

TRIUMPHANT LIVING

Taught by Ted Woods

Session: “The Weight of God and the Lightness of Man”

September 20, 2013

The Lord be with you.

AUDIENCE: *And also with you.*

Let us pray. Lord, God, You confound the proud in the imaginations of their hearts; therefore, give us the light of life that our eyes may be opened, and that we may not be proud but be transformed from one degree of glory to another through Christ our Lord. Amen.

OK. Bruce asked me to carry on with the Glory of God, this topic and there are notes. But as an introductory comment, I have often thought and every time I say this Holly Campbell grimaces, but I have often thought that the most valuable service that a preacher or a teacher of the gospel can give to their flock or their students, is an accurate description of reality. But I think that most important thing that a teacher or preacher brings to the table is an accurate description of reality. I think that she was hoping that I might say something a little more spiritual or scriptural. I think it all boils down to that and I have often recently puzzled what the distinction between what truth and reality is, and how those two relate to one another.

I like the definition that I found in the dictionary—I hate going there because you find folks doing that and they start off by saying what the dictionary says—but I like what the dictionary says: Truth is a conformity with fact or reality. Truth is a conformity with fact or reality. So as you conform to the fact or the reality is, you are dealing with the truth. Truth is such a critical issue and topic in the Bible. Jesus said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Jesus said, “The Truth will set you free.” “Full of grace and truth.” So truth is a huge idea and the fact that truth is the conformity with reality.

The problem that most of us have in our Christian lives is that we live in the “unreality,” in the things that are, in fact, not true. We believe and act in a way that does not conform to reality. That is why what Bruce has been teaching and has been teaching all along about the attributes of God, the union **with** Christ, being **in** Christ, Christ **in** me and I **in** Him, and God’s glory, more recently, are critical descriptions of reality. That is the way that things are.

I have come to hate that expression when I’m complaining about a situation...what is that expression? It is, what it is. I just hate that because I don’t want it to be what it is. I want it to be something different. And I think that before you are regenerated, before you are born again, before God has grasped you, your mind and your heart and your will—before He has grasped those things—that you want to believe unreality. You want to believe your own reality and that is why you don’t like the truth; you don’t like the reality that it describes. But when you were

grasped by the truth and the truth grasps you, you will be changed. There is irresistible at that point. The truth will drive the change within you.

As you are where Bruce sometimes talks about the reformed faith and that word, that expression, is batted around and, perhaps, some of you do not quite understand what it means when we talk about the reformed faith. The reformed faith is really the faith that was taught by the Protestant masters, the leaders of the Protestant Reformation in the mid-sixteenth century; and they would be Luther in Germany, and John Calvin in

Switzerland, Thomas Cranmer in England, and other guys with names like Bullinger, Bouser and Vermigli. Out of Italy, these great teachers of the Protestant Reformation. What they were trying to do was to grasp or take hold of the realities and the truths of the Bible and of the ancient Church; and as they laid these out, this confronted and confounded a lot of the Church leadership at that time and the result was a break between the historic Roman Church and the Protestant Church.

Some of these doctrines that were laid out are summarized as what might be called the Doctrines of Grace and sometimes you will hear Bruce refer to those. But I'm just wondering how much those are kind of outlined and described so that you understand what he is talking about. The Doctrines of Grace are usually considered five. These are considered critical doctrines to understand who God is and who man is. I'm not going to spend hardly any time on this because I'm going to use this as a launching pad. The Doctrines of Grace would involve the total depravity of man; that in his natural state man is not only unwilling but unable to believe and have faith.

Another Doctrine of Grace would be a limited election, that God elects people for no reason except that it is out of His good pleasure. God does not say you have done a good job, you're trying hard, you are sincere and therefore, I will select you for eternal life. No, He does that purely based on what He decides to do.

A third Doctrine of Grace would be limited atonement. Not everyone is saved. How do you get saved? Do you get saved because you choose or because God chooses you?

Once God chooses you, that grace that He gives, number four, is irresistible. You cannot resist God's grace. You do not have a choice in the matter. I was talking to a fellow the other day, actually, a pastor and we got into some of this and he said, "Well, I don't believe people are robots." You often will hear that...people are not robots, they have to have a choice. What about free will, Ted? What about the freedom to choose before you're saved to choose God? I would say, I don't know about robots; robots is a 20th century term but I do know about the term that was used in the first century, and that was slavery. All men are born slaves of sin. I asked, "Do you believe if you are a slave of sin and Satan, do you think that Satan is going to give you the choice to leave him? He owns you; you will not be free from that slavery until a stronger man breaks into Satan's household and frees you. So that would be limited atonement.

