

PREPARING FOR GLORY

by David Wallis

From the beginning, God has always desired to dwell with man in His glory. This is the very thing we have been created for. Many years ago, God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to have fellowship and to walk with Him. Tragically, Adam disobeyed and lost that glory, and through Adam's sin we have all inherited a sinful nature that falls short of God's glory (Rom.5:12 & 3:23). So how can we be restored back to the glory of God?

PREPARATION THROUGH SEPARATION AND CLEANSING

Second Corinthians 6:16-17 show us a key for dwelling with God in intimacy: *"...for you are the temple of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be separate,' says the Lord, 'and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you.'"*

If we are to walk intimately with God, knowing His glory, there must be a coming out from sin and a separation from the system of the world. Holiness is not an option if we are to move on in God. The Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 12:14 that we are to pursue peace *"and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."*

Even though holiness is a work of God, we also play a part in the process. That is why the Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 7:1, *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*

It is interesting that this scripture says we are to perfect holiness in the fear of God, not in the love of God. The fear of God is a reverence for God that causes us to fear displeasing Him. This quality, which is missing in many churches today, will keep us away from evil. *"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil" (Prov. 16:6).*

An American television evangelist who was famous in the 1980s backslid and ended up in prison. Someone visited him there and asked him when he fell out of love with Jesus. The former evangelist said that he never fell out of love with Jesus, but he fell into sin because he did not fear God.

GOD APPEARS IN HIS GLORY

We will now look at some examples of when God has appeared to man in His glory.

On the island of Patmos the Apostle John was taken up in the Spirit to see Jesus revealed in all His glory. *"His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead,"* (Rev.1:14-17).

At the time of his conversion, the Apostle Paul was on the road to Damascus to kill and persecute Christians. The Lord met him there and he experienced the glory of God. When he described that experience to King Agrippa in Acts 26:13-14, he said: "At midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining round about me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'" There, at midday, with the sun shining in its strength, Paul saw that Light emanating from the Lord's face that was far brighter than the Middle Eastern sun.

The books of Joel and Isaiah tell us that in the last days, when the glory of God will be revealed, even the brightness of the sun will be turned into darkness. The glory of God will overcome all other light.

In modern times, a missionary to Mexico, David Hogan, has shared a testimony from a village in eastern Mexico. A warlock (male witch) who hated Christians lived there, but His son became saved and witnessed to his dad. His father became very ill and as he was dying said, "I hate You God." His son just kept on praying for his dad to come back from the dead. After six hours, the warlock was miraculously resurrected from the dead.

David Hogan spoke to that man afterwards and asked him what he had seen during those six hours. He said that he left his body. He saw the sun and moon, and then a Man brighter than the sun came. He had a glowing robe down to His feet, a golden belt was round His waist, eyes like a fire, and feet like a machete that is put in the oven and becomes glowing red. The Man spoke in his local language, and when He spoke, it was like a river flowing and thundering with power. The Man spoke to the warlock the words, "I love you", and then the man returned to life. One of the pastors then led him to Christ and he became a great witness for the Lord. What an amazing testimony of God's love, that Jesus reveals His glory to a God-hating warlock and says to him, "I love you!"

In 1982 I met a pastor named Zachy in India. Before he knew the Lord, he was involved in smuggling drugs and murder. He ended up in jail for the third murder and was sentenced to die. He prayed to the Sikh and Hindu gods but received no help. Then he just cried out, "If there is a God, reveal Yourself to me and release me from this prison."

On November 19, 1969, he was awakened from sleep by a blinding light that filled the room. He pulled up the blankets in great fear and he heard a voice, "There is no one else besides Me who can forgive you for your past sins and release you from your inward conflicts." He opened his eyes and saw Jesus in His glory. Miraculously he was released from prison on the date that God had told him. This is an amazing testimony of the power of God.

GOD'S COMING GLORY

God is sovereign and we cannot receive His glory whenever we want it. However, we need to seek Him and prepare ourselves for when He will choose to reveal His glory. We can prepare ourselves by walking in the light, allowing God to expose our hearts and deal with sin in our lives. We should separate ourselves from the love of the world and become cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh.

We are privileged to be alive in these end times when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. In times of great darkness, the glory of God will arise (Is.60:1-2). The glory of the last days will be far greater than the glory in the early church (Hag.2:9). How will we respond to the coming glory of God? May we be those who are found ready.