



The Glorious Atonement
Good Friday Message
Dr. Mary Craig
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The redemptive work of Jesus Christ glorified His Father.

Sin dishonored divine majesty. Sin robbed the Creator of the glory due to Him. By virtue of the Creator-creature relationship alone, God deserved the glory, the honor due His Name, the obedience of His commandment. Adam listened and obeyed another word; another wisdom, and plunged humanity into an estate of sin and misery.

Jesus glorified the Father in what He was sent by the Father to be and to do.

*Father, glorify Your Name. Then came there a voice from
Heaven saying, I have both glorified it,
And will glorify it again.
John 12:28*

In John 12:28, Jesus prays to the Father to glorify the Father's name. The Father responds that He has glorified it and will glorify it again. The life of Christ on earth had been a continuous glorifying of God up to that point, both in purpose and effect. Man by apostasy tramples under foot the declarative glory of God, not rendering the glory due to God's Name. The second Man brought what is the due tribute to God.

In the plan of redemption, God had already glorified Himself and would do it again. The events connected with the Cross would exhibit and commend divine wisdom. This outworking of the wisdom of God includes God's mercy in sending His Son as Savior, God's veracity in fulfilling the promise, God's justice in requiring full satisfaction for sin according to His Law, and God's power in carrying His counsels into execution.

As Jesus prayed before the Father, the Father declares that He will again glorify His Name in completing the work and accepting the sacrifice. What of the work remained, the Father says, will be acceptable and accepted and bring the Father the utmost measure of glory. As the Father has glorified His Name by Christ's coming into the world and by the work done in it so far, so the Father would glorify it again by Jesus' departing the world and returning to the Father, and by the Father accepting the sacrifice which Jesus offered, namely Himself.

*Therefore, when He was gone out, [Judas]
Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and
God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him,
God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and*

*Shall straightway glorify Him.
John 13:31, 32*

In John 13:31 Jesus speaks in the presence of the disciples at the moment when Judas went out to betray Him. He says, "Now is the Son of Man glorified; and God is glorified in Him." The reward of the atonement for Jesus was exaltation and the securing of a people. Jesus held this joy before Him. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

*Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You:
As You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life
To as many as You have given Him.
And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God,
And Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do.
And now, O Father, glorify You Me with Your own self with the glory
Which I had with You before the world was. John 17:1-5*

In John 17:1-5, Jesus speaks of glorifying the Father by means of a work finished on the earth. His ascension will likewise glorify the Father. This is more than Jesus coming as God Incarnate to be a teacher or an example or even a prophet or priest. Jesus poured out His soul unto death. In His suffering and being obedient unto death, Jesus could expect with confidence His due reward. (Philippians 2:8ff) Jesus voluntarily lay down His life according to the commandment received from His Father (John 10:18). He will be exalted to the place of supreme dominion and have power over all flesh and give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him.

The word in John 17:4 for "finish" is tel-i-o'-o. It means to complete, to make perfect, to accomplish, to finish, to bring to an end, to the purposed goal, to bring to fulfillment. When Jesus proclaims that the work is finished, it demonstrates that He views His work as already done. The aorist tense is used. He has finished it. Here we see into the mind of Christ.

What Jesus did, as His work, gives glory to God in design as well as in tendency and effect. Jesus' obedience flowed from a lively sense of God's greatness and perfection. That obedience glorified God and did so in a way no creature had or could do. Jesus procured for people eternal life.

Sin is heinous to God. Jesus' obedience as the remedy for sin gave God glory beyond what any mere creature could give. The atonement magnifies the divine law and makes it honorable. Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, upholding and glorifying the standard God set for His people. Jesus' obedience was practical, living, perfect, personal, and perpetual. God is lawful. Jesus' life gives dignity to the Law, which is holy, pure, perfect, good, and spiritual.

Divine honor had been taken away. Jesus restored it as an indispensable condition of forgiveness. The Book of Romans demonstrates this. People come short of the glory of God. Sin must be atoned for in a way acceptable to God, the offended party. (Romans 3:23) God must be rendered the honor due Him, the tribute of declarative glory due to Him as Creator.

