

The Glory of God

Exodus 33.18

Series: We Value...

January 16, 2022

The Village Church at Shell Point

- I. **“What sort of people ought you to be...” (2 Peter 3.11)**
- A. At the end of this month Jean and I will have been with you in ministry for nine years
1. It only seems like yesterday that we left Morgantown, WV in a snow storm
 - a. In two cars
 - b. One of which was pulling a U-Haul trailer
 - c. We drove into Florida covered with northern, winter salt residue
 - d. Which Jean made me wash off the vehicles in St. Augustine
 - e. So we wouldn't look like the Beverly Hillbillies when we pulled into Shell Point
- B. Beginning ministry to a people in a place is no small matter
1. And so as I began to consider where to start
 - a. I decided to do nothing for a year
 2. Well, not exactly nothing
 - a. My goal was discover what this community, what this church, was all about
 - b. “What sort of people” were you as Peter would have said
 3. So I made it my primary priority to listen
 - a. To listen to your stories
 - b. Everybody has stories
- C. It was through listening to everyone's stories that the rudiments of our mission statement began to take shape
1. The mission statement of TVC is **“We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ”**
 2. The core of the mission statement – forgiveness, purpose and hope – is what began to develop in my thinking as a result of asking the question “What sort of people” are here in this community
- D. I shared those elements with our staff, with a group of leaders who led a strategic planning effort, with the Elders, and eventually with a larger forum of about 70 ministry leaders
1. The discussions helped refine the mission, helped define the mission, helped frame the mission in biblical terms
 2. And “building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ” was what the Elders adopted
 - a. And that mission statement has been embraced by this congregation and its ministry leaders in ways that exceeded my expectations
 - b. It's a rare committee meeting that somebody doesn't say something like, “how does this help us to build a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope?”

- E. The core of that mission statement – forgiveness, purpose, and hope – came out of your stories
1. **Forgiveness**
 - a. Through listening to our people I’ve learned that there are many in this community who have gone to church, but who haven’t really understood what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus
 - b. That salvation is not about what we have done, but is about trusting wholly in what Jesus Christ has done for us
 - c. That forgiveness is a gift of God’s grace in Jesus Christ
 - d. And people can go to church for a lifetime – and not get that!
 2. Forgiveness also means being a forgiving people
 - a. I’ve learned through everyone’s stories that we all have a history
 - b. And that our histories can be messy; often have issues, problems, broken relationships
 - c. And that reconciliation with family members or close friends is one of the primary tasks in this phase of life
 - d. And I’ve learned that in a senior community like this, we’re all on the home stretch of life
 - e. And we don’t have a lot of time left to deal with being a forgiven people, and with being a forgiving people
 3. **Purpose**
 - a. In a retirement community, what gave one purpose in the past is no longer what gets one up in the morning
 - b. What got us up in the morning in the past is often in our rear view mirrors
 - c. So we all need to redefine our purpose
 - d. And redefine our purpose in terms of God’s purpose for us
 - e. Redefine in terms of our relationship with Jesus Christ
 4. **Hope**
 - a. Again – we’re on the home stretch of life
 - b. And there are challenges in this period of life
 - c. “Aging isn’t for sissies”
 - d. It’s easy to be discouraged
 - e. And yet, in Jesus Christ we can have the hope that carries us into eternity with anticipation and expectation
 - f. Regardless of whatever challenges we face
 - g. So our mission includes being a community of hope, encouraging one another, reminding one another that there is an “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1.4) through Jesus Christ
- F. That’s the origin of the mission of TVC
1. “We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ”
 2. Since we adopted it, I’ve made it a practice to preach on it every couple of years

