

# Glory of God

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of love, just like Jesus did, and how this can be manifested through patience, encouragement, and living for God and for others.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:6, Isaiah 50:4, Matthew 8:10, Mark 8:36, Luke 7:47, Luke 23:34, John 7:38-39, Acts 10:38, Ephesians 4:15, 1 John 4:8

**Topics:** "The Nature of God's Love", "Living for Others"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that God is the essence of love, as demonstrated through Jesus Christ, who embodied this love in His actions and words. He explains that true love originates from the inner man and is reflected in our thoughts and attitudes, which must be selfless and compassionate. Poonen highlights that Jesus valued every individual, regardless of their circumstances, and was willing to sacrifice Himself to free humanity from sin. He encourages believers to speak the truth in love and to exhibit patience and kindness, following Jesus' example of uplifting others. Ultimately, Poonen calls for a life dedicated to serving God and others, reflecting the glory of God's love in our daily interactions.

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## Transcript

God IS Love. It is not that He just acts lovingly. He IS in His very essence LOVE. The glory of God as seen in Jesus, manifests this clearly. Jesus did not just perform acts of love. He went about "doing good" (Acts 10:38). But that was because the love of God flooded His whole being. Love has its origin, like holiness and humility, in our inner man. It is from the innermost being of the Spirit-filled man that the rivers of life flow (Jn. 7:38,39). Our thoughts and attitudes (even if never expressed) give an odour to our words and actions and to our personality. And others can easily detect this odour. Words and acts of love count for nothing, if our thoughts and attitudes to others remain selfish and critical. God desires "truth in the innermost being" (Psa. 51:6). The glory of God was seen in Jesus' love for all men. Jesus never despised anyone for his poverty, ignorance, ugliness or lack of culture. He specifically stated that the whole world and all that it contained was not as valuable as one human soul (Mk. 8:36). That was how He valued men. And so He delighted in all men. He saw men deceived and bound by Satan; and He longed to set them free. So great was this longing born of love, that He was willing to pay the ultimate price to free men from sin's grip over their lives. And because He was willing to die for men to save them from their sins, He earned the right to preach against sin forcefully. We have no right to preach against sin, if either we have not judged that sin in our own flesh and overcome, or if we are unwilling to die (if need be) to save others from the sin that we preach against. This is what it means to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). Because

He bore the cross daily, Jesus was never irritated with anyone, however crude or stupid he might be. The slowness of others never got on His nerves, nor did untidiness, disorderliness and carelessness in others, ever make Him impatient. The perfect man can easily bear with imperfect people. Only imperfect people find the imperfection of others to be intolerable! Patience is one of the greatest manifestations of our love for others.

Consider the glory of Jesus' love, in His speech. Jesus never belittled others or passed remarks or jokes about them that hurt them. He never made any subtle wounding statements. He never discussed the shortcomings of His disciples behind their backs. It is truly amazing that in three years, He never exposed Judas before the other eleven disciples - for even at the last supper, the eleven could not guess who was going to betray their Master. Jesus used His tongue to encourage and admonish others, thereby making His tongue an instrument of life in God's Hand. He used His tongue to speak soothing words to the weary (Isa. 50:4), and also as a sword to cut down the proud and the haughty (Isa. 49:2). How greatly encouraged the Roman centurion and the Syrophenician woman must have felt when they heard Jesus praise them for their faith, publicly (Mt. 8:10; 15:28). The sinful woman who was praised for her love (Lk. 7:47) and Mary of Bethany who was praised for her sacrificial offering (Mk. 14:6) would never have forgotten the words of Jesus. How strengthened Peter must have been through Jesus' assurance that He would pray for him (Lk. 22:32). Just a few words, but what strength and encouragement they conveyed. Many others must have heard words from Jesus' lips that lifted their weary spirits, for it says in Isaiah 50:4 that Jesus listened daily to His Father's voice so that He might have an appropriate word for the weary souls that came across His path each day.

Peter described the ministry of Jesus as "going about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Truly, this summed up His life. He was not just a good preacher, nor was He just interested in winning souls. He loved the total man, and did good wherever He went, both to the bodies and the souls of men. His enemies, taunting Him, called Him, "a friend of tax-collectors and sinners" (Lk. 7:34), and that was exactly what He was, a friend of the most despised people in society. Jesus had taught His disciples that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), and demonstrated by His life that the happiest and most blessed life that a man can live on this earth is one lived totally for God and for others, where he gives himself and his possessions to bless others. Jesus lived so utterly for God and for others that, even when dying, He found time to lead a thief to salvation. Hanging there on the cross, He was unmindful of His own sufferings and of the jeerings and hatred of others, and was more concerned that those who crucified Him should have their sin forgiven (Lk. 23:34). Jesus always overcame evil with good. The floods of the hatred of others could not quench the flaming fire of His love (Song 8:7). This is the love that He gives us by His Spirit whereby we can love one another even as He loved us (Jn. 13:34,35; Rom. 5:5). Thus we too shall manifest the divine nature.

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