

# FROM GLORY

# TO GLORY

by Ed Marks

Regeneration takes place in our spirit, transformation in our soul, and glorification in our body. Glorification is a process whereby the God of glory dispenses Himself into our spirit, spreads into our soul, and eventually saturates our body.

God's eternal purpose, His heart's desire, is to gain many glorified sons for His radiant expression throughout the universe. Before the foundation of the world God predestinated us unto sonship according to the good pleasure of His will (Eph. 1:4-5). When we received Christ as our life and our Savior, He entered into our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22) to make us God's sons, who have God's life and nature (1 John 5:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:4). Our spirit has been indwelt, united, and mingled with the Spirit of God's Son to become a spirit of sonship in which we cry, "Abba, Father!" (Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6; cf. 1 Cor. 6:17). The apostle John is very emphatic about this when he says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are" (1 John 3:1). Although we are the children of God, "it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him" (v. 2). The entire creation is awaiting, groaning, and travailing in pain for the revelation, the full manifestation, of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19-22). Not only the entire creation "but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body" (v. 23). The redemption of our body will be the transfiguration of our body, the saturation of our body with God as glory.

Our being fully manifested as the sons of God takes place by the God of glory dispensing Himself in Christ as the Spirit into all three parts of our being—spirit, soul, and body (1 Thes. 5:23). A striking phrase in 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that we are being transformed *from glory to glory*—from one degree of glory to another degree. This phrase reveals the ongoing process of glorification in the Christian life. On the one hand, we may say that regeneration takes place in our spirit, transformation in our soul, and glorification in our body. On the other hand, we may say that glorification is a process whereby the God of glory dispenses Himself into our spirit, spreads into our soul, and eventually saturates our body. We need to see how we can remain in this organic process until our mortal bodies are "swallowed up by life" (5:4) and transfigured by the Lord at His coming "to be conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:21). "When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

Glory is God Himself expressed and manifested. Jeremiah 2:11 in the Amplified Bible says, "Has a nation [ever] changed its gods, even though they are not gods? But My people have changed *God*, their Glory, for that which does not profit." Acts 7:2 says that the God of glory appeared to Abraham. God the Father is the Father of glory (Eph. 1:17), God the Son is the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8), and God the Spirit is the Spirit of glory (1 Pet. 4:14). Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9) dispenses Himself as glory into our spirit for our regeneration. This is instantaneous. The transfiguration of our body for our full glorification will also be instantaneous,

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taking place “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52). We must however, cross the bridge from our glorified spirit to our glorified body by allowing the Lord to glorify our soul. We must cooperate with Him, allowing Him to spread from our spirit into our soul, so that we can be transformed from one degree of glory to another. This is the increase of the God of glory within our inner being, whereby we grow with the growth, the increase, of God in us (Col. 2:19). “The reality of the believers’ glorification is their gaining of God Himself. Without God, we do not have glory. When we gain God, we are glorified. The measure of God that we have determines the measure of our glory” (Lee 67).

The believers’ being transformed in the divine life today is God’s being expressed in the believers as glory; hence, this daily transformation is from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18b). The practical, subjective glory of God in us is a glory that progresses from one degree to another degree. This expressing of God is progressing and advancing; hence, it is from glory to glory. (68)

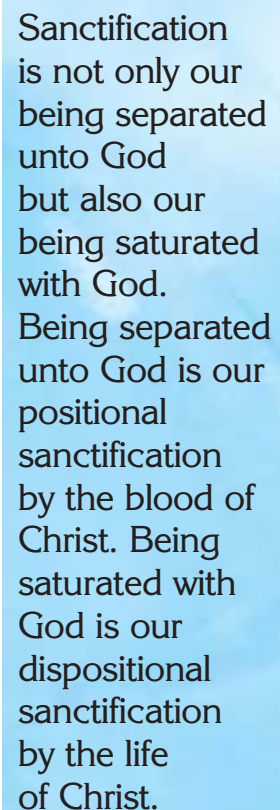
### Sanctification Being the Gradual Process of Glorification

