

(1 Samuel) Has the Glory Departed?

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon explores the spiritual crisis in Israel following the loss of the Ark of the Covenant, emphasizing the departure of God's glory due to misplaced trust.

Duration: 31:41

Scripture: 1 Samuel 4:13-17, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Repentance", "Accountability"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the danger of pushing God away and becoming calloused towards Him. He highlights the certainty that every person will have to stand before God and give an account, whether in this life or the next. The preacher urges listeners not to ignore God's voice or push Him away, but to seek His guidance and repentance. The sermon also recounts the story of Eli, whose disobedience and failure to discipline his sons led to their deaths and the capture of the Ark of God by the Philistines.

Transcript

Open up our Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 4. If you didn't bring a Bible this morning, raise a hand and one of our ushers will bring one to you because you're going to want to follow along with the text in 1 Samuel chapter 4. We've been making our way through the book of 1 Samuel and we ended last week in the middle of chapter 4 and we saw that how the nation of Israel was really at a crisis point. They were battling some of their near neighbors, the Philistines, and had lost the battle terribly and they thought that what would really turn the tide of battle for them the next time was having the Ark of the Covenant of God go with them into the fight. And so, not directed by God, but rather instead directed by human schemes and plans and sort of ingenuity, they said, let's get the Ark of the Covenant and it'll go before us.

And you know what the Ark of the Covenant was all about. You saw that movie Raiders of the Lost Ark, that golden box with the design of angels on the top and what it was was the representation of the presence of God, the throne of God, if you will, in the midst of Israel. And they took the Ark of the Covenant to battle with them, but it didn't help Israel.

Instead, the battle went even worse and they lost thousands of men, 30,000 men, when the Ark of the Covenant went into battle with them. It was God's way of showing that He wouldn't be manipulated by Israel. And so now that the battle had been lost and all those men had been killed and worse yet, the Ark of God was taken away by the Philistines.

We pick it up here in verse 12 of 1 Samuel 4, where the news gets delivered back to the high priest Eli in the city of Shiloh. Verse 12. And then a man of Benjamin ran from the battle line that same day, and he came to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dirt on his head.

Those were signs of mourning and of grief. Verse 13. Now when he came, there was Eli sitting on a seat by the wayside watching, for his heart trembled for the Ark of God.

You see the picture there, don't you? This old man, Eli, high priest of the nation of Israel. There he sits, and Eli was the one who had given permission for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord to go forth from the house of God, there from the tabernacle that stood in Shiloh. Eli was the one who had allowed it to go forth and to be carried into battle on that day, and his heart was anxious.

Friend, the armies of Israel were out on the field of battle against the Philistines, but Eli wasn't concerned so much about the armies of Israel, even though it was a crisis point for Israel. They had been conquered again and again in battle by the Philistines. You lose a few more of those battles, there is no more nation of Israel.

All you have is one big nation of Philistines and no nation of Israel. But Eli wasn't so worried about the army. His own sons were out there on the field of battle, Hophni and Phinehas, and he could have had a fatherly concern for them, but Eli wasn't so concerned about his own two sons out on the field of battle.

Eli's heart was trembling over the Ark of the Covenant itself. I can't help but wonder if there wasn't some sort of guilt in his heart. Maybe he knew he shouldn't have let the Ark of the Covenant go out on a superstitious errand.

Treating it as if it was the ultimate rabbit's foot to be sent out into battle, the lucky charm that would turn the tide for Israel. He probably knew in his own heart he had done something wrong in allowing it to go out. So there he sits by the road, waiting anxiously for word back.

What happened? And he's hoping, hoping, hoping in his heart. You know, he's here of a great victory that the Lord had won for Israel. The battle had been won and they defeated the Philistines.

They routed them. That's what he's hoping to hear in his heart. But there's something at the same time he knows that's not what he's going to hear.

He knows he has not pleased the Lord in allowing the Ark of the Covenant to go forth. And so it goes on here, verse 13, in the middle of it, it says, And when the man came into the city and told it all, the city cried out. When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, What is the sound of the tumult mean? And the man came hastily and told Eli, There's Eli, he's old, he's blind, probably hard of hearing.

