

# God Reveals the Coming Victory

## Summary and Goal

God's glory is personally beneficial to those who follow Him. Understanding God's glory reveals the certainty with which we can receive His promises. There is never a dichotomy between displaying God's greatness and resting in His love. The ancient story of Assyria's calloused threats against Judah during the reign of King Hezekiah illustrates that God saves us for the glory of His name and for our good. We, in turn, make known His glory so that others will rest in His grace.

### ***Main Passages***

2 Kings 19:8-20,32-37

### ***Session Outline***

1. The kingdoms of this world rise up and oppose God's people (2 Kings 19:8-13).
2. God's people ask God to save them and exalt His name (2 Kings 19:14-19).
3. God is victorious for the sake of His name and His people (2 Kings 19:20,32-37).

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### ***Theological Theme***

God saves us for the glory of His name and for our good.

### ***Christ Connection***

Hezekiah prayed for God to manifest His glory by saving His people from the pagan kingdom that was rising against them. God exalted His name by answering Hezekiah's prayer. Jesus also prayed for the salvation of His people, and through His death and resurrection, He accomplished the ultimate manifestation of God's glory through defeating the enemy and saving His people.

### ***Missional Application***

God calls us to live on mission for His kingdom because we know that God is victorious over His enemies.

Date of My Bible Study: \_\_\_\_\_

## Session Plan

# God Reveals the Coming Victory

### Introduction Option

As group members arrive, hand out a sheet of paper with the names mentioned in the leader-only content (leader p. 70). (A handout with these names is available on the DVD in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*.)

Ask group members to fill out characteristics that go with each name, based on their knowledge or opinion, and then to group up and share their conclusions.

### Pack Item 6: My Father's World

Ask groups of 3-4 to discuss the following questions in light of the quote from the hymn (consider writing them on a board or sheet of paper for groups to have; also available on the DVD in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*):

- How are we to make sense of “God [being] the Ruler yet” when Satan currently functions as the ruler of this world?
- If this is indeed “My Father’s World,” then how should we live in it, and how should we approach God in our trials and sufferings?

### Introduction

Comment on the value of a name and how names can shape what others think about us and at times misrepresent our identities. Nevertheless, names are important, and God is intentional about His name (leader p. 70; PSG p. 55).

- ❓ What is the first reality you think of when someone mentions God or Jesus?
- ❓ How will our understanding of who God is shape the way we live?

Summarize the session, noting that God’s glory reveals the certainty with which we can receive His promises (leader p. 71; PSG p. 56).

## 1. The kingdoms of this world rise up and oppose God’s people (2 Kings 19:8-13).

*Reference Pack Item 2: The Divided Kingdom Map and Pack Item 10: The Divided Kingdom to help set the context for this session: Assyria has conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel (722 B.C.) and has now set its sights on Judah and Jerusalem.* Read 2 Kings 19:8-13. Point out how the temptation, trials, and suffering within this historical narrative of Israel are similar to what we face today. Then explain the two main reasons it is difficult for Christians to walk as children of God in this world (leader pp. 71-73; PSG pp. 56-57):

- **Satan is the ruler of this world.** See the sidebar for instructions on how to make use of **Pack Item 6: My Father’s World** here.

- ❓ What are some ways Satan is wreaking havoc in the world today, and how should Christians respond?

- **Your trials are not always about you.**

- ❓ What is your first reaction whenever bad things happen in your life?

- ❓ How will seeing hardship through the lens of God’s glory change how you handle life’s challenges?

## 2. God's people ask God to save them and exalt His name (2 Kings 19:14-19).

Set up the text by describing the pressure Hezekiah must have felt (leader p. 73). Then ask a volunteer to read 2 Kings 19:14-19. Highlight Hezekiah's desire for the glory of God's name and the prerequisite confidence for this approach in prayer—God's glory is practically beneficial in our lives (leader pp. 73-74; PSG pp. 58-59).

- What do these verses teach us about prayer?
- How should we approach God with our requests?

Say that when our understanding of life's purpose is centered on God rather than ourselves, our focus is free to shift to making His name known (leader p. 74; PSG p. 59).

- How do we personally benefit when God makes His glory known?