The daily Christian life should be the story of the progressing and advancing expression of God, the glory of God. How does the Lord take us from glory to glory? We want to show that this “glory to glory” Christian life is carried out by the Lord’s daily sanctifying us. Sanctification is not only our being separated unto God but also our being saturated with God. Being separated unto God is our positional sanctification by the blood of Christ (Heb. 13:12). Being saturated with God is our dispositional sanctification by the life of Christ (Rom. 6:19, 22). To be sanctified is to be made holy, and to be holy is to be unique and distinct from all that is common. Only God is holy. Only God is the unique and distinct One in this universe, yet God charges us to be holy: “You shall be holy because I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16). We can be holy only by the Holy One dispensing Himself in His holy and divine nature into our entire tripartite being. We need to be daily “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4) so that God has the way to sanctify us wholly in our spirit, soul, and body (1 Thes. 5:23). By being saturated with the holy God we become the holy city, the New Jerusalem, “having the glory of God” (Rev. 21:10-11).

**W**e need to see that this dispositional sanctification is the gradual process of our glorification, and the process of glorification is the process of our being “sonized” to become the manifested sons of God in our spirit, soul, and body. Two passages from the holy Scriptures reveal this vital truth—Hebrews 2:10-11 and Ephesians 1:4-5. Hebrews 2:10 speaks of the Lord as the Captain and Author of our salvation leading many sons into glory. His leading many sons into glory is the process of glorification. Then verse 11 speaks of the Sanctifier and the ones being sanctified. Thus, our being sanctified by Christ as the Sanctifier is the process of our being glorified. The way God leads His many sons into glory, from glory to glory, is by sanctifying them. Ephesians 1:4-5 says that before the foundation of the world God chose us to be holy by predestinating us unto (for) sonship. We were chosen to be holy for our sonship. Thus, sanctification, being made holy, is for sonship. Sanctification is God’s “sonizing” us to glorify our entire tripartite being with Himself as the holy and glorious One. “And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:23). We need to daily cooperate with the inner operating holy God, opening our being to Him to let Him saturate our being with Himself. This subjective sanctification prepares us to be Christ’s holy and God-expressing bride, His glorious church.

### Sanctification for Our Glorification by the Washing of the Water in the Word

Ephesians 5:26 reveals how the indwelling Christ as the hope of glory can accomplish



Sanctification is not only our being separated unto God but also our being saturated with God. Being separated unto God is our positional sanctification by the blood of Christ. Being saturated with God is our dispositional sanctification by the life of Christ.

His goal to gain His bride. He does this by His speaking, His word—"That he might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word." Ephesians 5:27 reveals the beauty of the bride, saying that Christ will present the church to Himself as His bride full of Himself as glory, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish." We as the church are being beautified through the process of sanctification by Christ as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) cleansing us by the washing of the water as the flowing life of God in the word. Apart from Ephesians 5:26 there is no way for the bride of Christ to be prepared, to be completely glorified, beautified, with and in Christ. How crucial the word of Christ is! We daily need to be in the sanctifying, glorifying, and beautifying word of Christ.

We need to fully consider the import of Ephesians 5:26 to our ongoing process of glorification. The water in this verse refers to the flowing life of God as the living water, the water of life (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 7:38-39; Rev. 21:6; 22:1, 17). The cleansing by the washing of the water of life is in the word of Christ; this indicates that in the word of Christ is the water of life. This cleansing is a divinely metabolic cleansing of our inner being. When we take in God's word, His speaking, an inner spiritual metabolism takes place within us. The old element of our natural and fallen being is gradually discharged, and the new element of Christ's riches is gradually dispensed into the inward parts of our being to transform us with the riches of His glory so that we no longer express ourselves but Him. This metabolic cleansing beautifies us with the Christ of glory and washes away the defects of our natural and old man.

