

Marching to Glory

by Warren Wiersbe

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the glory of God and how it is revealed through Jesus Christ, who is the King, the Savior, and the Judge.

Duration: 36:50

Scripture: John 12:12-19, John 12:23, John 12:32, John 12:34

Topics: "Gods Glory", "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the three views of the glory of God. He emphasizes that the glory of God can bring deliverance and solve problems in our lives. The preacher focuses on the glory of the king, Jesus, as he rode into Jerusalem fulfilling Old Testament Scripture and promises. The people hailed Jesus as the king of Israel, but the Pharisees were threatened by his popularity. The preacher also mentions the record-breaking ticker tape parades in New York City and relates them to the glory and honor given to Jesus as the king.

Transcript

The word of God from John chapter 12 beginning at verse 12 and concluding with verse 33. On the next day many people that were come to the feast when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him and cried, Hosanna blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus when he had found a young ass sat upon it as it is written, Fear not daughter of Zion behold thy king cometh sitting on an ass's colt.

These things understood not his disciples at the first but when Jesus was glorified then remembered they that these things were written of him and that they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that were with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave and raised him from the dead bore witness. For this cause the people also met him for they heard that he had done this miracle.

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold the world is gone after him. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast. The same came therefore to Philip who was of Bethsaida of Galilee and desired him saying, Sir we would see Jesus.

Philip cometh and telleth Andrew and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them saying, The hour is come that the son of man should be glorified. Verily verily I say unto you except a grain

of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me let him follow me and where I am there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me him will my father honor.

Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify thy name. And then came there a voice from heaven saying I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.

The people therefore that stood by and heard it said that it thundered. Others said an angel spoke to him. Jesus answered and said this voice came not because of me but for your sakes.

Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out and I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die.

May God speak to our hearts from this word. New York City is famous for its ticker tape parades and as I understand it there are three parades that hold the record. Back in 1927 when Colonel Charles Lindbergh came to New York City following his epic making flight the city tossed down from the windows 1,800 tons of paper.

Aren't you glad you weren't working on the street cleaning department. That was the record until 1951 when Douglas MacArthur came home and the city gave to him 3,249 tons of paper. That's a good record but then Colonel John Glenn showed up and he had orbited the earth three times and nobody had ever done that before and so he was given 3,474 tons of ticker tape and confetti in honor of the occasion.

They didn't have ticker tape back in Jerusalem in Jesus day obviously they didn't have the tickers to tape with but they had palm branches and to a Jew a palm branch is a symbol of victory. Victory and triumph after war and they used to take their outer garments off and lay them down in the road to let the king know that they were his. Gladly would they have placed themselves on that road but that they couldn't do and so they placed their garments on the road.

But while all of this was going on the shouting hosanna which means save now blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord while all of this was going on our Lord Jesus was not the least bit impressed. He wasn't impressed by the size of the crowd he wasn't impressed by the noise of the crowd. The one thing that did impress him was the praise of the little children even the children sang out and praised him.

Our Lord was concerned really about one thing the glory of God not the glory that came from Jerusalem not the glory that came from the crowd the glory of God. In verse 23 the hour is come that the son of man should be glorified he prays in verse 28 father glorify thy name and the father speaks from heaven he had spoken at the baptism from heaven he had spoken at the transfiguration from heaven now he speaks as the Lord is about to go to Calvary and he says I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. Our Lord's great concern was not the praise of men but the glory of God.

In fact the whole theme of this parade the whole theme of what we call Palm Sunday is the glory of God which by the way is a theme that is greatly neglected today very little of what is said and done even in the name of religion today is concerned with the glory of God. I wonder how much I did this past week over which I was able to pray Lord glorify thy name. The Lord Jesus Christ is revealing to us the glory of God

and he does it in a very unique way.

We see the Lord Jesus from three different views. We see the glory of the King as he relates to Israel and then the Greeks show up and we see the glory of the Savior as he relates to the whole world not just Israel. You say you can't get any bigger than that oh yes you can.

Then we see the glory of the judge as he reaches out into that invisible spirit world and conquers the enemy and brings deliverance not just to Israel and not just to the world but to the whole universe. Let's look together at these three views of the glory of God and see what they mean to our lives today. It may be that the problem you're facing today can be solved by the glory of God.

