

Glory

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, March 31, 2024
PASSAGES	Matthew 28; 2 Timothy 1; 1 Peter 5; Romans 8; John 17; 2 Corinthians 3; 2 Peter 1; 1 Corinthians 15
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:08:50 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

We usually preach Easter from our side of the ledger — we are forgiven, we are given new life. Matt asked the other question: what does *God* get out of it? What has he been after all this time? The answer running through the whole Bible is that he means to bring us into his own glory, as children and heirs, and that he intends to reward every small thing given to him along the way.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ The women left the empty tomb with “fear and great joy.” Those are the two responses the resurrection is supposed to produce, and pastel colors and an egg hunt will not produce either one.
- ◆ Paul says God saved us “because of his own purpose” — not because he ran out of options and not because we stumbled into it. There is an ancient plan here, and it is his.
- ◆ God does not need butlers, and he does not need a bigger choir. Angels would do both jobs better. He made us for something he did not need.
- ◆ Jesus promises a reward for a cup of water given because you belong to him. That is the disposition of the one who saved us: he is looking for reasons to give.
- ◆ “Called to his eternal glory” is not filler. It is the destination, and Peter puts it in the same breath as suffering and restoration.
- ◆ God will never share his unique identity — “my glory I give to no other” — and yet Jesus says the glory the Father gave him he has given to us. Both are true, and the second one is not smaller for the first being true.

- ◆ Refusing what God wants to give you is not humility. Taking the janitor's closet in heaven is not the modest option; it is a way of not receiving.
- ◆ Everything you give him in this life is worth it — but the reward is not the point. The point is walking with him.

► 1:08:50

Easter Sunday at Hope began with a bare cross at the front of the room and buckets of flowers along the aisles, the congregation invited to come and cover the wood while the band played — and, before that, with Job's confession read aloud by a man who could barely get through it: "I know that my Redeemer lives." Matt came up with a sore throat and a helper. Michael read every passage in the message aloud, which Matt hoped would not be a distraction but the opposite — God highlighting the main points "through two witnesses instead of one."

The question underneath the empty tomb

► 1:10:13

"But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.'"

MATTHEW 28:5-6 ↗

The detail Matt wanted the room to sit with is what the women carried away from that graveyard: they ran "with fear and great joy." Both at once. "A lot of us wear pastel colors and look for eggs," he said. "We celebrate new chapters in our lives. Does that fill you with fear and great joy?" Many people suspect there is something deeper going on and cannot name it. There is. And the way in, Matt argued, is to stop asking only what we receive and ask what God's heart's burning desire is — "what does he get out of it?"

Three things hidden in one sentence of Paul's

► 1:12:44

“...who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

2 TIMOTHY 1:9-10 /

Three things, in order. Christ *abolished death* and brought immortality to light. He called us to a *holy calling* — “something beyond recycling and planting trees,” Matt said, something you have to be called into rather than something you stumble upon. And he did it *because of his own purpose*. Not ours. “He’s scheming something,” Matt said, “and he has been for a long time.” The rest of the message was an attempt to say what.

Why make us at all?

► 1:14:10

Genesis tells us we are made in God’s image without ever telling us precisely what that means. So Matt worked at it from the other direction — by ruling out the reasons God did not do it. “God has no need of more butlers, or any butlers at all,” he said. If he wanted fetching done, his ministering spirits of flame and fire and wind are better staff than we are. Does he need a bigger choir? “Some of us sing off key anyway.” Does he need to be told how great he is? He knows. Paul settled it in Athens: God is not served by human hands, as though he needed anything.

What is left, when the useful explanations are gone, is a capacity we have that the animals do not: we can understand glory, and we can ache for it. “You long to see God and his glory,” Matt said, “and he longs for you to walk in it with him.” Food and drink grow boring in this life. Heaven is not more of the same, upgraded.

He intends to reward a cup of water

► 1:16:38

Before answering the why, Matt had Michael read a passage that lands sideways at first — “the one who is not against us is for us” — and said so himself: “It doesn’t seem relevant yet, but it will.” Then came the line he was after, one of Jesus’ stranger promises: “whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.” “Jesus plans to reward us richly for teeny tiny things,” he said — for handing someone a drink. “This goes back to the heart and soul of why he saved us. He earnestly desires to reward us even for the small

stuff that he still doesn't need, by the way." That tells you something about the character behind the plan. He is looking for reasons to give.