According to the original Greek text, the word for *washing* is *laver*. We are sanctified by the laver of the water in the word. In the Old Testament the laver was placed just outside the tabernacle so that the priests could wash themselves from all earthly defilement to serve God and enter into His dwelling place (Exo. 30:18-21). According to Exodus 38:8 the laver was made with the bronze mirrors of the serving women. The Word of God is today's universal laver for us to be cleansed from all our earthly defilement and glorified to be Christ's bride. When we come to read the Word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer, the Word is like a bronze mirror to us. As we are reading the Word, a mirror is placed before our inward being to expose our true condition to us. Bronze is indicative in the Bible of God's judgment. The bronze altar in the outer court of the tabernacle where the offerings were presented to God signifies the cross where Christ was judged by God as the Substitute for our sin (27:1-8). He went to the cross as the reality of the bronze serpent (Num. 21:4-9; John 3:14) to judge, annul, and terminate the devil, the old serpent, with our serpentine nature. By coming to God's Word, the reality of the bronze laver, we are exposed and enlightened, and the things in our natural being that are unholy, not matching the holy God, are judged by God.

The Greek word rendered *word* in Ephesians 5:26 is *rhema*. The Greek word *logos* refers to the written and constant Word of God whereas *rhema* is God's instant word, the word the Lord is presently speaking to us. *Rhema* is direct communication from God revealing something to us personally and intimately. The Bible is the *logos*, but this *logos* needs to become *rhema* to us. The Bible as the laver is the *logos*, and within the laver as the *logos* is the water of life as the *rhema*. "*Rhema* is something the Lord has spoken previously which He is now speaking again. In other words, *rhema* is the word which the Lord speaks the second time. This is something living" (Nee, *Glorious* 54). We need to convert God's constant Word, the *logos*, into His instant and present speaking to us, the *rhema*, so that we can be sanctified, saturated with Christ, to become the glorious bride of Christ.

The way that God's *logos* can become His *rhema* to us is seen in Ephesians 6:17-18. These verses tell us to receive the word of God by means of all prayer, praying at every time in spirit. As we read God's Word, we need to pray over God's Word and with

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God's Word. By means of all prayer (various means of prayer) through the exercise of our spirit, God's constant Word becomes His instant, direct, personal, and intimate speaking to us. It is this speaking to us and in us that saturates us with God as the divine element of holiness and glory. George Whitefield, a great evangelist in the eighteenth century, provides us with a wonderful pattern of using God's Word as our prayer book so that the constant Word becomes the Lord's instant and personal speaking to us. In his journal Whitefield makes the following statements:

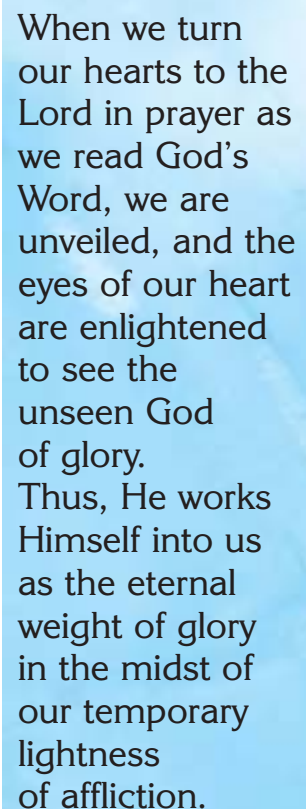
For many months have I been almost always upon my knees, to study and pray...and I have been directed, by watching and reading the Scripture in this manner, even in the minutest circumstances, as plainly as the Jews were, when consulting the Urim and Thummim at the High Priest's breast. (62)

I immediately retired to my room, and kneeling down, with many tears, prayed, over that Psalm wherein David so often repeats these words—"But in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them" [Psa. 118:10-12]. (38)

On Sunday morning, I rose early, and prayed over St. Paul's *Epistle to Timothy*, and more particularly over that precept, "Let no one despise thy youth" [1 Tim. 4:12]. (69)

By prayerfully reading the Word of God, with our hearts being fully turned to the Lord, we are transformed from one degree of glory to another. In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul is speaking of the unbelieving sons of Israel when he says, "Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart; but whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (vv. 15-16). Notice the phrase *whenever Moses is read*. This refers to Moses' writings, which are a part of the holy Scriptures. Whenever we read Moses' writings or the writings of the other inspired channels of God's speaking in the Bible, we need to turn our heart to the Lord in prayer. Then the veil is taken away from our heart, and we can behold and reflect the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face to be transformed from glory to glory. It is an encouragement to realize that even in the midst of suffering, trials, and hardship, we can come to the Word of God, and the divine glory with its eternal weight can be dispensed into our being. "For our momentary lightness of affliction works out for us, more and more surpassingly, an eternal weight of glory, because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (4:17-18). When we turn our hearts to the Lord in prayer as we read God's Word, we are unveiled, and the eyes of our heart are enlightened to see the unseen God of glory (cf. Heb. 11:27). Thus, He works Himself into us as the eternal weight of glory in the midst of our temporary lightness of affliction.