- a. Reminding us of the direction it gives us
 - b. Teaching our newer members and attenders what drives us
 - 3. But that's where it came from
 - a. It came from you
 - b. It came from asking the question, "what sort of people" are you
 - c. And thus, what kind of ministry ought to characterize our community
- G. It wasn't long after we adopted the mission statement that we knew we needed to take it a step further
 - 1. The mission statement gave us a solid biblical direction for our ministry
 - a. It helps us evaluate the kinds of ministry activities we support, encourage, and sanction
 - 2. But there was more that we needed to consider
 - 3. We needed to get more definitive and specific about our commitments as a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
- H. So our strategic planning group focused on discerning the core values of TVC
 - 1. What are our commitments?
 - a. What are our non-negotiables?
 - b. What are our foundational beliefs?
 - c. Of all the vast array of emphases that have been seen to be "Christian," what are the ones we hold most dear?
 - d. What are the values that we want to be known by?
 - 2. It's another layer in answer to the question, "what sort of people ought you to be?" (1 Peter 3.11)
 - 3. So our strategic planning group brainstormed, made lists, studied scripture, examined our statement of faith, explored our ministry gifts
 - a. And boiled it all down to seven critical elements
 - b. Elements that helped to define what sort of people we are
 - c. Or what sort of people we aspire to be
- I. And so when you enter our lobby from the outside you will see our mission statement on the right hand wall
 - 1. And on the left hand wall you will see the seven core values of TVC
 - 2. **We value the Glory of God**
 - a. Demonstrated by our passionate devotion to exalting His sovereignty and majesty
 - 3. **We value the Word of God**
 - a. Demonstrated by our reverential submission to its authority
 - 4. **We value the Sufficiency of Christ**
 - a. Demonstrated by our resting confidence in His all-inclusive work
 - 5. **We value the Ministry of the Holy Spirit**
 - a. Demonstrated by our acknowledgment that His anointed empowerment is essential for holy living and fruitful service
 - 6. **We value the Great Commission of Christ**
 - a. Demonstrated by our active participation in working toward its completion

7. **We value the Body of Christ**
 - a. Demonstrated by our whole-hearted commitment to the church, the people of God
8. **We value Prayer**
 - a. Demonstrated by our unreserved dependence on the practice of prayer
- J. Your first impression might be that these are doctrinal commitments
 1. And that is certainly true
 - a. Doctrine is extremely important to us
 2. But these values are more than doctrine
 - a. You should also notice that the descriptions for each of these values begin by saying “Demonstrated by...”
 3. We expect these values to be applied
 - a. We expect there to be evidence in the lives of our people
 - b. That our embrace of each one of them is not mere intellectual assent
 - c. But commitments to live lives which exemplify “what sort of people ought you to be”
- K. So last year I opened the year preaching on the mission statement
 1. This year I begin with a series on the seven core values
- L. When we adopted the core values, we purposely didn’t number them
 1. Because we didn’t want to imply that any one value was more important than others
 - a. That the first values are somehow more significant than the later values
- M. But if you stuck a gun to my head and said, “All right – choose one value that is the most important” – it would be The Glory of God
 1. **The Glory of God**
 - a. **Demonstrated by our passionate devotion to exalting His sovereignty and majesty**
 2. That’s because the notion of the Glory of God pervades the scripture from beginning to end
 - a. And we’ll see in a few moments, that if God were to have one overriding core value, it would His own glory

II. **“Show me Your glory”**

- A. The first thing we need to do in addressing the Glory of God is to understand what the Bible means by the Glory of God
 1. Essentially, the Glory of God is best understood as **The manifestation of God’s nature and character**
 - a. More specifically, how His nature and character display His excellency, His supremacy
 - b. His Godness – what makes Him God above all
- B. Two biblical words are used
 1. **OT – Hebrew = kabod**

- a. Literally means “weighty”
 - b. Gives the sense that the nature and character of God is not light and insubstantial
 - c. Not inconsequential or transitory
 - d. But in fact is eternally consequential, more substantial than anything imaginable
 - e. God is “heavy,” He is “weighty”
2. NT – Greek = doxa
- a. The word from which get our word “doxology” – an expression of praise
 - b. Essentially it means the valuation of something
 - c. And in the case of God, He is supremely valuable
 - d. There is no Being in the universe that has the value of God
3. That’s why I indicated earlier that if there is a primary core value in our list of values, it would be the Glory of God
- a. That’s because the word “glory” literally means “value”
 - b. And God is the supremely valuable Being
- C. One of the best ways to understand the Glory of God is to explore Moses’ encounter with God as he was leading the people of Israel through the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land
1. Context
- a. Moses had spent 40 days on the mountain with God
 - b. Left the people of Israel under the leadership of Aaron
 - c. While meeting with God on the mountain, he had received the instructions for the construction of the tabernacle – the place where God would dwell with His people while they were traveling
 - d. But while he was gone, the people grew restless
 - e. They pressed Aaron to make gods to lead them
 - f. So, you know the story
 - g. Aaron collected a bunch of gold
 - h. They manufactured a golden calf
 - i. Exodus 32:6 (ESV) — 6 And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.
 - j. Their idolatry was a direct violation of the first and second commandments
 - k. When Moses came down from the mountain he smashed the tablets with the commandments to the ground
 - l. Burned the golden calf; ground its remains into powder; scattered it on the water, and made the people drink it
 - m. Found the sons of Levi faithful to the Lord; commissioned them to exact punishment on Israel
 - n. 3,000 idolaters were killed by the faithful Levites that day
2. Moses then ascends the mountain again – perhaps to make atonement for their sins