And finally, perseverance. Once God lays His hands on you, you are irresistibly drawn and conformed into the image of Christ. The scripture that Bruce has been dealing with is 2nd Corinthians 3:16-18, and it says that we are being transformed from one degree of glory to another. This is my great confidence. I do not have confidence in my ability to make myself grow in grace from one degree to another. I cannot do it; I've tried and I made a good effort. I've been sincere. "Well, Ted, you could try harder." You're right, I could try a lot harder. Maybe if I just tried harder I would get that way, but the fact of the matter is, thanks be to God that He draws me irresistibly, conforms me irresistibly, and places me from one degree of glory to another.

Having said all of that, this is the area of the great glory of God and the glory of God is a key component in reformed theology. Everybody has a theology and we should not be nervous about that word because everybody thinks about God. Theology is theos logos, the study of God. Everybody thinks about God in some way. Everybody has a theology and you can either have a thoughtful theology that wrestles with the scripture and the ideas about God, or you can have a complacent and non-thinking about theology, and that is what the preacher told me. When I got saved, that's what they told me without having wrestled with any of these things. But reformed theology, since we all have a theology, I believe reformed theology best conforms to the character of God and His attributes and Who He is; and the glory of God is one of those key attributes that defines reformed theology. You start with God and you end with God. You do not start, as Bruce has said, with man's needs and then go to what God can do for you.

When you think about it, if you were to just think about that statement, "OK, I'm going to start with my needs and how God is going to take care of them." The beginning and end of my theology. When you think about that, doesn't it strike you that it is almost blasphemous? Doesn't that strike you as absolute folly? God is Who He is. He does as He pleases, and the best I can hope for is to be scooped up into His grace and His love, and His glory, and transported to a new place that I cannot take myself to.

Having said all of that, this is an area that I have not studied very much. And I need your help today. I have thought about the union **with** Christ. In fact, when Bruce started teaching on that, I was delighted because I thought this union **with** Christ—the idea of this union **with** Christ and its description of reality that when we are born again we are placed in the union **with** Christ and that every place He goes and everything that He is, that is what I become and that is what I inherit.

I had been thinking about that and I was so delighted to see that Bruce latched onto that and I have learned a lot in his teaching. But in terms of glory, I am an amateur in this and so I am going to need your help. Please feel free, I do well with interaction going back and forth, and so I just want to touch on a few things. I want to touch on glory—a definition of glory—and a thing that I am comfortable with, and then touch on some of the things that Bruce says.

Do you all have any thoughts at this point? This is going to be much more interactive than what you normally have in class.

Yes?

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *When you were talking about the will of man, a thought that I heard recently that confused me a little bit, is that some reformers would say that the will of man or group is at the bondage of the will only related to heavenly things. We can do whatever we want here on earth, God doesn't really care who we marry, what job we have, where we live, but in terms of salvation, we have no choice. Right?*

Well, I would say, and if Bishop Rodgers can help me with this....go ahead Bishop Rodgers before I make a mistake. No, I would...you... {LAUGHTER}...I don't know what to say something I have to repent of later. {LAUGHTER}

BISHOP RODGERS: *Your understanding of what is ultimately true and real shapes all of your decisions. So in your relationship to God and God is the God of the scriptures that affects all the decisions that you make. Now it is true that we have more discretion on things that have a lower level, but they are all caught up in what you understand God to be and His relationship to you. There is no area of your life that isn't shaded by that in some sense.*

And God defines all of that. He is the definer of reality and that is why it is interesting because R. C. Sproul in his great audio series, his video series, *What is Reformed Theology?* He starts off his first lesson is—*What is Reformed Theology?* Well, first of all, it is about theology—the study of God. I know a lot of us, myself included, started off in evangelical faith and I was converted at William & Mary in 1967 to the work of intra-varsity, and I really started off with myself as the beginning of the process, rather than God as the beginning of the process.

I remember when in the student union we set up an information table—this was in 1967—for students to come in and learn about intra-varsity and engage in conversation. One of the local pastors stopped at the table and asked me about what I was doing and one of the statements I made to him, that I regret to this day, is “Ever

since I became born again, I've been happy every morning.” {LAUGHTER} I think that is simply not a true statement because at the time...I have heard people say and recently say, “Well, Ted, I just wish I had that glow, that ardor I had when I first believed.” Well, you know, I had a huge amount of ardor for Diana when we first got married. I love her more now but I wouldn't say that I am as arduous, and I think a lot of the ardor that we feel when we are first converted is not ardor of the spirit but is ardor of the flesh.