Such prayerful reading of the Scriptures is vital if we are to remain in the experience of sanctification as the process of glorification. The crucial question is this: Is God speaking to us today? The degradation of God's people is due to a lack of God's direct and personal word to them. In Samuel's day when he was still a boy under the tutelage of the degraded priest, Eli, "the word of Jehovah was rare in those days; visions were not widespread" (1 Sam. 3:1). In Revelation 2 and 3 we see the seven churches in Asia with the Lord's call for overcomers in the midst of a degraded situation. The Lord's repeated call in each epistle to these churches, a sevenfold call, is: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). At the beginning of each of these epistles, it is the Lord who speaks (2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14), but at the end it is the Spirit who speaks to the churches. This shows that, as 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, "The Lord is the Spirit"; He is the speaking Spirit. Furthermore, Christ's speaking is the Spirit; it is the very presence of the life-giving Spirit. In John 6:63 the Lord said that the words He speaks to us are spirit; Ephesians 6:17 speaks of "the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God." Without the

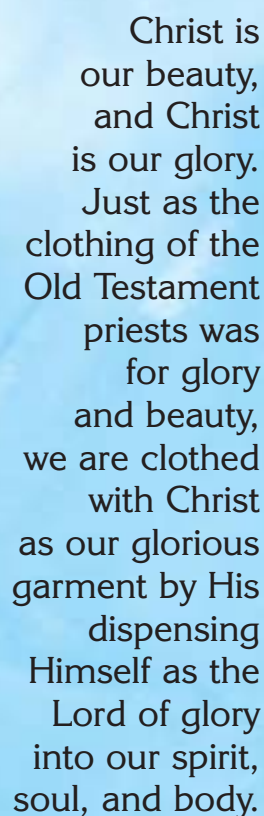


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Lord's present speaking, we do not have His presence. His presence is in His speaking, and His speaking is His dispensing Himself into us as the God-man of glory to make us glorious.

We desperately need the Lord's personal speaking to us both personally and corporately for us to be prepared to be His God-expressing bride. When we receive the Lord's direct speaking to us as fresh messages from Him for His people, we become His messengers. Revelation 1:20 speaks of these messengers as shining stars. They are living in an ascended position, shining intensely with the light of God's word, and illuminating the darkened and degraded situation of God's people. When the Lord speaks to the seven churches, He does not speak to them directly. He does so through these messengers (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). The Lord needs people today who would become the channels for His instant speaking to His people. We need to give ourselves to prayer over God's Word and to the ministry of God's present, direct, and personal word to His people for their sanctification to bring them on from glory to glory (Acts 6:4). "The central point of our prayers should be our longing for the Lord's speaking. Oh, may the Lord speak to us! The Lord's word being spoken to us will enable us to attain the eternal purpose of God" (Nee, *Glorious* 57). Every day we should pray this simple prayer: "Lord, speak to me." Then we can be channels for the Lord to speak through us to His people. We should aspire to be like the apostle Paul, a person in whom Christ spoke (2 Cor. 13:3) and a person who spoke in Christ (2:17). The fresh messages we receive from the Lord are for His people's preparation to be His bride.



Christ is  
our beauty,  
and Christ  
is our glory.  
Just as the  
clothing of the  
Old Testament  
priests was  
for glory  
and beauty,  
we are clothed  
with Christ  
as our glorious  
garment by His  
dispensing  
Himself as the  
Lord of glory  
into our spirit,  
soul, and body.

