



## Living For The Glory of God, Part 2 -- Making it Personal

*Series: Philippians – To Live Is Christ*

Philippians 4:20, Romans 13:11-14

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If you keep up with the news then you now about the social unrest that is breaking out on our college campuses around the country, the demonstrations, riots, the demands for “safe spaces,” the demands for the ouster of presidents and professors, the complaints of victimhood, and all the rest. It’s now up to around 65 campuses and spreading. But Everett Piper, the president of Oklahoma Wesleyan University, an apparently Christian university, preemptively dealt with this situation by posting an open letter to the whole student body.

Let me just read this to you. He wrote: “This past week, I actually had a student come forward after a university chapel service and complain because he felt “victimized” by a sermon on the topic of 1 Corinthians 13. It appears this young scholar felt offended because a homily on love made him feel bad for not showing love. In his mind, the speaker was wrong for making him, and his peers, feel uncomfortable. I’m not making this up. Our culture has actually taught our kids to be this self-absorbed and narcissistic. Any time their feelings are hurt, they are the victims. Anyone who dares challenge them and, thus, makes them “feel bad” about themselves, is a “hater,” a “bigot,” an “oppressor,” and a “victimizer.”

I have a message for this young man and all others who care to listen. That feeling of discomfort you have after listening to a sermon is called a conscience. An altar call is supposed to make you feel bad. It is supposed to make you feel guilty. The goal of many a good sermon is to get you to confess your sins—not coddle you in your selfishness. The primary objective of the Church and the Christian faith is your confession, not your self-actualization.

So here's my advice: If you want the chaplain to tell you you're a victim rather than tell you that you need virtue, this may not be the university you're looking for. If you want to complain about a sermon that makes you feel less than loving for not showing love, this might be the wrong place.

If you're more interested in playing the "hater" card than you are in confessing your own hate; if you want to arrogantly lecture, rather than humbly learn; if you don't want to feel guilt in your soul when you are guilty of sin; if you want to be enabled rather than confronted, there are many universities across the land (in Missouri and elsewhere) that will give you exactly what you want, but Oklahoma Wesleyan isn't one of them.

At OKWU, we teach you to be selfless rather than self-centered. We are more interested in you practicing personal forgiveness than political revenge. We want you to model interpersonal reconciliation rather than foment personal conflict. We believe the content of your character is more important than the color of your skin. We don't believe that you have been victimized every time you feel guilty and we don't issue "trigger warnings" before altar calls.

Oklahoma Wesleyan is not a "safe place", but rather, a place to learn: to learn that life isn't about you, but about others; that the bad feeling you have while listening to a sermon is called guilt; that the way to address it is to repent of everything that's wrong with you rather than blame others for everything that's wrong with them. This is a place where you will quickly learn that you need to grow up. This is not a day care. This is a university."

Now I read that to you, not only because it is a no nonsense letter – it is – but because this sort of thing that Dr. Piper addresses in this letter is the natural fruit of the self-absorption and narcissism that pervades our culture -- the fruit of living for your own glory, for your own pleasure, for your own agenda. It's exactly what happens when the vision of the purpose of your life is narrowed to you alone. To be fair, it isn't just the kids on our university campuses; it's throughout our culture, which is exactly why we need to be reminded and exhorted that our lives are not our own, but that we have been bought with a price – the precious blood of Jesus Christ – and so we must glorify God with our bodies and our souls which belong to God.

Remember what we are doing here. We are fleshing out Paul's doxology at the end of Philippians where he writes: **"To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."** (Philippians 4:20, ESV) Paul wants us to see that the goal of the gospel theology he has been expounding in Philippians, is that God, our Father, would receive the glory, the praise, the honor, the acclaim, the renown and the fame of which He alone is worthy.

Now over the last couple of weeks, we have established a couple of foundational principles: First, in the final analysis, when all is said and done, when you boil everything down, when you silence all the noise, there are really only two ways of living. You and I will either live for the glory of God or we will live for our own glory. We established the incredible high calling and blessing that it is to bring glory to God with our lives that we should make it the overarching goal of the whole of our lives. In fact, Paul established the scope of this calling to bring glory to God when He wrote: **"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."** (1 Corinthians 10:31, ESV)

Then, second, we established the truth, from Scripture, that the fountainhead for a life that brings glory to God is boasting in the cross of Jesus Christ. Paul makes a statement at the end of his letter to the Galatians: **"But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."** (Galatians 6:14, ESV) Paul's whole life had been radically reoriented around Christ and His cross. Trusting in Christ, alive in Christ, Paul's bondage to the world was broken, and the overpowering lure of the world was broken. The source of his life and his satisfaction and his joy was Jesus Christ and Paul gloried in Him, because He saw the surpassing worth of Jesus Christ. That's where a life of glorifying God must begin, right?