- a. He pleads with God – to the degree that if God doesn't forgive these people, Moses asks that his own name be blotted out of His book
 - b. God doesn't completely buy Moses' argument
 - c. He sends a plague on those who were guilty
 - d. Then tells Moses to go down and lead these people to the Promised Land
- D. Moses continues his intercession
1. He tells God, "You want me bring this people up; but You haven't told me who will go with me" (**Exodus 33.12-17**)
 2. He argues with God (do you ever argue with God?)
 - a. "This is Your people!"
 3. God relents: "My presence will go with you"
 4. Moses: "If Your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and Your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"
 5. God says, "Ok Moses, I'll do this for you. You have found favor in My sight"
- E. And then Moses says this
1. **Exodus 33:18** (ESV) — 18 Moses said, "Please show me your glory."
 2. This is a man who's spent more than a month on the mountain in the presence of God
 - a. And yet, he doesn't get the sense that He knows God well enough yet
 - b. He wants more
 - c. He says to God, essentially, "Show me who You really are. Show me the essence of Your being. Show me the fullness of Your being"
 - d. "Show me Your glory"
- F. But God says, "I can't do that to you; if I showed you all of who I am, the fullness of My glory, you would be destroyed"
1. **Exodus 33:20** (ESV) — 20 "But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."
- G. And yet, God does make this promise to Moses
1. **Exodus 33:19** (ESV) — 19 And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."
 2. He says, "I will reveal My nature and My character to you"
 - a. "I will show you My goodness"
 - b. "I will proclaim My name: Yahweh – The LORD"
 - c. "Yahweh – I Am who I Am"
 - d. The covenant name of God, Yahweh – which displays His sovereignty, His independence, His self-existence – He would share with Moses

- e. He will show His grace to Moses
 - f. He will show His mercy to Moses
 - g. He will show His sovereignty to Moses: “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy”
- H. Then in Chapter 34 this is what happens
- 1. God puts Moses in the cleft of the rock
 - a. He, in all of His glory, passes by Moses, partially hidden from its fullness, protected by the rock
 - 2. But as God passes
 - a. **Exodus 34:6–7** (ESV) — 6 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”
 - b. **Yahweh, the LORD** – the name of God, His self-existence, His independence
 - c. **The mercy of God**
 - d. **The grace of God**
 - e. **The patience of God** – slow to anger
 - f. **The steadfast love of God**
 - g. **The faithfulness of God**
 - h. **The righteousness of God**
 - i. **The justice of God**
 - j. Even **The wrath of God**
- I. You see, Moses asks God, “Show me Your glory”
- 1. God reveals Himself to Moses
 - 2. God reveals His nature and character to Moses
- J. Because God wants to be known by His moral creatures
- 1. He wants to be known in His nature and character
 - 2. So the glory of God is the display of God’s attributes, His perfections, His nature
 - a. His self-existence
 - b. His mercy
 - c. His grace
 - d. His patience
 - e. His love
 - f. His righteousness
 - g. His justice
 - h. And yes, His wrath
- K. The glory of God is manifested in the burning bush, in the pillar of cloud by day, in the pillar of cloud by night, in the shekinah glory in the tabernacle and temple

1. But even then, God displays Himself so we would gain a sense of His Being, His nature, His character
- L. And of course, the greatest display of God's glory – His nature and character – is in His Son
 1. **John 1:14** (ESV) — 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 2. In Jesus Christ, we see His glory
- M. Moses says, "Show me Your glory"
 1. And God proclaims His nature and character
- N. We say, "Show me Your glory"
 1. And God gives us Jesus Christ
- O. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of the glory of God

III. **"My glory I give to no other..."**

- A. So if that's what the glory of God is, how important is the glory of God to God?
 1. **Isaiah 42:8** (ESV) — 8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
- B. We have been taught by our parents to share
 1. To share what we have been given with others
 2. And we take that value to heart
 - a. That's evidenced in who we are as a congregation, as TVC
 - b. We are a very generous people
 - c. We share
- C. God shares
 1. He has created all manner of goodness in our world which He shares with us
 - a. **James 1:17** (ESV) — 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...
 2. God loves to share
 - a. And we are the constant beneficiaries of God's sharing
- D. But there's one thing that God doesn't share
 1. He doesn't share His glory
 - a. **Isaiah 42:8** (ESV) — 8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
- E. Why is that?
 1. Well, the glory of God is the demonstration, the manifestation, of His value, His worth
 - a. And there is no other being in the universe who can begin to approach the worth and value of Almighty God
 2. So the glory of God is a manifestation of His supremacy, His superiority, His majesty
 - a. And in the presence of the Glory of God, no other being measures up
- F. How does that work?