What I said to that man was an untrue statement because really, in the end, it didn't make any difference whether I woke up happy every morning. It is the fact that God had my life and He

was taking it from one glory to another. That is the only thing that mattered. God was good enough to put me on the train with Him and take me out of the station because otherwise I would be in the station the day of rejoicing.

Yes, Dale?

DALE: *I walked a mile with happiness, she chattered all the way, but 'nary a thing I've learned from her in spite of all she had to say. I walked a mile with sorrow, and 'nary a word said she, but oh the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me.*

Ya, that's great Dale; you have great poems. That's great. Thank you. That is the idea.

Well, let's talk about the...I don't know, Sig, I think that was excellent, that was excellent.

The weight of God. The glory is a translation of the Hebrew word kabod which comes from the root word for "weight" or "heavy." This is very helpful in understanding the word glory because many times we use Christian or our words from the scriptures that we really do not know what they mean. Such as Hosanna. What is Hosanna? Save now. But we would say, Hosanna. Or how about Hallelujah. What does that mean? We have words or sounds that we throw around without understanding what the word means. Alleluia is praise Yahweh. Praise the Lord. Or that always-famous inscrutable "Selah" found in the Psalms. What does it mean? We are really not too sure, we really have no idea what it means.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *We're having tortilla chips. {LAUGHTER}*

So you see, there are words...but it is important that we...glory just might be the same thing. We sometimes say, "That was glorious" or that was "God in His glory," or "He was in His glory." But what does glory really mean? It's very helpful to find the Hebrew word for that, the original word, which was "heavy" or "weighty." It can also be translated "wealth," or "abundance," "substance," "honor," or "splendor." All of those words make sense because if you have a lot of wealth, you have substance; and if you have substance, you have weight. One of the key characteristics of God is His glory because of His weightiness or how heavy He is.

God's glory gives a thing or a person's true substance or weight. It says in Exodus that "in the Tabernacle I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory." Sanctified: set aside by my weight. When God comes into the Temple, the Temple in and of itself has no substance or no importance or honor; but when God's glory, His weight moves into the Temple, then it has ultimate substance. You, being the Temple of the Holy Spirit, you have no substance or weight until God moves into your life and gives you ultimate weight and substance.

It's interesting in 1st Kings 8:10, I did not include this in the outline but when Solomon dedicated the Temple in 1st Kings 8:10, it says, the priests came out of the holy place, in the Temple, a

“cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the LORD.” So when Solomon was dedicating the Temple, the priests were there to conduct the

service of dedication but they could not move because of what? What was filling the Temple? The glory of God. The weight, the substance, the heaviness of God was present and they could not even move because of that. This weight or substance, God’s glory, also fills His creation: “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.” So we actually see the substance and weight of God in what He has made.

I think I have shared this with you before but Diana was taking a class in astronomy and she had to go to a required lecture by a professor of Carnegie Mellon about the photographs and the information gathered by the Hubble Telescope, the satellite that was sent out and could see into the universe like never had been done before. In fact, for some great shots in the photos, I would turn you to www.Hubblesite.org/gallery, and the professor who was not a giving a Christian lecture or a Biblical exposition, I began to worship God because of the absolute glory of His creation. The immensity, the greatness...I was overwhelmed, I teared up as he lectured because all I could think about is how great is our God to create all of this. It is incomprehensible. You could put zeroes behind the numbers of the universe in weight, or distance, but you cannot, in fact, get your head around it...it is too great. It humbles man, it confounds him, and it makes all his theories and suppositions look foolish up against what the universe is that the God of glory, in His glory and showing forth His glory in what He has made. So God’s glory fills His creation.

It’s interest, John Piper the great reformed Baptist...which almost sounds like a non-sacred word in my own mind, but that is another subject completely says, “The glory is like the out radiating of the sun which rays strike us and penetrate us in the form of grace.” So Piper sees God’s glory as such that it is like the sun radiates and it hits us like the sun’s rays hit us and God’s glory comes out from Him, He cannot help Himself in a sense. He just radiates His glory and as He radiates that glory, it penetrates us, for those of us who have been elected as His children, and it penetrates us and it comes to us in the form of grace.