## 3. God is victorious for the sake of His name and His people (2 Kings 19:20,32-37).

Read 2 Kings 19:20,32-37. Emphasize that God is willing to hear us when we cry out to Him and also willing to intervene on our behalf for His glory. Then recount God's faithfulness to His name and His word for the sake of His people (leader p. 75; PSG p. 60).

- Why is the Lord eager to be victorious for His people?
- What does this tell us about His love for us, and His desire to see His name exalted?

Comment on the following principles drawn from this Scriptural account (leader pp. 76-77; PSG p. 61):

- God is motivated by His character and glory.**
- God is motivated by love and compassion for His people.**

- What problems arise when we focus solely on God's desire to receive glory (apart from His compassion)?
- What problems arise when we focus solely on God's compassion (apart from His desire for glory)?

## Conclusion

Close by differentiating between God's pursuit of His own glory and the narcissistic fallenness seen in humanity. Stress the reasons that the children of God should live to make God's name known (leader p. 77; PSG p. 62). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission" (PSG p. 63).*

## ? For Further Discussion

Why might it be difficult for us to grasp that God desires His own glory?

How can we reorient ourselves to understand God's glory as of supreme importance in our lives?

## Conclusion Option

Consider concluding this session by singing the hymn "This Is My Father's World" together as a group as an affirmation of God's authority demonstrated in His victory over the Assyrians.

(A printable PDF of this hymn is available on the DVD in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*. Make as many copies as needed.)

**Christ Connection:** Hezekiah prayed for God to manifest His glory by saving His people from the pagan kingdom that was rising against them. God exalted His name by answering Hezekiah's prayer. Jesus also prayed for the salvation of His people, and through His death and resurrection, He accomplished the ultimate manifestation of God's glory through defeating the enemy and saving His people.

**Missional Application:** God calls us to live on mission for His kingdom because we know that God is victorious over His enemies.

## Expanded Session Content

# God Reveals the Coming Victory

### Voices from the Church

“Isn’t it interesting that God gave us only ten commandments and one of them focused on His name? The commandment means more than avoiding using God’s name in a slang or profane way. It means that those who are in relationship with Him must honor His name in their lives. The name of God has to do with character, and when we live in covenant relationship with Him, we become accountable for reflecting His character.”<sup>1</sup>

—Ken Hemphill



## Introduction

Names always tell us something. For good or bad, whenever you hear a name, you usually have an image of something that is associated with that name. Songs like Johnny Cash’s “A Boy Named Sue” humorously illustrate the discomfort that comes when a person’s name does not accurately reflect his or her identity. Perhaps this is why every parent labors over the right name when they welcome a new child into the world. Sometimes we even give nicknames to others because certain actions seem to mark them for life.

To be called “Honest Abe” leaves us pleased, but to be labeled a “Benedict” will likely lead to our protest. In the world of sports, it’s a badge of honor to be pegged as “The Mailman,” “The Iron Horse,” “Primetime,” or “The Great One.” There might have been a time when being called “The Juice” made you smile, but actions off the field leave no one wanting that label today.

Even in the church, we’d much prefer to be considered a Barnabas over a Doubting Thomas. To be called a Paul often means you’re a mentor, while wearing the designation of Timothy makes you a learner. If someone marks you as John the Baptist, it likely means you’re prone to speak your mind, but if people associate you with Judas, it means you cannot be trusted. To be singled out as an Abraham likely means you are a person of great faith, while resembling his son Jacob leaves you designated as a deceiver. Names are powerful precisely because they communicate ideas about those whom they identify.

Perhaps this is why God is so intentional about His name. Admittedly, speaking of God means different things for various people, but when understood correctly, the name of God uncovers multiple reasons for worshipping Him. Not only do we benefit from understanding all that God’s name entails but also from making His name known to others.

-  What is the first thing you think of when someone mentions God or Jesus?
-  How will our understanding of who God is shape the way we live?

## Session Summary

In this session, we will learn how God's glory is personally beneficial to those who follow Him. Understanding God's glory reveals the certainty with which we can receive His promises. There is never a dichotomy between displaying God's greatness and resting in His love. The ancient story of Assyria's calloused threats against Judah during the reign of King Hezekiah illustrates that God saves us for the glory of His name and for our good. We, in turn, make known His glory so that others will rest in His grace.

## 1. The kingdoms of this world rise up and oppose God's people (2 Kings 19:8-13).

Because we live in a fallen world, pain and suffering are far too common. Even worse, most people today resist God despite His willingness to bring peace and relief from the calamities around us. The closer our walk with God, the more likely we will be shunned in the world too.