It may be that the burden that you're carrying can be lightened by the glory of God. It might be that someone who's walking a very difficult uphill path can be encouraged today if he'll only get a glimpse through Jesus of the glory of God. In verses 12 through 19 of John chapter 12, we meet the glory of the King.

Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel. Fear not, daughter of Zion. Behold thy King, the glory of the King as it relates to Israel.

Do you know that this is the only public demonstration Jesus ever permitted while he was here on earth? He was constantly saying to people now keep it quiet don't go tell everybody. He healed the leper and said now go see the priest but don't tell anybody and the leper told everybody so much so that Jesus had to retreat out into the wilderness to have time alone to pray. Our Lord was constantly fighting the crowd.

One day he saw the crowd and turned and said you can't come after me unless you deny yourself and take up your cross then you can follow me. Our Lord did everything he could to cut out the crowd, to thin out the ranks. He knew there were many like in this crowd who followed him because of the miracles that he had done.

The pilgrims that came from Galilee knew our Lord Jesus because of his ministry there. The pilgrims who lived around Bethany knew the Lord Jesus from his raising of Lazarus. These two crowds came together and then the other crowds of pilgrims joined them and got psyched up in the emotion of the hour but our Lord permitted it.

There are two reasons why he permitted it. Ordinarily Jesus said no parades, no shouting, no crowds. Reason number one he was fulfilling the Old Testament scripture.

I am not mathematician enough to calculate all of these things but those who know tell me that you can calculate from Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 9 to the very day when the Lord Jesus entered into Jerusalem. If you're interested in the statistics get a hold of an interesting book by Sir Robert Anderson in which he discusses this very subject. Sir Robert Anderson sat down with the royal astronomer in England and they figured out all the new moons and they figured out the extra days and lo and behold they came to the conclusion in his book called the silence of God that the very day was that day of prophecy.

Now Jesus was fulfilling in time what Daniel wrote and in event what Zechariah wrote. Back in Zechariah chapter 9 and verse 9 here's what the prophet said. He looked down the centuries and he saw he saw what God was going to do.

Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion. Shout O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy King cometh unto thee.

He is just and having salvation lowly and riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of an ass. Jesus was fulfilling this Old Testament prophecy. It's interesting to see what John leaves out when he quotes this.

John says fear not daughter of Zion. Behold thy King cometh sitting on an ass's colt. John doesn't say rejoice greatly.

They had nothing to rejoice over. Their city was going to be destroyed. They were going to reject their King.

Judgment was going to come. Jesus didn't rejoice when he came to that special place in the road. He looked over Jerusalem and he wept.

Thy King cometh and yet they said we have no King but Caesar. He is just but they treated him unjustly. All of his rights were taken away from him.

He has salvation but they wouldn't receive that salvation. They received instead condemnation. Lowly, yes he was lowly, but they were looking for one to come on a white charger.

Perhaps riding in a golden chariot. That's why they were crying out Hosanna save now. Deliver us from Rome.

Deliver us from slavery. Reestablish the great kingdom of God in Israel. Oh how blind they were to their own scriptures.

Just like people today. People invite Jesus to do all sorts of things he's never going to do. They said you come and be our King.

He said I can't take the crown until I have the cross. You come and take the scepter. No I can't take the scepter until first I've felt the rod.

Enter into your glory. No first there has to be the suffering and then the glory. Our Lord permitted this demonstration to fulfill prophecy.

But there was a second reason why he did it and this is most interesting. You'll remember that the chief priests and the Pharisees had gotten together and decided to kill Jesus. Even the high priest said it's necessary it is expedient that one man should die for the nation that the nation perish not.

He didn't even realize what he said. Being the high priest he spoke a prophecy. They said we've got to kill this Jesus of Nazareth but not during the feast lest there be some kind of a riot.

Ah but he had to die during the feast. God's calendar had been set up centuries before. The Lamb of God had to die on Passover when they were slaughtering their lambs in the temple.

The Lamb of God had to be dying on a cross. Oh they couldn't wait until after the feast. The politicians said we're going to schedule it after the feast.