And this morning, our goal is to make this calling personal. The question we are going to answer is: "In my personal life, how do I go about bringing glory to God. Why is it vital and how do I do it?" And to do that, I want us to look in depth at the text from Romans 13 that we read today and I want us to think first about this truth: We must

**Discern the Nature and the Urgency of the Times We Are In. (11-12a)** Look at verses 11-12a with me. **Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep.**

***For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. (Romans 13:11-12a, ESV)***

Have you ever experienced that perfect sleep – when the covers are just right, you’re just the right temperature, your face is cool, your body is warm, you have that slight sweet breeze blowing over you? Perfectly comfortable, oblivious to everything around you. That is where a vast number of professing Christians spend the entirety of their lives. Not discerning the character or the urgency of the times that we are in.

Paul calls us to wake up and recognize the times in which we live. This age in which we live is evil. It is dark and demonic, filled with sin, pain, and death, violence and terrorism. It is filled with falsehood and shadow. It is filled with unreality. But in the midst of all of this, we live in light of this truth: the coming of the Son of God into the world as a real man to destroy the works of the devil and create a new people for His own glory and the glory of the Father, by fulfilling perfectly the law of God, sacrificially dying for the sins of His people as the only atonement for sin, rising triumphantly over death, ascending to God's right hand with all His enemies under his feet, and waiting the day when He returns to put all that is wrong in this world, eternally right.

We live in the last days, the days between the incarnation of our Lord and His triumphant suffering as the Lamb of God and the days of His glorious revelation as the Lion of Judah, the King of glory, the one who is Faithful and True when He will consume His adversaries with the brightness of His coming and strike down the nations with the sharp sword of His eternal and unbreakable Word. And the days are growing short. Every night we pitch our tents closer to glory.

For that reason, spiritual slumber and apathy are completely irreconcilable to our calling as the people of God. I love what John Piper says about this: **Sleep is what the people lost in this age are doing. They are sleepwalking. All the glitz and flash and skin and swagger and muscle and brilliance and scientific achievement and art and military might and business and industry are sleepwalking compared to life in the day of glory of Christ. Do you want to spend your life asleep in the dream world of this glitzy age? Or do you want to be awake in the dawning rays of the age to come where Christ and his people will lead lives so full of**

**joy and love and justice and creativity that everything we thought was great in this age will look like the kindergarten of the universe?**

Paul describes our great, forward looking hope in his letter to Titus, saying: ***“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”*** (Titus 2:11–14, ESV) This is not the time for sleeping or slumbering. This is the time to be alert. It is time to wake up. We are living in light of the coming of Christ, the appearing of our great God and Savior and Shepherd and King whose glory will be finally and fully revealed in His coming and we must be living for His glory right now. Wake up, Paul says, ***For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand.***

What’s he mean by that? What Paul is explaining is that our salvation is not yet complete. Make no mistake, the penalty of our sins is already forgiven, our guilt born away by Christ, the wrath we deserve extinguished by His perfect intercession on the cross -- we have been justified by Christ and there is now therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. And it is also true that we are being saved from the power of sin as we kill sin in our lives and grow in our love for Christ and we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

But that is not the whole of salvation. We look to the day when sin is eradicated, when death is destroyed, when mortality puts on immortality, the day when we see the glory of Christ face to face, that is the salvation that is at hand, salvation fulfilled. We are closer than ever to the return of Christ, closer than ever to the end of the age and Paul’s point is that living in light of that truth, rightly discerning the nature and the urgency of the times that we are in should be a grand motivation to holy living, to faithful ministry, to evangelism, to worship, to passionate pursuit of Christ, to personally living for the glory of God in Christ.

Is the calling to live for the glory of God right now as urgent and important as I am making it sound? Is it legitimate to wait for a more convenient time? We have all kinds of excuses.

I'm just a kid, a high school student, a college student, trying to get my career established, a parent of small children, getting my kids out of my house, trying enjoy my heard earned success, settling into retirement, getting old... You see how this works don't you? There will never be a more convenient time... and then you run out of it.

Jesus told a parable in Matthew 25, saying, **““Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”** (Matthew 25:1–13, ESV)

JC Ryle in “Thoughts for Young Men” wrote: **Tomorrow is the devil's day, but today is God's. Satan does not care how spiritual your intentions are, or how holy your resolutions, if only they are determined to be done tomorrow.** Tomorrow just never quite gets here. Paul's message is clear...

**Get in the Fight Now! (12b-13)** Paul says: **“So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.”** (Romans 13:12–13, ESV) This is wartime. War against sin, war against the world system, and against Satan and his schemes. For that reason, Paul speaks of putting off immorality and putting on the armor of light. Paul's point here in not merely the negation of sin, but the pursuit of holiness.