Judah's experience under the leadership of Hezekiah helps us to respond correctly when the world rises up against God's people today.

*<sup>8</sup> The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he heard that the king had left Lachish. <sup>9</sup> Now the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, "Behold, he has set out to fight against you." So he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, <sup>10</sup> "Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. <sup>11</sup> Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? <sup>12</sup> Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? <sup>13</sup> Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"*

At first glance, the subjects of temptation, trials, or suffering do not seem obvious within this historical narrative of Judah. A closer look, however, reveals that many of the challenges disciples of Christ face today follow the same pattern found within these verses.

But why is it so difficult to walk as a child of God in a contemporary world? Why do the kingdoms of earth rise up against the people of God? There are two things to keep in mind:

## Further Commentary

"Rabshakeh" is a title rather than a personal name. One author defined the position as: "High Assyrian official, originally a cupbearer or chamberlain, but later a powerful palace official. The Rabshakeh was the emissary of Sennacherib, who insultingly demanded that Hezekiah and Jerusalem abandon their reliance on both Egypt and God and surrender to Assyria."<sup>2</sup>

## Further Commentary

"Rabshaken again warned 'Hezekiah,' and again the message dealt with overwhelming Assyrian power. The warning was supported by a list of conquered peoples whose gods had not helped them: 'Gozan,' on the Habor tributary of the Euphrates River near 'Haran'; 'Rezeph' northeast of Hamath on the trade route to the Euphrates; the 'Edenites' (sometimes identified with Aramean kingdom, Bit Adini, conquered by Assyria ca 855 B.C.), who like 'Telassar' are unknown; 'Hamath,' almost directly north of Damascus; 'Arpad,' near the site of modern Aleppo; 'Sepharvaim' and 'Hena,' whose locations are unknown; and finally 'Ivvah,' probably identical with Avva (17:31), whose gods are named but whose location is unknown. All of these sights were roughly on Assyria's approach to Palestine."<sup>3</sup>

—Andrew C. Bowling,  
*HCSB Study Bible*



## Voices from Church History

“This is my Father’s world,  
O let me ne’er forget That  
though the wrong seems  
oft so strong, God is the  
Ruler yet.”<sup>4</sup>

—Maltbie D. Babcock  
(1858-1901)

### **Satan is the ruler of this world.**

First, Satan has a limited source of power in this world. Since the garden of Eden, a war has been raging between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). Because creation has been subjected to sin, Satan temporarily functions as “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4) and the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2).

Consequently, the world is a domain over which the Devil exercises great, albeit temporary, power (1 John 5:18). Though Christ came to reestablish what Adam lost in the garden by means of a new heaven and a new earth, for now, Satan continues to wreak havoc in the world, primarily against the people of God.



What are some ways Satan is wreaking havoc in the world today, and how should Christians respond?

### **Your trials are not always about you.**

Second, seeing the backdrop to evil in the world helps us understand that every hardship and suffering we face is not necessarily about us. Granted, Satan walks around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). He is the serpent of old, anxious to accuse the family of God (Rev. 12:10). But his attacks are also part of a much larger war that is not primarily about the single individuals affected by the hardships created.

When Assyria came against Hezekiah and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, the primary target was “your God in whom you trust” (19:10). By listing other nations and the false gods who were unable to save them, the servants of Assyria were satanic tools used to mock the name of Yahweh by lumping Him in the same category (19:12). Through these mouthpieces, Satan mocked the notion that God was able to deliver His people (see 18:22-24). He even suggested that the pagan gods of surrounding countries approved and commissioned the attack due to Hezekiah’s efforts to reestablish the worship of Yahweh as the only true God (18:25).

Ultimately, this is why the kingdoms of the world rise up against God’s people. It is not because we are significant. Nor is it because our happiness or lack thereof can alter the course of the ancient war between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. God’s people are mocked, tempted, targeted, and persecuted in order to call God’s name into question. Our lives are a battleground for God’s glory, and Satan is anxious to prove that the God we serve is no different than the false gods of dead religions.