The providence of God said no it's going to be during the feast. And when Jesus rode into Jerusalem you know what he did? He forced the Pharisees and the chief priests, he forced them to change their plans. They looked out the windows and said look the whole world is going after him you better do something.

And about that time Judas came to their help and their aid and said I'll be glad to give him to you if you pay me. Our Lord Jesus by riding into Jerusalem displays the glory of the king. The glory of fulfilling Old Testament scripture.

The glory of accomplishing Old Testament promises. The glory that can one day belong to Israel because Jesus is their king. Now they didn't want him as their king.

I speak to some people right now who don't want him as their king. They would say with that mob we have no king but Caesar. Whoever feeds us leads us.

Caesar gives us food. I had a letter this past week from someone who was very unhappy with the Founders Week prophetic conference. And her reason for being unhappy was, quote, you people take the Bible too literally, unquote.

And she tried to prove in her letter, and I appreciate her kindness in writing, that we cannot take this literally. There is not going to be a literal kingdom. But Jesus said there was.

And Paul said there would be. And so did Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and all the prophets, Moses, Samuel. One day our Lord is going to ride into Jerusalem but not lowly upon an ass.

Read it in Revelation chapter 19 beginning at verse 11 where heaven opens and there comes forth a white horse and him who sits upon it is our Lord Jesus Christ. And he rides forth conquering and to conquer. And he will deliver his people Israel.

And he will establish the throne of David his father. And he shall reign in righteousness. The glory of the king.

Now in verses 20 through 26 we see the second view of his glory. That's the glory of the Savior. He's not talking now about Israel.

He's talking about the whole world. Some Greeks show up. This is biblical.

To the Jew first and also to the Greek. These Greeks were coming to the feast because they weren't satisfied with their Grecian religion and philosophy. You know Greece had a lot to offer.

Beautiful architecture. Gorgeous artistic achievement. Philosophy was born in Greece.

Modern scientific thinking was born in Greece. Here were people who had a tremendous heritage of philosophy and art and wisdom and culture. Democracy was born in Greece.

But they weren't satisfied. And they said you know we think the Jews have got the answer to this real problem. Our culture can't change our hearts.

Our culture can't forgive our sins. Our philosophy can't give us victory over sin. We need a Savior.

Let's go to Jerusalem to the feast. And lo and behold at the feast they didn't get any satisfaction. All of the ritual and all of the tradition and all of the religion didn't meet their need.

And they finally came to Jesus. By the way if you're honest wherever you begin you'll end up with Jesus. If you begin with philosophy and you're honest you'll end up with Jesus the wisdom of God.

You begin with culture if you're honest you'll end up with Jesus. You begin with religion if you're honest you'll end up with Jesus. That's what happened to these men.

They came and said to Philip and to Andrew we want to see Jesus. They repeatedly kept asking we want to see Jesus. And Jesus wouldn't see them.

He said it's very strange if the Jews didn't want him and the Greeks did you'd think he'd want to see them. No he wasn't ready for them yet. That grain of wheat had to fall into the ground and die.

Our Lord is saying I'm going to be lifted up on a cross. By the way that's what it means to lift up Jesus Christ. I've heard people pray oh may Jesus be lifted up that he may draw all men.

You don't want him to be crucified again do you? When our Lord is lifted up he's talking about crucifixion. When he says all men he doesn't does not mean all men without exception. He means all men without distinction.

Jews and Gentiles are going to be saved because the seed was planted into the ground and died. My Lord is comparing his body to a seed. He's saying if this body remains as it is it'll always be alone.

But I was sent to this earth to bear fruit. I was sent to bring a harvest. They have to put me into my grave.

I have to die. And just as you plant a seed in the ground and it dies to produce life. So my Lord was placed into the ground dead and he came forth in life.

Resurrection glory. And now he's the Savior of the world. Not only is he the seed but he's the sacrifice.

If I am lifted up from the earth I'll draw all men, Jews and Gentiles, unto myself. I feel so sorry today for those people who don't know what it is to have a Savior. They've tried culture and they've tried philosophy and they've tried religion and they've tried all the things that Jews and Greeks have to offer and they have a great deal to offer.