Now consider the works of darkness he calls us to cast off. We read of orgies, drunkenness, sexual immorality, sensuality, quarreling, jealousy... all works of the flesh, full of self-

indulgence and selfish will, self-preoccupation, self-centeredness. All empty of any value, all deceitful, empty promises. That is what all sin is. Paul is saying cast off the works of your selfish flesh. So cast off the unfruitful works of darkness and instead put on the armor of light. What is the armor of light of which Paul speaks? He tells us in verse 14 when he tells us to

**Put On Christ (14)** Paul tell us to put on the armor of light and then he says: **“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” (Romans 13:14, ESV)** It is synonymous for Paul to say that we are to put on the armor of light and put on Christ. To put on Christ is to put on faith in, hope in and love for Christ. Putting on Christ means trusting in Him and all that God is for us in Him fully and completely and living in light of His Word – that is faith; it is hoping in Him as the supplier of every need of yours according to his riches in glory including the very fullness of salvation – that is hope; and taking Him as your supreme treasure – that is love. It is immersing yourself, engulfing yourself in Christ.

How do we put on Christ? We put on Christ by availing ourselves of the means of grace that feed faith, hope and love in Christ. Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ, so we put on Christ by hearing the Word of God. Hope grows from seeing the promises of God fulfilled so we put on Christ by learning and by trusting in the promises of Christ and by praying to God according to those promises and seeing the provision of God in Christ. Love for Christ grows as we meditate much upon His love for us revealed in His atoning work on the cross and His continuing work of intercession, of shepherding our souls, as mediator and faithful high priest, forever securing our salvation before the throne of God. We put on Christ by meditating upon the gospel and His glorious beauty as the lover of our souls. We put on Christ by waking up to the reality that Christ lives in us to live through us. Paul wrote: **“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” (Romans 8:29, ESV)** Put on Christ. Make no provision for the flesh and -- THEN -- walk as Christ walked. That’s the heart of this whole message. Wake up, get about what matters, put on Christ, and live as He lived.

**Walk as Christ Walked (1 John 2:4-6)** John wrote, **“Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.” (1 John 2:4-6, ESV)**

Here then, is the lynchpin of this whole message. If we have put on Christ, been clothed with Christ – another way of saying that we “know Him” – if we have been saved by Christ and are making our life in Him, that is, abiding in Him, then we **“ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”** If we are abiding in Christ, trusting in Him, walking according to the leading of His Word and of His indwelling Spirit, then we ought to walk as He walked, to live as He lived.

So why do I say that the lynchpin to this message calling us to live for the glory of God in our personal lives is walking in the same way that Jesus walked? Here’s why. In all that Christ did in His life on this earth, He lived to the glory and praise of God.

John testified of Jesus Christ: **“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.”** (John 1:14, ESV) He said, **“No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.”** (John 1:18, ESV)

Of Jesus Christ, Peter declared: **“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”** (2 Peter 1:16, ESV)

Jesus testified of Himself on the night of His betrayal, looking back over the whole of His life and to the cross that was looming, saying: **“Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”** (John 17:1–5, ESV) Of Christ alone did Father God declare: **“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”** (Matthew 17:5, ESV) And Paul says that we are saved when we have our eyes opened to see **“the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”** (2 Corinthians 4:6, ESV)



From incarnation to crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived for the glory of God the Father. When Jesus came to earth, it was that He might glorify the Father, that He might again show forth in fullness that glory to which sin had made men blind.

How did Jesus do this? Jesus glorified God *by obeying Him*. Jesus said to the people: **“When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.”** (John 8:28–29, **ESV**) To His disciples, He said: *“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”* (John 4:34, **ESV**) And later He said: **“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”** (John 15:10, **ESV**)

He was obedient to the Law and the Commandments, obedient to the demands of Scripture. In His conflict with sin and Satan, especially in the wilderness, in His sacrifice of His own will, in His waiting for the Father’s teaching, in His unquestioning obedience to the Word, in being led by the Holy Spirit in all that He did, Christ showed that He counted nothing worth living for, but to live for the glory of God.

Jesus glorified God *by openly confessing Him*. Not only did He make known the message God had given Him and show us who the Father is, He did more. He continually spoke of His own personal relationship to the Father. He did not trust the silent influence of His holy life; He wanted men to understand clearly what the root and aim of that life was. Time after time He told them that He came as a servant sent from the Father, that He depended upon Him and owed everything to Him, that He only sought the Father’s honor, and that all His happiness was to please the Father, and abide in His love.

