart. We are to be loyal to Jesus’ teaching as the only perfect and reliable guide to true spirituality.

⁷The law of the LORD [God’s Word] is perfect, converting [transforming] the soul...

⁸rejoicing the heart...enlightening the eyes...¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold...sweeter than honey...¹¹And in keeping them there is great reward. (Ps. 19:7-11)

3. The Lord told Joshua that he would be empowered to be courageous, obedient, and prosperous by engaging in long and loving meditation on God’s word (Josh. 1:7-9).

⁷Only be strong and very courageous...⁸This Book of the Law [the Scripture]...you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do [obey]...all that is written in it. Then you will make your way prosperous, and...have good success. (Josh. 1:7-8)

¹*Blessed is the man...²[whose] his delight is in [the Scripture]...he meditates day and night.
³He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit... (Ps. 1:1-3)*

4. One of the primary issues that is attacked globally in the end times is the teachings of Jesus. David prophesied that the nations would rise up in anger against Jesus' leadership (Ps. 2:1-3), seeking to remove the influence of His Word from society (2:3). Many secular leaders will see God's Word in a negative light, as though it were *bonds* enslaving them and hindering "human potential," and as *cords* binding them to His morality, godly ways, and truth.

¹*Why do the nations rage...²The kings...and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD...saying, ³Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." (Ps. 2:1-3)*

5. John, like Ezekiel, was commanded in essence to "eat God's word"—that is to devour and digest the Lord's end-time message (Rev. 10:9; cf. Ezek. 3:1). By meditating on God's word, we receive understanding of God's love, leadership, and His end-time plans (Dan. 11:33).

¹...*"Son of man...eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." (Ezek. 3:1)*

⁹...*and he said to me, "Take and eat it [the scroll or little book]..." (Rev. 10:9)*

³³...*the people who understand [end-time message] shall instruct many...* (Dan. 11:33)

II. ASK WHAT YOU DESIRE AND IT SHALL BE DONE FOR YOU (JN. 15:7)

A. Jesus promised that, when His people pray in agreement with Him, He shall answer them.

In John 13-17, Jesus emphasized 5 times His promise to answer "whatever we ask for" in God's will (14:13-14; 15:7, 16; 16:23). One of the most effective ways to bear fruit is by our prayers.

⁷*"If you abide in Me [intimacy with God], and My words abide in you [mediation on the Word], you will ask what you desire [intercession], and it shall be done for you." (Jn. 15:7)*

B. There is a deep connection between what we pray and how we think and live by abiding in His Word. His words are in our heart, and when we pray our words are in His heart.

C. There is no limit to the power of the life that is in Jesus the true Vine; the only limit is in our cultivating a life of abiding and engaging in prayer that agrees with Him. He responds by revealing His heart, giving us direction, blessing our circumstances, transforming our emotions, touching our loved ones, reviving the Church, saving the lost, releasing justice, impacting society, and so on.

D. Prayer positions us to receive greater grace to love and pray with power. Multitudes in the end times will walk in deep intimacy with God and release His power as a way of life (Acts 2:17-21).

E. While not every believer is called to preach, we are all called to pray. Prayer is essential for our spiritual well-being. We must make every effort to establish our prayer life, because it will not develop on its own. The Spirit will help all who desire to grow in prayer. The results are worth whatever it takes to cultivate a strong prayer life.

F. Being a person of prayer is the most important calling in one's life; it is a higher calling than being a spouse, parent, pastor, preacher, or leader in the marketplace. We will all become far better spouses, parents, and leaders as we take time to grow in prayer. Intercession is our most effective spiritual weapon to support and help our loved ones. It is one of our deepest expressions of love.

G. Jesus clarified that our highest priority is to "abide in Him" or cultivate intimacy with God. This empowers us to engage in breakthrough prayer to release His glory. By cultivating intimacy with Jesus, we "soak in His beauty and glory" and then contend for breakthrough for the nations. In 15:7, "Mary of Bethany meets Anna the intercessor" (Lk. 2:37).

H. Intercessors burn out without a foundation of intimacy with Jesus (or abiding). Jesus is not just our King with power; He is also our Bridegroom with a deep desire for relationship with His people.
4" You shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...⁵For as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. ⁶I have set watchmen [*intercessors*] on your walls...they shall never hold their peace [*be silent, NAS*] day or night..." (Isa. 62:4-6)

I. The message in Isaiah 62:4-5 is that Jesus is our Bridegroom God who delights in His people. This truth is essential to sustaining prayer in Isaiah 62:6. Both the message of the Bridegroom God (62:4) and continual prayer (62:6) are essential to the forerunner message in Isaiah. 62:10-63:6.