The Word of God...this is a very interesting juxtaposition of scriptures: John 1:14 and 16: “The Word of God became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father...,” And what was that glory full of? “...full of grace and truth.” Verse 16: “For from His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.” So John seems to be saying that as God radiates out His glory to us, it brings with it grace and truth. And that is how we experience primarily God’s glory. Grace is the way God’s glory shows up in us, Piper says.

Now once again, Guys, I apologize. I have not wrapped my head around this stuff. I have not... I am giving you suppositions and thoughts, but I have not wrestled with this enough to be able to take it apart, so I feel very inadequate this morning. If I do figure it out, I will feel very adequate. I was just reflecting on man’s humorous...God’s glory is the object of evangelism. God’s glory

is the object of evangelism. Evangelism is not primarily about getting people saved. That is a second or third level. It is about infusing the glory of God into His people. It says, “to declare His glory among the nations.” First Chronicles...”His marvelous works among on the peoples.” John Piper describes this as “beholding His be-coming.” When we behold God’s glory, we become the person who He created us to be. You cannot behold His glory without having that glory do some transfiguring thing in you, Piper says.

The good news of the gospel is not about making much of me; the good news of the gospel is not about God making much of me but about fitting me and changing me so that I can make much of Him. Hear that again. The good news of the gospel is not about God making much of me but about fitting me and changing me so that I can make much of Him. His glory allows me and fits me, and shakes me, and causes me to glorify Him. It transforms me so that I bring Him the glory.

And finally, God’s glory is His ultimate objective. This is His purpose; you want to know what God’s purpose is in all the world? It tells us in Habakkuk, he prophesied it: “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.” That’s God’s ultimate purpose: to fill the earth with the knowledge of His glory. We have God’s glory, His weightiness, how heavy He is in His creation, what He is doing in our lives. We have that on one side: the total substance and wealth, and abundance of God on one side; and on the other side, we have what I call the Lightness of Man. Listen to these scriptures.

“God knows your frame. He remembers that you are dust. As for man, his days are like grass. He flourishes like the flower of the field, for the wind passes over it and it is gone, and in its place knows it no more.” No more. There for a season, then gone. No more, that’s it. The curtain closes, the drama is over, that’s it. You are nothing but dust. “You have made my days a few hand breadths, and my life is as nothing before you. Surely all man-kind stands as a mere breath.” All mankind, the greatness, the Einsteins, the Leonardo DiVinces, the Thomas Jeffersons are all but a breath.

“The Lord knows the thoughts of a man, but they are but a breath,” it says in Psalm 49. Man is like a breath, his days are like a passing shadow,” Psalm 144. “All flesh is grass and all its beauty is like a flower of the field. The grass withers and the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it. Surely, the people are grass.” Truly, the people are grass. “Behold the nations...” Not only does this applies to individuals, but it applies to all of our institutions and the greatest institution of authority and control that humans have ever invented is the nation because it has the power of the group, and it can arm itself and can control itself and can control others. But having said that, even in our greatest strength, behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket and are counted as dust on the scales. The nations are counted.

So even the strongest of nations, the most glorious of nations, are like dust on a scale and when the person and the merchant in the market place...I’m thinking Israel and the market place...in

Biblical times...they put the weights and they are going to have the produce in there and there is some dust on the weight...they want to be sure it's heavy. The greatest of the nations, the greatest man has produced, is dust. Gone. It is a breath. Gone. It's grass, gone. It's a flower, it's gone. So that is the lightness of man.

Men have no weight in and of themselves. When I see and grasp the lightness of God, I despair of my own ability. I despair of my ability or strength to do anything. "I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is in my flesh" (Romans 7:18). "The flesh is no help at all." (John 6:63). And, finally, that great statement Paul makes in Romans 7: "Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of death?"

So that is my situation. We come to Christ out of desperation. When we truly come, we come out of desperation because we realize how untenable our position is. We have no substance, that we are here and gone and there is nothing to life. It is meaningless, as it says in Ecclesiastes, it is a total vanity unless God gives us His glory, which is His ultimate weight and substance. When I receive that, I have received all that I will ever need.