At the same time, the messenger comes in and he passes right by Eli and he tells all the people in the city what happened. And a great cry goes up and Eli doesn't know what to make of it. Is it the cry of joy that a great battle has been won on behalf of Israel? Is it a cry of pain and anguish because all has been lost? Eli's heart is pounding.

He doesn't know what to do. Then the man comes and he tells him, verse 15, Eli was 98 years old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see. Then the man said to Eli, I am he who came from the battle and I fled today from the battle line.

And he said, what happened, my son? So the messenger answered and said, Israel has fled before the Philistines and there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also, your two sons, Hockney and Phineas are dead and the ark of God has been captured. Friends, I want you to see how verse 17 takes it from bad to worse to worser to worse.

I know worser isn't a word. Last night after the service, somebody helping me with grammar let me know that worser wasn't a word. I know that, but it fits in this context.

Look at it in verse 17. The first news was bad. Israel has fled before the Philistines.

That's bad news. Whenever the people of God are fleeing before their enemies, whenever the battle's been lost, that's bad news. They had the ark of the covenant with them.

They should have won this battle. They should have won it big. If they would have fought to a draw, it would have been a loss because Israel should win big when the ark of the covenant's with them.

It's bad news that Israel has fled from before their enemies. But it gets worse. Look at the next line in verse 17.

And there's been a great slaughter among the people. Friends, 30,000 soldiers of the army of Israel are dead on the field of battle. Not only did they lose.

You can lose a battle and not lose a lot of men. But not this day for the nation of Israel. They were routed from their positions and 30,000 graves had to be dug.

It's a terrible calamity. Friends, on this day, the news went from bad to worse. Look at it.

Verse 17 to worser. Verse 17. Also, your two sons, Hoppy and Phineas, are dead.

Eli held those little boys in his arms when they were small. He saw them grow up. He saw them go their wicked ways when they were grown up.

But he didn't do anything to correct them. Not as a father, not as their boss. He was the high priest and they were under him as priests.

But he didn't correct them. He didn't discipline them. And this indulgent father now sees these two lights of his life, his two sons.

They're dead. They're gone. Friends, there was bad news.

There was worse news. There was worse news. But the worst news was yet to come at the end of verse 17.

The messenger said, and the ark of God has been captured. Now, I don't know if you were Eli, which one of those things would have struck you as being the worst. Israel defeated before its enemies.

Friends, you keep losing battles like that and the nation is done. That's bad news. 30,000 men of Israel dead.

That's bad news. Your own two sons dead. That's terrible news.

But you know what news affected Eli the most? That the ark of the covenant of God had been captured. Take a look at it at the end of verse 18. Then it happened when he made mention of the ark of God that Eli fell off the seat backward by the side of the gate and his neck was broken and he died.

For the man was old and heavy and he had judged Israel 40 years. Friends, I don't know which broke first, Eli's neck or his heart. But I know he died with a broken heart.

Not so much because Israel was defeated. Not so much because 30,000 men had died. Not so much because his own two sons were dead.

He was grieved most of all that the ark of the covenant of the Lord had been taken by the enemies of God. It was captured by the Philistines and who knows what they had done with it. Friends, this called everything that Israel believed into question.

Was our God really stronger than the Philistine God? Maybe not. He's been defeated. Does our God still love us, still care for us, still fight for us? Maybe not.

He's been captured. Does God care anything about Israel? Is he strong enough? Does he love us enough? All these things are called into question. Now, what's going to happen to Israel? What's going to happen to us? I don't know what would be comparable to us in the United States.

Maybe if you took the Liberty Bell and the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. I mean, the original copies of all of those things. If you took all of those things together and put them in the hands of a nation that hated us and wanted to destroy us, that'd be a national calamity, wouldn't it? Take all of that and it's not one-tenth as bad as it was for Israel when the ark of the covenant of the Lord was captured.

It was a national calamity on the greatest scale. You think that's bad? It gets worse. Look at verse 19.

Now, his daughter-in-law, Phineas's wife, was with child due to be delivered. And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband was dead, she bowed herself and gave birth, for her labor pains came upon her. And about the time of her death, the woman who stood by her said to her, Do not fear, for you've born a son.

But she did not answer, nor did she regard it. Friends, I haven't experienced it personally, of course, but I've been witness to the birth of some children. And I see the pain, the difficulty that a woman goes through when she's giving birth.