He glorified God in His *compassion*. Jesus never looked away from people; He always looked upon them and had compassion. Whenever people were around him, Jesus understood what their real needs were and He sought to meet them.

He glorified God in His *servanthood*. Without question, Jesus was the ultimate servant. In Mark 10:45, Jesus said, **“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”** (Mark 10:45, ESV) Despite having all authority, He did not insist on being served but gladly lowered Himself, serving others.

He glorified God in His *forgiveness*. How many heard the beautiful words from the Savior’s lips, **“Your sins are forgiven.”** Peter, Thomas, Zaccheaus, the woman taken in adultery, the prostitute who anointed His feet. Over and over we see Jesus forgiving the sins of those who are truly repentant. One of the most startling things said in Scripture is found in Luke 23:34, when Jesus is on the cross and proclaims: *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* And they cast lots to divide his garments.” (Luke 23:34, ESV) Even while bleeding and experiencing pain, Jesus prays for God to grant forgiveness and salvation by His grace to those who are crucifying Him.

He glorified God in His *prayerfulness*. No matter how busy His ministry got, He found time to be alone and pray. Whether it is in the garden of Gethsemane, across a river, or on a mountaintop, Jesus disappeared for a while in order to pray to the Lord. He glorified his Father in His prayerful dependence and personal devotion to personal communion.

He glorified God in His *patience*. Throughout the gospels, we see the patience of Christ, bearing with His disciples, enduring the foolishness of the Pharisees and Sadducees who continually attacked Him, and the needs of the large crowds who wouldn’t leave Him alone.

He glorified God in His *humility*. Jesus had every opportunity and right to demand praise and accolades for His miracles and teachings, but He never did! Even when the crowds sought to make Him king, He rushed away from their grasp. He came, not to assert Himself, but to seek and save the lost and offer forgiveness for sinful people.

Jesus glorified God ultimately by His *work of redeeming love*. Jesus claimed that there is no greater love than to die for one of your friends—and He did just that. If anyone doubts His love, all they have to do is look upon the cross and see the agony that He bore for their

sakes. He experienced that horrible death so that all can be saved. That, very clearly, is true love at its finest.

It was not only in acts of obedience, or words of confession, that He glorified God, but in giving Himself to magnify the holiness of God and His love by His atonement. He gave Himself, His whole life and being, to show how the Father loved, and longed to bless, how the Father must condemn the sin, and yet would save the sinner. He counted nothing too great a sacrifice, He lived and died only for this, that the glory of the Father, the glory of His holiness, of His redeeming love, might break through the darkness of this sin-filled world, and shine brightly. ***“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*** (1 John 4:9–10, ESV)

And there is so much more. I could speak of His self-denial, His joy in His disciples, His goodness, His kindness, self-control, His contentment, His mercy, His seeking and saving the Lost. I could speak for hours and never exhaust all the ways in which the Scriptures show us that Christ glorified the Father.

And we are to walk as Jesus walked. If you want to know how to live a life that glorifies God, study Jesus and how He lived, and strive by the power of the Holy Spirit in you and the grace given to you to walk as He walked. Study Jesus. He obeyed the Father. He confessed the Father. He gave Himself to the Father’s work. He was compassionate, humble, serving, loving, faithful and more. Study Christ and His character; don’t just guess at how Christ lived – search it out from Scripture and do it. Read the Word of God and conform to the commands of God. ***“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*** (Matthew 5:16, ESV) God’s glory alone is worth living and dying for, and that as we give ourselves to this, God will wonderfully use and bless us in leading others to see and confess His glory too.

The time is short. Don’t sleepwalk through life. The days are evil and they will continue to grow worse, but Christ is coming. Live in light of His glorious revelation as the Lion of Judah, the King of glory, the one who is Faithful and True when He will consume His adversaries

with the brightness of His coming and strike down the nations with the sharp sword of His eternal and unbreakable Word.

JC Ryle give us this prayer as an example: Lord Jesus! Who didst come to earth to glorify the Father in our sight, and ascend to heaven leaving us to do it now in Thy name and stead, oh! Give us by Thy Holy Spirit a sight of how Thou didst it. Teach us the meaning of Thy obedience to the Father, Thine acknowledgment that, at any cost, His will must be done. Teach us to mark Thy confession of the Father, and how Thou didst in personal testimony tell men of what He was to Thee, and what Thou didst feel for Him, and let our lips too tell out what we taste of the love of the Father, that men may glorify Him. And above all, oh I teach us that it is in saving sinners that redeeming love has its triumph and its joy, that it is in holiness casting out sin that God has His highest glory. And do Thou so take possession of our whole hearts that we may love and labor, live and die, for this one thing, "That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER." O my Father, let the whole earth, let my heart, be filled with Thy glory. Amen.

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