But all of the wisdom of Greece could only point to the Savior. All of the religion of Israel could only point to the Savior. And there he stands and he says the hour is come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Not crucified, glorified. Isn't that a marvelous thing when you can look at the difficulties of life and see the other side? If I'd been standing there I would have said Lord why are you saying glorified? They're going to arrest you. That's to the glory of God.

They're going to nail you to a cross. That's to the glory of God because they will put me in the tomb and I will be raised from the dead and I will come forth in glory and I won't be alone. I'm going to be the first fruits of that harvest and you and I can be a part of that harvest.

Somebody listening to me right now has never trusted the Savior and you don't have the glory of salvation. My Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I'm going to be speaking at a banquet this week, the Lord willing.

It's a Christian high school graduation banquet. Their theme is something beautiful. Their verse is Ephesians 2 10.

We are His workmanship. You know the most beautiful thing in all the world is the beauty of holiness. The ugliest thing in the world is sin.

How people can take sin and put it on a TV screen and entertain people is more than I can understand. There's no beauty in sin. Sin is ugly.

Sin didn't make Samson beautiful, it made him ugly. Sin didn't make Judas beautiful, it made him ugly. Sin hasn't made this world beautiful, it's made it ugly.

Jesus says I am the seed and you put me into the ground and out comes life and beauty and fruitfulness. Now my dear friend, if you've never trusted the Savior, you have lost the glory of God. But when you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior, you're a part of the glory of God.

When Jesus prayed, He said, Father, I have glorified thy name. I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do. Now, the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them.

And Father, I want that one day they shall behold my glory. You want to go on in the ugliness of sin, the wretchedness of sin, or do you want to go on in the glory of God? The glory of the Savior for the whole world. But He doesn't stop there.

He's talked about the glory of the King for Israel. And they miss that glory by rejecting Him. The glory of the Savior for the whole world, Jew and Gentile, whosoever will, let him come.

But He realizes that behind all of this is a battle. Behind all of this is an invisible spirit world. He calls it the world.

He calls its ruler the prince of this world. He's talking about Satan. He realizes that behind sin is Satan.

Behind ugliness is Satan. Behind darkness is the prince of darkness. And something has to be done about him.

He has invaded God's universe. And there can never be the glory of the King for Israel or the glory of the Savior for the world until there is the glory of the Judge. He's going to have to judge the universe.

He talks about that. Now is the judgment of this world's system. Now shall the prince of this world's system be cast out.

How can I, if I be lifted up? The death of Jesus on the cross not only purchased a kingdom for Israel and purchased salvation for all who will believe. The death of Jesus on the cross was the great defeat of the forces of evil. Did you know that there can be no glory without judgment? Now you just think about that.

There's no glory without judgment. Let's take the physical body. God made our bodies for glory.

But there's a tumor. There's an infected gallbladder. There's an abscessed tooth.

And before there can be glory, there has to be judgment. The doctor x-rays. He says, I'm sorry, this has to come out.

I'm judging that. I'm declaring it is guilty and it's going to come out. And you're never going to have the glory of health without the judgment of surgery.

This is true of buildings. We're in the process of renovating areas in this church building. You can't have glory without judgment.

The architect, the contractor comes in and he looks and says, look, this plaster is no good. It has to be replaced. These footings are awfully weak.

Something has to be done there. First the judgment, then the glory. That's true spiritually.

You know why some people are not saved today? It's not because they haven't heard. They've heard. They've heard enough to save the world.

You know why they aren't saved? They won't stand under judgment. Oh, they want the glory. Lord, someday I want to be in heaven.

Then let me judge you right now as a condemned sinner. Oh, no, I don't want that. How foolish the sinner is who rejects judgment.

He's as foolish as the cancer victim who rejects the x-ray and the surgery. He's as foolish as the owner of the house who rejects the architect's estimate of damage that the termites have done. The glory of the judge.

Jesus said, when I die on the cross, here's what's going to happen. The world is judged. To think that the religious world hung Him on a cross.

The Roman world of law hung Him on the cross. The Greek world of wisdom hung Him on a cross. Religion nailed Him there.

Government nailed Him there. Culture nailed Him there. And in so doing, they condemned themselves.