1. It works through praise
 - a. We glorify God primarily in our praise of God; in our exaltation of God
 - b. “My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to ... idols”
 2. To glorify God is to praise Him
 - a. That’s why we spend so much time – in every single worship service – praising God, exalting God, worshiping God
- G. God wants to keep all the glory to Himself
1. Maybe that strikes you the wrong way
 - a. We’re not only taught since we were little squirts, to share
 - b. We’re also taught not to glorify ourselves
 2. But God glorifies Himself
 - a. Why is that?
 3. It’s because only God is worth it; only God is that valuable
 4. If we glorified ourselves, we would be idolaters
 - a. We would be valuing something above God
 5. If God glorified us – He would be an idolater
 6. The only Being who is valuable enough, worth enough, to receive the glory of God – is God!
 7. Piper: God is the only Being in the universe for whom self-exaltation is the chief virtue.
- H. That’s why I said earlier that if there is one core value that ranks above the rest
1. One value that is number one on the list
 - a. It is the glory of God
 2. Because it is first on God’s list of values
 - a. “My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to ... idols”

IV. **“Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”**

- A. So what does that mean for us?
1. We have tried, in our limited human way, in expressing our core values to describe the Glory of God this way
 - a. **Demonstrated by our passionate devotion to exalting His sovereignty and majesty**
 2. Certainly, that must impact our worship
 - a. That’s why you come here on Sundays
 - b. That’s why you should come here on Sundays
 - c. That’s why when you are able, you should come and gather here with us on Sundays
 - d. Because when we glorify God in our worship together, God is glorified more than if we were off to ourselves trying to do it without the community
 3. Remember the mission of TVC: “building a community...”
 - a. We can’t fulfill our mission by ourselves
 - b. We need each other

- c. When we gather in worship as a community, when we respond to the leadership of our worship leaders
 - d. When we submit to one another by singing together, by praising God together, by praying together, by reciting the creeds together
 - e. We glorify God more than we could by being an island unto ourselves
 - 4. That's not to say you can't worship by yourselves – you certainly can
 - a. But you can't do it in the same way as you can when you gather as a community in worship
- B. But that's just Sundays
 - 1. What about the rest of the week?
 - a. **1 Corinthians 10:31** (ESV) — 31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
 - b. **Colossians 3:17** (ESV) — 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
 - 2. Will the people around you, when they encounter you, when they observe you, when they meet you
 - a. Will they catch a glimpse of the nature and character of God?
 - b. Will they see God in your eating? In your drinking?
 - c. Will they see God in the wood shop?
 - d. Will they see God in choir rehearsals?
 - e. Will they see God in the art studios?
 - f. Will they see God in the impromptu encounters as you walk the island?
 - g. Will they see God on the golf course?
 - 3. Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God
- C. Let me make one more connection with the mission of TVC
 - 1. Building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
 - 2. Many of our community struggle with finding purpose in retirement
 - a. What should I do?
 - b. But doing is not the point
 - 3. “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”
 - a. The point is not what you do
 - b. The point is why you do it and how you do it
 - c. You do it to the glory of God
 - d. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him
- D. Jane
 - 1. Jane lost a friend yesterday
 - a. One of her high school classmates (less than half a dozen left in her class)
 - b. But Jane has kept in touch with pretty much all of them
 - c. Even after she moved down to Florida to be with us

2. This dear lady had, in her later years, a host of problems – all of which you can relate to
 - a. Jane kept in touch; by phone lately; by card or letter in earlier times
 3. But this dear lady passed away yesterday morning
 - a. Her daughter called Jane to tell her
 - b. And with tears her daughter thanked Jane for how she kept in touch with her all those years
 - c. How much it meant to her – and to her family
 4. Quite honestly, I don't believe Jane was aware of the impact and significance that a brief phone call had to a friend like that
 - a. But I believe in those encounters, that dear lady caught a glimpse of the love of God; of the mercy of God
 - b. A glimpse of the nature and character of God was on display
 - c. Even in the midst of those mundane and ordinary conversations
- E. **“Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”**