And it's a very, very difficult thing. But I've also seen the joy spread across the face of a woman when the child is finally delivered and she has that child in her arms. And it's like everything's OK because the child's there now.

I want you to see that even that maternal instinct was not strong enough to overcome the grief and the anguish that Phineas's wife felt on that day. She lost her husband. She lost her brother-in-law.

She lost her father-in-law. Israel was defeated. It was on the brink of national defeat and collapse.

And the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord had been captured. Friends, it just doesn't get any worse than this. And to reflect the calamity in the nation of Israel at this time, look at verse 21.

Then she named the child Ichabod, saying the glory has departed from Israel because the Ark of God had been captured and because her father-in-law and her husband and she said the glory has departed from Israel for the Ark of God has been captured. Seems kind of mean to name a kid Ichabod. What's your name? The glory has departed.

That's what he went through the rest of his life with that name. Friends, it's so reflected what Israel was going through at this time. Do you understand that the depths of national tragedy happening here at the end of verse four? Excuse me, chapter four, and it leads us to ask a very valid question.

She named the child Ichabod because she felt the whole nation felt that the glory of God had departed from the people of Israel. Well, had it? Was the glory of God gone? Well, in one sense, yes, it was. But I want you to see the glory of God did not depart from Israel when the Philistines captured the Ark.

That's not when it departed. If people would have had the eyes to see it spiritually and the ears to hear it spiritually, they could have understood that the glory of God departed from Israel, not when the Philistines took the Ark. The glory of God departed from Israel when the elders of Israel got together and said, let's trust in the Ark instead of trusting in God.

That's when the glory of God departed. The glory of God departed from Israel when the people wouldn't seek God and humble themselves before him and repent and trust. The glory of God departed from Israel when they were trusting in human schemes and plans and strategies instead of trusting in the Lord.

That's when the glory of God departed from Israel. The glory did depart. And friends, I think you could take many churches, many ministries, many individual Christian lives today, and you could just write across them Ichabod because the glory of God's departed from them.

Oh, they still have services. Oh, they still do things for God. There's still a priesthood.

There's still a house of God. But it's just the form of godliness without the power. And the glory of God has nothing to do with that church or that ministry, that individual Christian life.

Friends, I might be describing you right now in your life. You're here, you're here at church, but you might as well be punching a time clock the way your heart is here today. You're just kind of doing your time or doing the obligation before God, but your heart isn't soft and tender towards the Lord.

You haven't turned towards him. And as much as you might say you're here and you enjoy the music or you enjoy what's going on, friends, the glory of God isn't in your life. It's not present.

It's not there. And your Christian life is miserable because of it, isn't it? Friends, Ichabod, it can be written across many things today, many things that are said to be done in the name of the Lord, but there's not the mark of God's glory there. Whenever God's people are trusting in schemes and plans and human inventions, whenever they're trusting, so to speak, in the ark of the covenant of God instead of the God of the ark of the covenant, then, friends, it's Ichabod.

The glory has departed. So in one sense, yes, the glory of God had departed. But I want you to see that in another sense, the glory of God had not departed at all.

Not one bit. Friends, what do you think it was? What do you think the scene in heaven was like when the ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines? Do you think God jumped off off his throne and

started pacing in front of the throne, wringing his hands? What am I going to do now? Oh, those Philistines gods. Boy, they can be really tough.

I don't know. Maybe I'm overmatched this time. Oh, Israel.

Oh, the Philistines. Oh, I don't know what to do. Does anybody think for a moment that God was fretting in heaven over what was happening? My friends, I want you to see that Israel thought they were in the worst kind of calamity, the worst kind of place.

They thought it couldn't get any worse. Now, you've been in places of calamity in your life. You've been in situations where you thought it was so bad.

You may as well just end it all. You've been in situations that seem so dark, so desperate. You thought, has the glory of God departed from me? Or you might be looking ahead.

You might be looking at problems or tragedies or disasters that might come upon us in the next year or two years. And you're thinking, oh, heavens, it's just too much. I don't know what I'm going to do.

There's just no way out of this. Everything's going to crumble. You're thinking the glory of God has departed or will depart.