The story has been told of numbers of artists. Turner is the one I have read most with reference to this story, the great landscape artist. A lady came to him one day and said, Mr. Turner, I don't see landscapes the way you do.

And Turner quietly said, don't you wish you did. You see, in condemning him, she was saying nothing about him, but she was saying a great deal about herself. When they condemned Jesus Christ, they were saying nothing about Him.

They were saying a great deal about themselves. They were saying religion bankrupt, culture bankrupt, government bankrupt. They even had the audacity to write above the cross in three different languages.

The Latin language, the language of government. The Greek language, the language of culture. The Hebrew language, the language of religion.

And he just put it right up there and said all of us were condemned. When Jesus died on the cross, He condemned this world system. And when He died on the cross, He condemned Satan and all of his system.

My heart leaps up when I read Colossians chapter 2, verse 15. I tell you, where it tells me that Jesus Christ stripped all of the armor off of Satan and his hosts, having spoiled principalities and powers. That word spoiled means He left them naked, He took their armor.

Having spoiled principalities and powers. Having conquered Satan and his hosts, triumphing over them in the cross. From the human point of view, Calvary was the greatest defeat anybody ever could experience.

From the divine point of view, Calvary was the greatest victory that God ever won. For on the cross, Satan was defeated. Satan's pride was defeated by our Lord's humility.

He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Satan's lies were defeated for he was on the cross as God's truth. And he said, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you'll know the truth.

Satan's power was broken. Satan's darkness was defeated. The power of death which had been in the hands of Satan was now wrested from him.

And Satan today is a defeated foe. And so it will be that one day God will be able to make a new heavens and a new earth and a clean universe. And there will be nowhere in this universe anything that lies.

There will be no darkness. There will be no serpent to deceive. No lion to devour.

There will be no masquerading. There will be no satanic force at work. All of God's great universe will be purged and cleansed and made anew.

And do you know what? Those of us who are saved are going to enjoy this whole great universe forever. I enjoy reading C.S. Lewis. I just finished a new biography of C.S. Lewis because C.S. Lewis believes something that I believe.

And I like to read somebody who believes what I believe. Mr. Lewis says many Christians have such a limited view of what heaven is going to be like, such a limited view of eternity. He said, if I understand what the Bible teaches and the kind of God we have throughout all eternity, we're going to have limitless space for our enjoyment and our employment.

And we won't be limited by time or place. Jesus Christ is going to give to us a universe, galaxies upon galaxies and universes upon universes. And we're going to have all eternity to explore their depths and enjoy their fullness to His glory because He died on the cross.

And so you and I can share in God's glory how interesting that He went to the smallest little country He could go to, Palestine, to the most subjugated people, the Jews, to a relatively little place called Calvary that never would have been written down in history had He not been there. He went to that little pinpoint geographically and yet what He did there reaches out for all eternity to all the universe. That's God.

And He wants you to be a part of it. The tragedy of hell is the tragedy of the absence of the presence and the glory of God. Yes, the Bible talks about torment.

Yes, the Bible talks about darkness. But that torment and that darkness are the byproduct of the absence of God, the absence of the glory of God. You say, I want to be a part of that glory of God.

Then you come to Him first as the judge. That's where it starts. First the judge.

You say, Lord Jesus, I confess. You're right. What you say is true.

I'm a sinner. I'm undone. I'm lost.

I have no glory. Then you come to Him as the Savior and He saves you. And then you come to Him as the King and you give your life to Him.

And you say, King of my life, I crown thee now. Thine shall the glory be. That's what it's all about.

The glory of God as the King, the Savior, the Judge. Gracious Father, who are we that we should ever share in the glory of God? What is there about us that we should ever see your glory, yea, share your glory, radiate your glory? But you have done this for us through Christ. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

You are the King and one day the glory will dwell with Israel. Thank you that you are the Savior and the glory can dwell in our hearts right now. Thank you that you are the Judge and one day the whole of the universe will radiate with the glory of God.

Oh, I pray that helpless sinners will come and trust you today. Those who are possessed by the darkness and ugliness of sin will come and begin to taste of the glory of God. And so help that people shall respond to your call today.

I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

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