When trials or persecutions come, the Evil One screams, “You cannot trust God!” When temptation fights for our loyalty, the serpent hisses, “God cannot really make you happy!” When the world mocks Christians, the old dragon roars, “A loving father would not allow His children to be treated like this!” These things may hurt us deeply, but tearing us down is not usually the main goal. The kingdoms of this world rise up and oppose God’s people in order to mock God’s kingdom and His rulership over it.

- What is your first reaction whenever bad things happen in your life?
- How will seeing hardship through the lens of God’s glory change how you handle life’s challenges?

## 2. God’s people ask God to save them and exalt His name (2 Kings 19:14-19).

Can you imagine the pressure that Hezekiah must have felt? Despite his efforts to honor the commandments of the Lord, he found himself in a desperate situation with no apparent solution. Unless God intervened, certain destruction awaited Judah. But notice how Hezekiah responded to the hopelessness he faced.

*<sup>14</sup> Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said: “O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup> Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. <sup>17</sup> Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands <sup>18</sup> and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. <sup>19</sup> So now, O LORD our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone.”*

Unlike those who came before him, Hezekiah was a righteous king who feared the Lord. Previously during his reign, he led Judah to tear down pagan altars that offered tribute and worship to false gods. The pressure from Sennacherib, king of Assyria, now forced Hezekiah to depend fully on the true God’s power for deliverance. He had already sought the counsel of Isaiah the prophet (19:5-7) and was assured of God’s deliverance. Now Hezekiah put his faith into practice by taking the Assyrian threats to the temple and calling out to the Lord in prayer.

### Further Commentary

“Hezekiah, unlike his father, Ahaz, trusted the Lord throughout his reign (715-686 B.C.) and introduced radical reforms by removing the high places, destroying idolatrous symbols, and centralizing worship in Jerusalem. Although he inherited vassal status from Ahaz, Hezekiah rebelled against Sargon (see Isa. 20:1) and his successor Sennacherib. The sacred historian gave Hezekiah the highest commendation (2 Kings 18:5).”<sup>5</sup>

—Kenneth A. Mathews

### Voices from the Church

“When we pray, we are speaking to the One whose eternal purposes and designs are unfolding as our present realities. In order to find hope in them, we must seek *Him* and *His* perspective.”<sup>6</sup>

—Nicolas Ellen and Jeremy Lelek

## Voices from the Church

“Clearly, Hezekiah wants freedom for himself and for his people, yet he never loses sight of Israel’s responsibility to bring recognition and glory to their Lord.”<sup>7</sup>

—Paul R. House

## 99 Essential Christian Doctrines



### 24. God’s Glory

The glory of God is His manifest work, the way He represents His perfect character through His activity. It also refers to His excellent reputation and is given as one of the reasons we are to praise His name. Another sense of the word is the inherent beauty of God, the unbearable brightness and beauty of His being as He radiates His own attributes and characteristics for all to witness. The Scriptures speak of humanity as having “fallen short” of God’s glory (Rom. 3:23) because we have rejected the purpose for which God created us—to glorify Him.

Obviously, Hezekiah asked the Lord for the salvation of Judah (19:19). But note also the strong emphasis on the integrity of God’s name. Divided into three parts, his prayer magnified the power of God, stated the problem facing the nation, and then appealed directly to God for help.

Angered by the fact that Sennacherib mocked the living God (19:17), Hezekiah desired all the kingdoms of the earth to know there is but one true God (19:19). Contrary to the pagan nations that fell to Assyria previously, Israel’s God was not made of wood or stone. The king was eager for the exaltation of his God as much as he was the deliverance of his people.

Prerequisite to this approach is the confidence that God’s personal glory will be practically beneficial in our lives. We pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10), precisely because of our conviction that nothing is more satisfying than making God’s name known through the growth of His kingdom. Like a lighthouse that leads those under its brightness to safety, God intentionally draws attention to Himself because salvation and abundant life are impossible apart from the light of His goodness. There is never a dichotomy between the provision we need and the glory that God deserves. When God promotes His glory, it results in the good of His people.

-  What do these verses teach us about prayer?
-  How should we approach God with our requests?

We should always ask, in every situation and circumstance, what response will allow us to celebrate that there is only one true God over heaven and earth and that we are fully dependent on Him. When we pray, we are seeking first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33).

When our understanding of life’s purpose is centered on God rather than ourselves, our focus is free to shift away from receiving gifts from the Lord to simply making His name known. Like Hezekiah, we should seek the Lord’s activity in our lives as a testimony to His goodness and grace. Our ambition, above all else, is to bless the name of the Lord forever (Dan. 2:20).