Can I say it? God isn't worried about it in heaven. Right now, as God sits on his throne, he's not worried about anything. He knows exactly how it's going to turn out.

The glory of God had not departed in this sense from Israel at all. As a matter of fact, can I just tell you that even though Israel regarded it as the greatest calamity, God was going to use all of this in a marvelous way to glorify himself. They should have been able to see that instead of the glory departing, God was just beginning to show his glory.

God was going to show it to the Israelites. God was going to show it to the priesthood. And God's going to show his glory to the Philistines, too, because they got more than they bargained for when they took that ark.

Maybe we should take a look at that beginning of verse one here. First Samuel, chapter five. Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod.

When the Philistines took the ark of God, they took it into the temple of Dagon and set it by Dagon. Well, you can picture this in your mind, can't you? I kind of, you know, set it up like Cecil B. DeMille would. You know, there's a cast of thousands and they're all in elaborate costumes.

And there's the exotic dancers. And there's the priests. And there's the musicians.

And there's the whole marvelous scene of the temple of Dagon. Everything's washed and clean and beautiful. And here's this huge procession coming in.

And the priesthood is leading the way of Dagon. And they come into the temple and they bring the ark of the covenant. And they shout out before the statue of Dagon, Oh, Lord Dagon, here is the God of Israel.

We've brought him before you and he's been humbled before you. And all the worshippers of Dagon, they're rejoicing. Yes, we've conquered the God of Israel.

And if you are Israelite spy there among the Philistines on that day, there probably would have been tears rolling down your face. Oh, our God's been defeated. Oh, maybe God isn't stronger than Dagon.

Oh, maybe Dagon's the way to go. I don't know. I want to go with the winner.

Maybe Dagon's the one. I just don't know what's happening. And there they are.

They're all upset. They're beside themselves, the worshippers of the true God. And, oh, of course, the worshippers of Dagon are just ecstatic.

It's their day of triumph, their day of victory. Until the next day, verse three. And when the people of Ashdod rose early in the morning, there was Dagon fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the Lord.

Oh, it would have been so embarrassing to be a priest of Dagon on that day. You open up the temple, you're so happy. Yeah, yesterday was great.

You probably hung over from the big party the day before. But yeah, it's so great. Oh, and then marvelous.

You open up the temple doors. Dagon, what happened to you? There you are. He's laying down.

It's as if he's bowing down to the God of Israel. There he is, the ark of the covenant's right in front of him. There's the statue of Dagon fallen on its face before the Lord, as if he's giving the Lord God worship.

And you know, the Lord was having some fun that night, pushing over that God Dagon, the stupid statue there. And people are foolish enough to worship. And there they are.

It's laying prostrate before the Lord God of Israel and the priest. Oh, my. Oh, it had to be an accident.

That's what it was. It was an accident. Right.

Did you feel that earthquake last night? Yeah, I felt the earthquake. Sure. Yeah, that's what it was.

And oh, there it is. You wanted the most ridiculous thing. Look at the end of verse three.

Did you notice that? It says, so they took Dagon and set it in its place again. Come on, Dagon. If you're a God, get yourself up.

Oh, we'll help you. We'll help you out, Dagon. We'll set you back up again.

And so they dragged him up. You can see all the priests pulling the great statue of Dagon. They set it up in his place.

They dust them off before they open up the temple doors to the public. After all, you can't let people see that. And so it's all the great secret around the city of Ashdod on that day.

Don't let anybody know what happened. We don't want to know about the accident that happened last night. Until the next day.

Take a look at verse four. And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon falling on his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. The head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were broken off on the threshold.

Only the torso of Dagon was left of it. I'm afraid I skipped over something in telling you about Dagon. Dagon was the fish god of the Philistines.

And so, well, he was like half fish and half man. Sort of like a merman, if that's what they call him. I don't know.

You know, fish from the waist down and a man. You could see the statue standing up. And there's Dagon, the fish god, standing before them.

And you know what the Lord did this time? He said, you guys didn't get the message, did you? I'll knock him over again. You could just see the priest of Dagon opening up the temple. They were afraid to open the doors the next morning.

It was just an accident. Couldn't happen again. It was just an accident.