J. In November of 1995, I had a prophetic dream exhorting me to call God's people, "Hephzibah." I heard a loud voice like thunder say, "***Call them Hephzibah, the Lord delights in you.***" The "Hephzibah message" is that God delights in us and rejoices over us as a Bridegroom rejoices over a bride. It is the same as the Song of Solomon message or David's "beauty of God" message.

K. When we pray in agreement with God's will, our "weak" prayers move God's heart. Our private times of prayer and the public prayer meetings we attend may not move us, but they move angels, and, more importantly, they move the heart of God. Never measure your prayers by what you feel.

III. THE FATHER IS GLORIFIED IN ALL WHO BEAR MUCH FRUIT (JN. 15:8)

A. The desire of the Father is that we bear much fruit. This is one way that Jesus glorifies the Father. Note a progression—to bear "fruit" (15:4), "much fruit" (15:5, 8), and "fruit that remains" (15:16). A disciple is one who voluntarily and diligently embraces the "disciplines" of Jesus' leadership.
By this: By embracing Jesus' leadership and refusing to yield to fleshly ways, God is glorified.

⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
(Jn. 15:8)

B. ***Much fruit:*** Fruitfulness includes *possessing* love, purity, gratitude, etc. and *inspiring* it in others. It includes our good works or service to others in doing deeds of kindness, answered prayer, obedient love for God (15:10), and leads to joy (15:11), love for others (15:12), and witness to the world (15:27). Bearing much fruit is not mostly about how many people we lead to the Lord. A lifestyle of bearing fruit is in contrast to complaining, being critical or spiritually lethargic, etc.

C. We can bear fruit in three ways—

1. **Character:** We walk out the 8 beatitudes in our speech and actions (Mt. 5:3-12) .
2. **Words:** We speak as faithful witnesses of Jesus and His message, which includes the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle (Mt. 5-7) and His views on sin, judgment, eternity, finances, etc.
3. **Deeds:** We demonstrate God’s glory through our practical service and ministry to others.

D. Jesus associated good works (which include our words) with releasing the Father’s glory to others (Mt. 5:16). God’s glorious plan is to transform the nations by using His people as vessels of glory.

¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father.
(Mt. 5:16)

E. ***Shine before men:*** The Church and the world have a very different message with conflicting values. Our power is found in maintaining our distinction. We are tempted to blur the lines in what we say to be more accepted by the people who reject Jesus. We must refuse the temptation to distort His message by removing difficult aspects in it. Jesus’ teachings are offensive to the secular mindset.

F. We must uphold Jesus’ teaching on self-denial and sacrifice without minimizing the aspects that are more difficult or repellent to people. If we present only the comfortable and positive side of Jesus’ message, then we present what is other than “the true gospel.”

1. C. S. Lewis wrote of *resistance thinking* that is *against the world, yet for the world*. Our message is both world-affirming and world-denying. We proclaim *what God has called the world to be* in its dignity and destiny, while at the same time proclaiming *what the world has become* in all its depravity. (I recommend the book ***Prophetic Untimeliness*** by Os Guinness).
2. We are to proclaim the scandal of the cross with its two applications. First, Jesus died on the cross as the *only* way to obtain our deliverance. Second, His people must embrace the cross as a lifestyle. Refusing this 2-fold message leaves the Church powerless and in compromise. The idea of blending into the secular scene with music, fashion, movies, etc. to win people by becoming like them is a great mistake. If believers are indistinguishable from non-Christians, they are useless in bringing real change to the world.

IV. BY THIS MY FATHER IS GLORIFIED (JN. 15:8)

A. We show ourselves to be Jesus’ disciples by bearing fruit. There is no guessing as to what He looks for in determining who His disciples are. Imagine, on the last day, His acknowledging you this way. A fruit-bearing believer is part of Jesus’ gift of love to the Father. ***This is the most glorious life.*** To glorify God means that our life gives insight into and a demonstration of the Father’s glory.

⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
(Jn. 15:8)

B. We glorify God in our personal prayer life when we discern and delight in His beauty by treasuring, enjoying, celebrating, and making much of His name and beauty and then by declaring it to others. “*God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.*” **John Piper**

C. Our greatest dream is to love Jesus with all our heart and to do good for His name by living in a way that shows people the excellence of His leadership by our joyful embrace of obedience even in mundane and difficult tasks. It is worth it regardless how difficult or how long the journey. It is a great miracle for weak people to be used by God to show glimpses of His glory and beauty in a dark world filled with people who do not often or easily recognize His excellent leadership.

¹²*The word of God is living and powerful.... a discerner of the...intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)*