-  How do we personally benefit when God makes His glory known?



### 3. God is victorious for the sake of His name and His people (2 Kings 19:20,32-37).

<sup>20</sup> *Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Your prayer to me about Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.*

The response Hezekiah received from the Lord is a reminder that God is eager to hear us when we pray with a kingdom agenda. Not only is God willing to hear us when we cry out to Him, He is also willing to intervene on our behalf for the sake of His name.

<sup>32</sup> *“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. <sup>33</sup> By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. <sup>34</sup> For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”*

<sup>35</sup> *And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. <sup>36</sup> Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went home and lived at Nineveh. <sup>37</sup> And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.*



With their backs against the wall, the only hope for Judah’s victory over Assyria was the unilateral action of God. Then, just as Isaiah predicted (19:7), Sennacherib fell in defeat as God fought to preserve His people. Tied to His promises to David (19:34), God eagerly protected those who belonged to Him. The sudden death of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (19:35) not only speaks of God’s power but also His relentless determination to take care of His own. Whether it’s the execution of a multitude or the execution of His own Son, God stands ready to do whatever is necessary to save those who humbly seek the kingdom of heaven.

#### Further Commentary

“When the Lord delivers in this way, he does so to make known his own greatness (19:19), for his own sake, and for the sake of the promises he made to David (19:34). At first glance this might seem selfish, but it is really great news for the family of God as its members encounter trials and difficulties in life. As the adopted children of the living God, we also bear his name and exult in his greatness. Since we are united to Christ, the true and better David (cf. Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 22:16), we share in the promises to God’s people. By God’s grace, because we bear his name and have received his promises, we can be assured of his great salvation.”<sup>8</sup>

—Miles Van Pelt,  
*Gospel Transformation Bible*

#### Further Commentary

“Some twenty years later (681 B.C.), two of Sennacherib’s own sons assassinated him and successfully escaped to Urartu. Another son, Esarhaddon (686–681), succeeded Sennacherib as king. The last vestige of the divine prophecy stood complete. While God’s program may seem to tarry (cf. 2 Pet. 3:4–9), it will be accomplished. The mills of God grind slowly but exceedingly fine.”<sup>9</sup>

—R. D. Patterson  
and Hermann J. Austel

## Voices from the Church

“The Christian vision that feeds battle-winning prayer is not the imagining of a possibility but the grasping of an inevitability, namely, the triumph of God in world evangelization.”<sup>10</sup>


—John Piper

## Further Commentary

“One of the most striking [archaeological] discoveries [pertaining to King Hezekiah’s reign] is present among Sennacherib’s annals, which were typically recorded on cylinders or “prisms.” One such prism, now called the Oriental Institute Prism, mentions Sennacherib’s ruthless razing of 46 of the cities of Judah, taking 200,150 captives, and confining Hezekiah the Judean king in Jerusalem ‘like a caged bird.’ Afterwards, Sennacherib forced the humiliated Hezekiah to pay a heavy tribute. For Assyrian annals to mention Hezekiah in this way is actually quite striking. Uncharacteristically, the annals do not boast that Sennacherib conquered Jerusalem, as all sources—even those from the Assyrians—agree that Jerusalem was spared. Other cities of Judah were not so lucky. An Assyrian wall relief from the seventh century B.C. graphically portrays the fall of Lachish, one of Judah’s strongholds, with depictions of Assyrian soldiers taking the Judean people away into captivity after plundering the city and burning it to the ground.”<sup>11</sup>

—Jeff S. Anderson,  
*Biblical Illustrator*

 Why is the Lord eager to be victorious for His people?

 What does this tell us about His love for us and His desire to see His name exalted?

### **God is motivated by His character and glory.**

The glory of God is not only a revelation of His power but also a reflection of His unwavering character and trustworthiness. By connecting the protection God provided in these verses to the promises He previously made to David (cf. 2 Samuel 7), failure to act would have violated the character and trustworthiness of the Lord. Once established, God guaranteed that the throne of David would continue perpetually through the Messiah. Until then, the preservation of His people was a means to fulfill His promise. This is the same God who promised a Redeemer in the garden of Eden, and His intention was no different here. God’s name is tied to His conduct, which was, and is, impeccable.