Couldn't happen again. They opened up and he goes, it's worse this time. Dagon had fallen down and he's all broken from the waist up.

The only part of him that's left is the fishy part. All the other parts broken. His head, his palms, the torso.

It's all gone. And so what did the priest do? Well, they do two things. First of all, they stand him back up again and they glue them together.

That must have been embarrassing. People come in to worship. What's wrong with Dagon today? Oh, he's fine.

He's fine. He just had a bad night. All the friends, they wouldn't.

They saw how God treated this pagan idol. But if those priests had one bone of integrity in their body, they would have said, you know what? This God of Israel is superior to our God. We should worship him.

But they wouldn't do it. Why wouldn't they do it? It would have changed everything in their life. They had to think differently.

They would have had to act differently. They would have had to live differently. They didn't want to change.

You know, that's why people don't come to Jesus Christ today. Some people want to act like it's a big intellectual trip. Well, you know, if you would just answer for me that question on whether or not Adam had a belly button, then I might really consider Jesus Christ.

Friends, your problems aren't intellectual. You don't want to change your life. And I'm just waiting for the day when somebody says, you know what? I'll come to Jesus, but I don't want to change my life.

That's why I'll do my thing still. That'd be honest, at least. That's why the priests of Dagon, they had all the evidence in the world right in front of them.

It wasn't that they were rejecting God because of the evidence. They were rejecting God in spite of the evidence. But friends, I want you to see that the glorious truth is that God was glorifying himself.

The Philistines wouldn't give him glory. The Israelites wouldn't give him glory. God would glorify himself.

You know, sometimes we look out at the church today and we see a lot of problems, a lot of scandal, a lot of difficulty in the church. And we wring our hands and we fret. We say, oh, Lord, what are you going to do? What about your work? It's such a tragedy.

And it is tragic whenever God's people don't glorify him. But friends, the solid truth that we can stand on is this, is that men and women won't glorify God. God will glorify himself.

You can count on it. God will not be without glory. And there he was doing it among the Philistines, but they rejected it.

They didn't want to hear it. So what did they do? This is classic. What do men do when God is speaking to them, but they don't want to hear him? They establish a religious ritual.

Look at verse five. Therefore, neither the priest of Dagon, nor any who come into Dagon's temple, tread on the threshold of Dagon and Ashdod to this day. Instead of submitting to the Lord God of Israel, they make up a silly ritual to follow.

Yes, a religious ritual. That's what we'll do. That's what the problem is.

We've been treading on the threshold of Dagon. And we've been treading on as if some religious ritual could take the place of humble repentance and submission before the Lord. Friends, if there's any theme that we've been learning as we go through First Samuel, we've seen this theme many times before that if you won't listen to God when he first is speaking to you, God will find, let's just say, a more creative way to speak to you.

And that's how he's going to speak to him in verse six. But the hand of the Lord was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and he ravished them and struck them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territory. So God knocked down Dagon once and they wouldn't listen.

He knocked down Dagon twice and broke him up and they still wouldn't listen. So what does God do? He strikes them with tumors. Do you know what the tumors were? There's a debate among scholars.

Some scholars are convinced that it's referring to the tumors associated with the bubonic plague. And there's a reason why, because there's mice or rodents associated with this. We'll talk about that a little bit more this next week.

But the old Jewish rabbis thought that it wasn't bubonic plague. The old Jewish rabbis thought that this referred to hemorrhoids. And that's what God smote the Philistines with.

I don't know why God chose to do hemorrhoids. I don't know. But I think they were very afflicted.

And God was saying, you won't listen to me one way, I'll speak to you another way. Friends, let me just teach you, listen to the Lord the first time. He didn't want to smite the Philistines this way, but they wouldn't listen.

So what do you do? God speaks to you once, God speaks to you twice. You know how it is when somebody is trying to get a hold of you on the phone and you really don't want to talk to them? What do you do? You don't return their calls. They leave a message, you don't return their call.

They leave a message, you don't return their call. Sometimes it's just from an oversight, but sometimes you just don't want to talk to that person. You know, the Philistines wouldn't return the call from the Lord.

God kept leaving them messages. They wouldn't return the call. Friends, I'll tell you, you can't push away God forever, though the Philistines tried.