The glory of God in this instance of John 17 refers to the divine image once possessed but lost by sin. Man is to render glory to God, giving Him His honor, by a pure nature and a God-glorifying obedience; he does not. When Christ glorified God as Mediator, He represented the people given to Him by the Father. As God-Man, Jesus learned obedience in the things which He

suffered. That obedience took Jesus to the Cross, to the grave, to the resurrection, and to the right hand of the Almighty.

Jesus glorified the Father by His perfect work, His whole life being counted as One Righteous Act. (Romans 5) Jesus restored the glory due to divine majesty, something which was withdrawn by man's sin. Repairing this could not be done by angels or by mere men. **The image of God is the glory of God and the only true way in which God can be glorified by a creature is to be what God created that creature to be. Man was made in the image of God. That image was marred by sin. Sin dishonors God and mars His image. The work of Christ fully satisfied the insulted majesty of God.**

The work to Jesus was a completed fact in Jesus' mind. He sees the crown before Him as He is about to face the abasement of the Cross. God is glorified in Jesus because Jesus displays the Father's declarative glory in exercising the attributes of God. Jesus manifests all the attributes of the Godhead and thus vindicates all the rights of Godhead.

Consider the divine Law. When Jesus subjected Himself to it, the Law received a greater glory than by the faultless obedience of creation alone. The Son of God submits to the Divine Law. He honors the divine Law. He upholds it. He fulfills it. He upholds and honors the authority of God as demonstrated in divine Law. God is the highest authority in the universe, the Creator. His Law is the highest Law in the universe, at once perfect, holy, pure, good, and spiritual, coming from the Creator/Redeemer. Jesus does not rebel against the Law. Jesus does not become a law unto Himself. Jesus does not resist the authority of God. Jesus honors the strong leadership of the Almighty. Jesus does not war with the Law of God; He does not fight it. He fulfills it.

The purpose of the Law is to provide the boundaries between life and death, to protect the life of the individual and of the community. The Law demonstrates the love of God in giving it and shows what love looks like. Jesus honors the Law in His submission to it in heart and mind and in His obedience to it in word and deed.

The Law, however, could not give life. God gave the Law in order to reveal sin and to prepare the way for a Savior. The Law could show the way to life but not give life. The Law cannot give life. Man is a sinner by nature. The Law reveals that and provokes sin because of the rebellion in the human heart. Revealing to us our sin and our sinful nature is done out of God's goodness to us.

Jesus is the only One who can give life. Jesus gives eternal life inasmuch as He came in the power of an endless life in order to give life to all those given to Him by the Father. It is not a matter of doing the Law: it is a matter of believing the Promise. The Promise by faith in Jesus Christ is given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:19-29)

In this Jesus glorifies the Father. In Christ the authority of God is more fully disclosed. The holiness of God led God to hide His face from sin and to withdraw from all fellowship with sin. Jesus walked in holiness; to see Jesus was to see the Father. As Jesus took the place of those given to Him by the Father, He also displayed what would be the demonstration of God's holiness and justice upon the finally impenitent in the blackness of darkness, cut off and separated from the living God.

God's love was displayed by Jesus in all that Jesus did and suffered. God's punitive justice was displayed as Jesus took the punishment due to satisfy offense against a holy and loving God. God was offended and recoils against sin and evil and against all that is contrary to His Nature.

Sin offends the love of God and all that God is. When there is sin, we are marring the image of God, dishonoring Him, robbing Him of glory.

The divine perfections, all the revealed attributes of God, were exercised and displayed and thus glorified to the utmost by the atonement. The redeeming work of Christ is the great work of God and the center of all His ways. That work shines forth to display God's grace and holiness, love and justice, mercy and truth, goodness and majesty, wrath and wisdom, power and knowledge, long-suffering and enduring. "Now is the Son of Man glorified; and God is glorified in Him."

Grace: "For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

Mercy: "But after that the kindness of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us; by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:4, 5)

Love: "For God so loved the world that He sent His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"For God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Truth: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes unto the Father but by Me." (John 14:6) "He that has seen Me has seen the Father". (John 14:9)

Wrath: "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Romans 5:9-11)

Righteousness: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." (Romans 10:3, 4)

Justice: "For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18)

Majesty: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness [radiance] of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:1-3)

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