SIG: *How did you realize your life is meaningless?*

I think you begin to see that, you know, if I just....Sig asked, how do I realize that my life is meaningless? Well the Word tells me, but I think experience shows me that. Some of you are faced with situations such as unemployment and you have interviewed and you have interviewed and nothing is happening. Don't you begin to despair after awhile? And if you begin to see who you are in light of getting a job and getting interviewed and producing income so you can take care of your family...if you see that as your joy and happiness, then you are going to begin to despair because it is not happening. I think everyone of us...we started off in our youth and I'm 65 now, I'm closer to death than I was 20 years ago; in our youth we have these dreams and we have these hopes but we begin to find life is not going to provide those for us. Just the pure grind of life gets to us. It doesn't mean we don't have joys. I have a lot of joy, I wake up a happy person—every morning. {LAUGHTER}. Just joking. That was wrong, that was wrong in 1967 and it is wrong in 2013. But you begin to realize it and you say, "If the Lord is not my glory...if the Lord is not my substance, I have no substance." And everything that everybody else seeks after outside of that is a waste of time.

Yes, please.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *The point you made, makes me think of an illustration. I work for a local utility company and it will be 30 years next year and I work in the field. I went to a house in Westview back closer to the beginning of my tenure and there was a man who lived in this house who had all the windows boarded up...the house was dark. You needed a flashlight to see in the house. I had a heart for this man because he was all alone and he was nice, but he was just kind of strange. He would not go out for groceries, and the neighbors told me he had them delivered. His wife had died and it changed his whole life; he never got back on board.*

Years later, many years later, I went back, wondering about this man and I looked...was it that house or was a that house. I went to the house next to it and I realized the house that he lived in was no longer there, right? So there was a woman across the street and I said, "Excuse me, did you know the man that lived right here?" And she said, "Right where?" And I said, "Right here." And she said, "Nobody has ever lived there." I said, "Well, how long have you lived here?" And she said, "About 12 years." And I said, "There was a house there." And she said, "They told me there use to be a man there but I think he died." The point I'm making is there was no evidence that there had ever been a house there and, if you didn't know it, you would just think it was an open lot, right? I'm sure this man had relatives and maybe a couple of friends, I don't know; but I thought at that moment, I see your point. It blew my mind, because I said that is me. There is going to be a time when I'm just like that grass, an empty lot and no body is even going to know that I have ever existed and I was probably late getting my work done that day. {LAUGHTER}. And I meditated on that, but I thought about...because that was a revelation to me that day.

You are an empty lot. Thank you. I could have sat down and that would have been it because that is very powerful. Some people may say, "Ted, that is exactly right. And you know what, I'm starting to experience that." Maybe some of you say, "You know what, I get it intellectually but I really do not get it existentially, I'm not experiencing that." And others may say, "I have no idea what he is talking about." That's OK, any place that you are on the continuum because God wants to give you fuller revelation of what that means. To start off it was an accurate description of reality and the reality is that in the end, the only thing of substance is God Almighty. The only way we get substance is to be put **in** Him and He **in** us.

That passage which Bruce was studying, and this is what the encouragement is in 2nd Corinthians 3:17, 18: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there* is freedom, But we all..." He says "all of us," all the Corinthians he's writing to: "you all..." "all of you with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image..." The same image as the Lord, that is how you are being transformed. "...from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." And this is the confidence that I have: if I am **in** Him and He is **in** me, if I am **in** union with Him, if I have been regenerated through repentance and faith, if those things have happened, He is telling me here that I am going to be changed from one degree of heaviness into another. My whole life **in** Christ is one step to one step of getting heavier and heavier, more and more and more substantial. Whether you think that is happening or not, He is still doing it in your life. And that is the only confidence I have...that is the hope I have and that is the reason that I can keep doing what I'm doing and living as I'm living; because in my own life, my own example, my own experiences, I deserve hell.

As John Piper says, he knows it is a good morning when he wakes up and says, "The sun is up and I am not in hell." {LAUGHTER}

Yes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *From one degree to another...[UNCLEAR]....hold on....
[MUCH BACKGROUND NOISE AND LAUGHTER]*

Bill would do anything to get attention. {MUCH LAUGHTER}

BILL: *Well now, as long as I've done that, I didn't do that on purpose. When you started this you said "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork" and that is a true statement, but I don't know where I got it but I always memorized it as saying, "Heavens declare the glory of God and the **earth** showeth His handiwork." We see a lot more handiwork than we do the....I mean not many people are looking through the Hubble Telescope but we are looking at His handiwork day after day, moment after moment....sitting, standing, or falling {LAUGHTER}.*

"He who thinks he standith, take heed lest he fallith." {MUCH LAUGHTER}

BILL: *From one [UNCLEAR] to another, I guess that definitely applies increase? OK, because I don't know...I always sense that it is always getting weightier but sometimes it fluxes a bit... weightier or less weightier. I don't always experience all of the increasing but I do experience it at different levels, and it does seem like the scripture, this glory thing is transferable...*

In what way?