Look what they did in verse seven. And when the men of Ashdod saw how it was, they said the Ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for his hand is harsh towards us and Dagon our God. Therefore, they sent and gathered to themselves all the lords of the Philistines and said, what shall we do with the Ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, let the Ark of the God of Israel be carried away to Gath.

So they carried away the Ark of the God of Israel. Friends, what they should have done was repented before the Lord. They should have said, we recognize that the God of Israel is greater than our God.

We humbly repent before him. But they wouldn't do it. You know what they did? Now, check if this isn't true in your life.

Sometimes they pushed God away. God gave them a message. They wouldn't return his call.

He gave them another message. They wouldn't return the call. He gave them another message.

They wouldn't return the call. And finally, they said, let's push him away. Maybe he'll stop calling.

Did it work? Take a look at verse nine. So it was after they had carried it away that the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction. And he struck the men of the city, both small and great, and tumors broke out on them.

They take it to the next place and the same thing happens. God is persistent. Look what happens in verse 10.

So therefore, they sent the Ark of God to Akron. So it was that the Ark of God came to Akron that the Akronites cried out saying, they have brought the Ark of the God of Israel to us to kill us and our people. So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines and said, send away the Ark of the God of Israel and let it go back to its own place so that it does not kill us and our people.

For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city and the hand of God was very heavy there. And all the men who did not die were stricken with the tumors and the cry of the city went up to heaven. Friends, they pushed God away, but God wouldn't go away.

I think the end of this chapter really brings two inescapable lessons to us. The first one is this. Friend, you can push God away to the best of your ability, but you can never, never make Him leave.

Now, I know it might seem like that. God's speaking to your heart. Maybe He's dealing with you with some issue in your life and you're not returning God's calls.

You're leaving those messages unanswered. You don't want to talk to Him about it. So God keeps calling and calling and you're pushing Him away and pushing Him away and the voice of God is getting fainter and softer all the time.

Pretty soon, you just don't hear Him much anymore. There's something inside of you that makes you think you've almost won. God's not bugging me about that anymore.

Boy, am I glad. Friends, you're in a very dangerous place right there for two reasons. First of all, your conscience has become hardened.

It's become calloused. Second reason why that's a very bad place to be in is you can't escape God. It might seem like it, but you can't.

Because if there's any truth more certain than death, more certain than taxes, it's the truth that each and every person here is going to have to stand before the living God and give an account. You can't escape that. You cannot escape it.

And even if you succeeded in silencing the voice of God in your ears for every breath you take on this earth, you're still going to have to face Him when you pass from this life to the next. Friend, how much better to do your business with God right now than to deal with it? Whatever thing the Lord is talking to your heart about, whatever issue of sin or growth that he's dealing with in your life, don't push him away. Come to God and say, Lord, speak to me about it.

Guide me, teach me, lead me. I need it. That's the one thing it teaches us.

The other thing it teaches us is this. Friends, bottom line is God is going to get his glory. There's no doubt about it.

At the end of chapter four, Israel was miserable. Things couldn't get any worse for them. But God was glorifying himself.

Do you realize that even in the midst of that lost battle and the death of Eli and his sons and the whole tragedy of the glory has departed? In the midst of all of that, God was still glorifying himself. He was teaching Israel, you're not going to treat me like a genie that you can clap your hands and I'll do whatever you want. God was glorifying himself among the Israelites.

Had the glory departed? Not at all. God was glorifying himself among the Israelites. God was glorifying himself among the Philistines.

The glory of God had not departed at all. But the Philistines couldn't enjoy the glory of God, could they? They felt oppressed by it. Could the Israelites enjoy the glory of God? No, they were in rebellion against the Lord.

Friends, do you realize that God can be glorified in your very presence and you might not enjoy a moment of it if your heart's hardened against the Lord? So I guess the lesson for us to conclude with is that God is going to get his glory and God is going to glorify himself. The only question is, are we going to enjoy it? Are we going to be partakers of it? Are we going to share in that glory of the Lord or is it going to be a curse to us? I don't know. I want to have a humble, repentant heart before the Lord and have his glory be something that gives me the most peace and the most joy in my life rather than be a source of something oppressive.

That's a tall order, so I think we'd better come before the Lord and pray that he works that in our hearts. Let's do that.

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