Now that Christ has fulfilled the promises that God made to David by establishing the eternal throne of His kingdom (Luke 1:30-33), all who are in Christ should anticipate the same allegiance from God that Old Testament Jews enjoyed because of their heroic king. Just as the kingship of David guaranteed the preservation of Israel, so also the kingship of Jesus assures us that we are eternally secure in Him. Because of His sacrificial death on the cross, God the Father gave Christ the Son a name that is above all other names so that God’s magnificent glory will be eternally manifested through Him (Phil. 2:9-11). God will never forsake those who belong to Christ because doing so would violate the sacrifice of Calvary. God the Father eagerly keeps His promise to provide eternal life for His people because of the glory that He has assured the Son.

### **God is motivated by love and compassion for His people.**

A strong emphasis on God’s pursuit of personal glory might tempt us to doubt His compassion toward us. Thus, it is helpful to understand God’s love and compassion as a *complement* to rather than a *contradiction* of His character. Because compassion toward His people is the ultimate expression of His glory, we need never fear God’s unwavering commitment to us. He is love (1 John 4:8), and therefore, He is eager to lavish us with His affection (Deut. 7:7-8). We can be certain that He delights in us (Zeph. 3:17) so profoundly that even the angels in heaven take notice of His elaborate gift of grace (1 Pet. 1:10-12).

Though the work of redemption accomplished God's glory in a unique way, it was never just a calloused calculation void of intentionally directed love. The work of the cross leaves no room for doubt concerning God's relentless love and compassion (John 15:13), and the notion that we can be called the children of God is staggering (1 John 3:1). God the Father not only longs for Christ to dwell in our hearts through faith but also that we fully comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of His great love for us (Eph. 3:17-19).

- ❓ What problems arise when we focus solely on God's desire to receive glory (apart from His compassion)?
- ❓ What problems arise when we focus solely on God's compassion (apart from His desire for glory)?

## Conclusion

Admittedly, we don't enjoy being around people who live for themselves to the neglect of others. God's pursuit of His glory, however, is fundamentally different from the narcissistic fallenness that plagues so much of humanity. Because no person or thing is more glorious than God, a failure to promote Himself would be idolatrous. In addition, because God embodies love (1 John 4:16) with a nature that is good (Jas. 1:13), magnifying His glory is universally beneficial for all people, especially those who are born again.

For these reasons, the children of God should live to make God's name known rather than for the advancement of their desires or agendas. God does not exist for us; we exist for Him. Because we are created for God's glory (Isa. 43:7), aligning ourselves to this purpose brings freedom, peace, and joy. When self-preservation dies, our lives become beacons of glory that point back to the One who is more glorious than any other (Matt. 5:16).

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Hezekiah prayed for God to manifest His glory by saving His people from the pagan kingdom that was rising against them. God exalted His name by answering Hezekiah's prayer. Jesus also prayed for the salvation of His people, and through His death and resurrection, He accomplished the ultimate manifestation of God's glory through defeating the enemy and saving His people.

## Voices from the Church

"Those who deserve the judgment of God have become the recipients of his delight. He doesn't just tolerate forgiven sinners. We who have trusted Christ fill His heart with gladness. He hasn't just made room for us in heaven; he has made room for us in his joyful heart."<sup>12</sup>

—Scotty Smith

## Additional Resources

# God Reveals the Coming Victory

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Grow with other group leaders at the Group Ministry blog at [LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry](http://LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry).

## Study Material

- “Awakenings in America: Seasons of the Spirit”—Article in *Christianity Today*; find a link to this article at [GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources](http://GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources)
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including “Hezekiah, King of Judah,” can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at [LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator](http://LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator). Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

## Sermon Podcast

Christopher Ash: “The Enemy at the Gates”

Find a link to this at [GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources](http://GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources)

## Tip of the Week

### A Tool, Not a Taskmaster

“Creative teaching is a process in which [group members] are vitally involved. Often in this process, ideas are developed and needs revealed that no writer can plan for, nor teacher predict. The teacher has to feel free in such cases to respond to the lead of his class and, when appropriate, modify his plan in order to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This may mean shortening some learning activities, adding unplanned ones, and eliminating some that were planned. This kind of freedom just isn’t possible for the teacher who relies completely on printed materials.”<sup>13</sup>