BILL: *Moses for instance, at certain points, would exude more of God's glory the more time he spent with Him, and less when he did not. So it is an interesting thing describing His weightiness because...I do think there are times in which we appropriate God's glory, or try to appropriate God's glory, and sometimes we appropriate it and give Him [UNCLEAR] of the weightiness we are exuding. But...*

In your flesh you will always...what did you say about God's glory...in your flesh you will always mis-appropriate God's glory for your own ends...in your flesh. I mean, that is just the way your flesh functions. Unless...this is why I have come to understand that **in** Christ...remember Bruce talked about when Jesus went on the cross, you were there when He went into the tomb and we have been crucified with Christ, we have been buried, we have been raised with Him, we have ascended with Him, we have made to sit with Him in the heavenlies, so to me that is just not a status statement. It is not a forensic statement, it is more like: in fact, there is, in fact, in truth, I am there **with** Him in the heavenlies. So if I have already arrived, how I experience that movement is God's work in me. Now, I may experience it and I may say that I am closer today, I'm not so close, I'm feeling more...degrees, but we do not understand what God is doing. My experience of it is very secondary to what God is actually doing and a poor judge of what is actually going on. I'm going through a time right now of a kind of spiritual flatness; I feel very flat right now. I get down on my knees in the morning to pray, I have my prayers and I'm just feeling flat. Now in the past I would have been very anxious about that; I'm not happy about it, it doesn't feel good. But in the end, as I said to my wife Diana, "I'm going

through this because God is using it. He is using it to work on me.” The only thing we don’t want to not happen is God not to work on us. Whether that comes from flatness or anger, or confrontation, or difficulties, or loss of this...God is using all of that to shape us into the image of what He wants us to be and so I’m feeling flat and I almost have

to say, “Well, so what?” Really, should I try harder now?” No, I think just rest in Him and see what He is going to do. He’s shaken...what He’s bringing to my mind. How He is conforming me to His image.

It is great freedom, Brothers, it is great freedom.

Yes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: *With respect to a comment you made, you implied or at least inferred that most of us or all of us come to Him in desperation. It strikes me that this word glory means heavy and weight, we experience through our journey all the time a change in this weight or in this glory because of different issues of desperation that we experience: month after month, year after year, it is another piece of desperation and another realization that His glory is there and it gets heavy at times. So it goes back to his comment about increase and we have a shallow flat period, then we have this heavy weight where we experience His glory and we come to Him and then it goes away and it comes back again. So it is a progression of different kinds of weights through His glory.*

I agree, but I want to keep in mind that what you just described is not the ultimate reality. The ultimate reality is Him and what He is doing. My experience to that has been very secondary to that, and that is...I mean you see this in your children. This is the way children respond in maturity. Children always see every incident and every emotion and experience as ultimate. They say, “My gosh, my boyfriend...it’s the end of the world” or “I’m going to die if I can’t Judy to go with me to the picnic...” You know, in 8th grade...all that is the end of the world. We experience that but we kind of act like that as adults when it comes to the Lord. “Oh, I’m not feeling this, I’m not experiencing this,” without realizing, in fact, we are already **in** Him and seated **with** Him in the heavenlies; and His work is to bring us through what? Difficulties. The study of the Word, worship, the sacraments. Bring us from one degree glory to the heaviness of another. So that ultimately my life has total substance and weight in it.

That is what I want, I do not want a light-weight life. I want a life of substance because without that substance, my life is a vacant lot. Which is very powerful and I thank my Brother who left... {LAUGHTER AND UNCLEAR COMMENTS}. He wasn’t here, remember the Twilight Zone in the 1960s. {LAUGHTER}

BILL: [UNCLEAR]. *Every time you practice the dash, you are getting fast and you can’t make it for a long time. I think that has really set my heart of practice, that I just show up.*

Yes, just show up. Yes, St. Woody Allen says that 95% of life is just showing up. Yes, “He who perseveres to the end will be saved.”

One last one.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPANT: [UNCLEAR] *Live above with saints that love, won't that be the glory? But here below, with saints we know, that's another story. {MUCH LAUGHTER}*

Yes, we need to take that and put music to it. So, let us pray.

Lord, God, we thank You that You have so marvelously, marvelously provided for us by including us in Your glory and Your weight. Lord, we confess to you that we live lives that are weightless, that have no substance far too often. We ask You to forgive us and give us that weight that never passes away. In Jesus' name. Amen.