As we keep ourselves in the washing process, the sanctifying and glorifying process, of the water of life in the word, we are saturated with Christ and transformed by Christ to be His holy, beautiful, God-expressing bride without spot or wrinkle, a bride full of the Triune God of glory, having no blemish or imperfection. The washing of the water in the word gradually eliminates the spots of our natural life. Spots can also be caused by wounds; many times we can be wounded psychologically by offenses from others and by certain sufferings and trials through which we pass. The washing of the water in the word heals these wounds. This washing also gradually removes the wrinkles of oldness and staleness, making us living, fresh, young, and new in our love for the Lord and our service to Him. Thank the Lord for His glorifying speaking which beautifies us with Christ! Christ is our beauty, and Christ is our glory. Just as the clothing of the Old Testament priests was for their glory and beauty (Exo. 28:2), we are clothed with Christ as our glorious garment by His dispensing Himself as the Lord of glory into our spirit, soul, and body. This is all for the fulfillment of Revelation 19:7: "Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." We want to make ourselves ready to be Christ's wife by remaining in His sanctifying word so that He can present us to Himself glorious.

Ephesians 5:26-27 is parallel to Song of Songs 8:13-14, the concluding verses to this allegorical romance between the God and His chosen people. Ephesians 5:26 shows that we are sanctified by the washing of the water in the word to be prepared as His bride full of glory in verse 27. In the Amplified Bible, Song of Songs 8:13 says, "O you who dwell in the gardens, your companions have been listening to your voice; now cause me to hear it." The gardens in which the Lord dwells are His loving seekers who are filled with Him and grow in Him for His satisfaction and private enjoyment (4:12). They are the ones who are always listening to the Lord's voice for their sanctification and glorification. As these companions of the Lord, our prayer should also be, "Cause me to hear Your voice." The Lord's bride-preparing speaking will lead us to the aspiration and conclusion of our divine romance with Him seen in Song of Songs 8:14: "Make haste, my beloved, / And be like a gazelle or a young hart / Upon the mountains of spices." The Lord's speaking to His seeker causes her to long

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for His coming for her full glorification, which will take place when He returns in the power of His resurrection to set up His sweet and beautiful kingdom on this earth. At the conclusion of the Bible the Lord declares, "Yes, I come quickly"; like the apostle John, we need to have an ear to hear the Lord's word and pray His word back to Him by saying, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20).

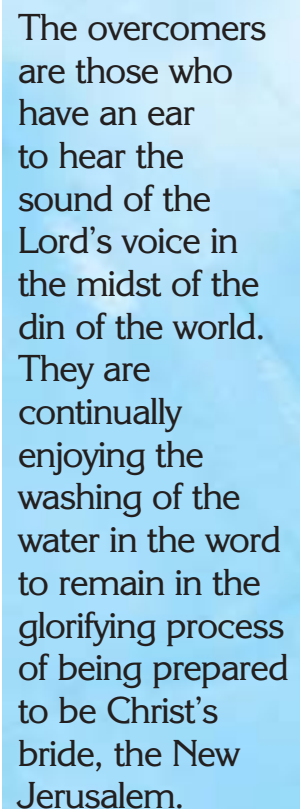
Watchman Nee, in the conclusion to his classic work entitled *The Orthodoxy of the Church*, points out how critical it is for us to have an ear to hear what the Spirit is speaking to us:

The Lord says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Two people were walking on the street, and one said, "Just a moment, I hear the sound of crickets." His friend replied, "You are crazy; the cars in the street are making so much noise, we can hardly hear ourselves talking! How can you still hear the sound of crickets?" But he ran to the wall at the side of the street and told his friend to stand and listen. Sure enough, there was a cricket. His friend asked him how he could have possibly heard it. He replied, "Bankers can only hear the sound of money, and musicians can only hear the sound of music. I am an entomologist; my ear can hear the sound of insects." The Lord tells us that he who has an ear and can hear the Lord's word, let him hear. There are many who do not have ears and cannot hear the Lord's word. If we have an ear, we must hear. (101-102)

The overcomers are those who have an ear to hear the sound of the Lord's voice in the midst of the din of the world. They are continually enjoying the washing of the water in the word to remain in the glorifying process of being prepared to be Christ's bride, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9-10). Their Christian life is a life of "glory to glory." **A&C**

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