

## Orthodoxy - Glorifying God

Question 6: How can we glorify God?

Answer: We glorify God by enjoying him, loving him, trusting him, and by obeying his will, commands, and law.

“You shall therefore love the LORD your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always.” - Deuteronomy 11:1

Living in reality means confessing that we have received all from God, and that we cannot add anything to him by giving him anything. Therefore, we lay at his feet with all that we are to enjoy him, love him, trust him, and obey him. Oh, that this was a reality!

Being American means confessing the phrase from the Declaration of Independence, “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Jeffersonian or not, this phrase sheds light on the “American Dream” - Everyone should be free to benefit from equal opportunities, and achieve the highest aspirations for the common good of all. Yet like most dreams we try to make a reality without God’s glory at the center of our endeavors, this one has ended up being more of a nightmare than a dream. Without God at the center of our existence “the pursuit of happiness” has become our own ability to determine our own destiny by living however we want. Without God at the center of our existence “liberty” has become an empowerment to do whatever we want, whenever we want, to become whatever we desire. Without God’s glory at the center of our existence we have made “life” definable only by what we determine pleases ourselves.

God’s destiny for his creatures is for us to have life in the full enjoyment of all that he is for us, experiencing the freedom of living in a loving relationship with himself, and pursuing the joyful life of walking in his trusting stride in his world expressed as we cultivate a life for the common good of all. God’s kingdom destiny is received and cultivated by his creatures in the earth when they live in the knowledge that everything is from him, through him, and to him for his own glory. This is to live with an understanding of his love and a response to his love. We can live with a knowledge of his love so that we’re filled with his fullness to express his love. This is how God is glorified in our lives as we believe what he says. But God’s destiny is not a reality in the lives of his creatures until they see and believe in his love demonstrated to them in the person and work of Jesus Christ. In other words, we are not able to live for his glory, but Jesus did. And, now we can live in his destiny to glorify God by faith in Jesus. When we believe in his love for us in Jesus then we can live in the enjoyment of him, loving him, trusting him, and obeying him, through our new life in Jesus, who has done and is doing this perfectly. Jesus said, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” (John 17:4) Now, those who live by repentance and faith in Jesus can live for God’s glory when we eat, drink, or whatever we do (1Corinthians 10:31).

## Today in Church History

On October 13, 1605 Theodore Beza, a French-born theologian, died at the age of 86. John Calvin, one of the protestant reformers, lived and ministered primarily in Geneva Switzerland. He died on May 27, 1564, and was succeeded by Theodore Beza, who became Geneva’s theological leader. Theodore Beza was born and educated in France by Melchior Welmor and other French educators who were influenced by the Protestant reformation. However, he later went to Paris where to the pleasure of his father he was educated and trained as a lawyer. However, his first love was Ancient Greek writings. He wrote and published *Juvenilia*, a work of poetry that made him famous in France at a young age. However, he converted to Christianity following



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Protestant views of salvation by grace and moved to Geneva, following many other French Protestant refugees. He took with him his fiancé, Claudine Denoese, and they married in 1548. They were married 40 years before his wife died childless.

Theodore Beza did much to influence the growth and maturity of the Protestant church in Western Europe. One of his chief contributions to the church in the late Middle Ages was his Greek New Testament. It was published in 1565 and a second edition was published in 1582. These versions were influenced by Erasmus' Greek New Testament and two other Ancient Greek texts that can be found today in Cambridge and Paris. His translation was published with the Vulgate and his own translation parallel to the Greek text. He also published hundreds of pages of his own notes on the Scripture text. This was extremely useful to the church and its pastors and teachers who relied upon these writings for their own understanding of what God said in his Word.

## **I'm Listening**

I have watched all 11 seasons of Frasier. Frasier is a Psychiatrist, who has a radio call in program in Seattle. My favorite line in the show is the repeated line uttered by Frasier when someone calls in to his program, "I'm listening." There's a bit of irony in this line because Frasier's character likes to talk and he likes to talk a lot about what he knows, and about himself. Yet, like most of us, with this bad side there is a good side. He's a good listener. Another aspect of the show I like is the frequent scenes in the coffee shop, Nervosa. It's where Frasier likes to gather with his brother Niles and others to drink coffee and talk. Gathering, talking, and listening, these are vital aspects of our humanity. Do you have a place to gather, talk, and listen to people?

The people can be family, neighbors, friends, church family, or work associates. The places can be dinner tables, proverbial water coolers, coffee shops, kitchen tables, walking paths, etc. Identifying with people in places is human. Being a good listener beautifies these human experiences of people and places. Asking questions and then listening demonstrates we're interested in another person, which is a beautiful expression of everyday love.

We live out our humanity knowing and being known. We were made to enjoy human connections, and these connections are made over time through normal interactions, and questions that lead to listening. These are some of the ingredients of meaningful interactions. They may begin simply with things like names or places or interests. They may continue with things like relationships or work or hobbies or leisure or trips. They may go further with things like family history or places they've lived or places they want to visit. They may go deeper with things like what's happening in their life or in the lives of those they love.

A good listener, a human listener living out their humanity in Jesus and his kingdom, is a listener hoping to hear deeper into the heart of the one they've gathered with, so that they can be used of God in their journey with God in this life. Too often our listening skips across the surface like a rock across water. We listen but we'd rather be doing something else. We listen but we'd rather be with someone else. We listen but we're thinking about something or someone else. We listen but we're thinking about what we want to say. We listen but we're thinking about what we need to say to fix the person or their situation. We listen but we're thinking about how we can't relate to the person. We listen but we're thinking we can't believe they're sharing "this" with us.

A good listener, a human listener living out their humanity in Jesus and his kingdom, is a listener who: moves toward others for thoughtful conversation, to see the good and enjoy the relationship, walking alongside them in the journey with a heart of compassion and prayer in times of weakness and trouble, and a willingness to talk about and help another with the deceitfulness of sin while you keep the story of redemption in view. May God grant us the grace to be like Jesus. He's listening.

## **CCC New Members Lunches**

Two Christ Covenant Church Membership Gatherings will be held Sunday October 20th and November 3rd. Church membership is an important step and decision in the life of a Christian. The leadership at Christ Covenant Church desires to assist you in making a prayerful and thoughtful decision as you consider membership.

The two meetings we hold are designed to assist you in this important step in your life. In our time together we will cover some important topics and ideas that will help you know Christ Covenant Church as a particular local church. The topics of this class will include:

- ❖ Who We Are, Your Story and Our Story
- ❖ What We Value, A Particular Church

The lunch on October 20th will be held at the Wilkerson's home 1617 Edgehill Rd. The lunch on November 3rd will be held after church at the Barnwell St. property. Please contact Cindy Jones at the church office if you're interested in attending.