Called to his eternal glory

► 1:18:40

Michael read from the top of the paragraph, so the promise arrived with its context still attached: an adversary prowling "like a roaring lion," and "the same kinds of suffering... being experienced by your brotherh Glory, in Peter, is not offered instead of suffering. It comes on the far side of it — "after you have suffered a little while."

"And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

1 PETER 5:10 ↗

Restore, confirm, strengthen, establish — Matt noted there will be a great deal in us needing restoration when we finally see him. But the phrase he did not want anyone skimming past is the one in the middle. "He has called you to his eternal glory. That's not just religious gobbledygook Peter throws in because he wanted his letter to be longer." The death and resurrection of Jesus go far past the good-cop-bad-cop question of whether we are in trouble. We are forgiven, yes. We are also invited into communion with God.

► 1:19:25

Then he put the guardrail up himself, before anyone could run the wrong way with it. "This is not a new-agey self-affirmation that we're going to discover that we're all the divine light. No, no — I'm not saying that. And God's not here to affirm and glorify everything we do." The loyalty is still required: "We indeed lay aside the deeds of darkness and pledge in every temptation to battle against sin and to express our loyalty to Jesus in new ways." But well past that struggle is a work of Jesus that "washes us clean, sets us free, and transforms us" — a calling that, Matt said, if we understood it thoroughly, would blow our minds.

Heirs — and the tension that comes with the word

► 1:20:56

“The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

ROMANS 8:16–17 ↗

“Does this not astound you?” Matt asked. “This is a passage you could dwell on for hours.” He was candid about the tension in it, and named the verse that creates it before anyone else could: “my glory I give to no other.” We are not being folded into God’s unique identity. There is no one like the Lord and there never will be. And yet:

▶ 1:22:31

“The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

JOHN 17:22–23 ↗

Jesus is not confused about the difference, and neither should we be — “that they may be one” is a purpose statement, Matt said, “it’s not the identity of it.” But there is some high order of glory he gives the church, deliberately. “You are not called into a club of do-gooders,” Matt said. “You are called into his bride, which he plans to present to his Son radiant and glorious. And I know that you long for that, because that’s how God made you.”

From one degree of glory to another

▶ 1:24:06

Michael read the run-up as well as the famous verse, and the run-up matters: the veil that lies over the heart whenever Moses is read, and what happens when it lifts — “when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed... and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” Transformation starts with an uncovered face.

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 ↗

► 1:25:27

This, Matt said, is the project — the secret plan from ages ago. And he turned it directly on anyone in the room who had walked with Christ, stumbled, and drifted: the invitation is not God in his office checking whether he has any forgiveness left over from last month. “He’s the one beckoning you.” Which is also why refusing the gift is not the pious move it feels like. “You might think it’s really spiritual to say, ‘Oh no, Lord, I’ll just take the janitor’s closet in heaven, I’ll just be in the back eating the crumbs’ — as if that’s humble. Receive what your Father wants to give you.” The chain in [Romans 8:28–30](#) runs the same direction and ends in the same place: foreknew, predestined, called, justified, *glorified* — and verse 28 says it happens according to *his* purpose.

► 1:26:22

The middle link of that chain is where the question Matt opened with finally gets its answer. We are predestined “to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” That is what God gets out of it: “to create for himself a precious possession, that we would be conformed into the image of his Son, for his own good pleasure.” And Matt refused the charge of proof texting before it could be made — “this isn’t just tucked away into one verse that I’m taking out of context; this is all over.” The destination has a name: “You are called to join into the very body of Jesus, which we also sometimes refer to as the church, or the bride of Christ — radiant, stunning.”

Partakers, not spectators

► 1:28:28

“...through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”

2 PETER 1:3–4 ↗

Partakers. Not admirers at a distance. And the route is not a technique — Matt leaned on the first phrase: “It’s all through the knowledge of him, through us communing with him and knowing him.” He then traced how that participation is actually delivered, and it runs through blood. [Leviticus 17:11](#) says the life of a creature is in its blood, which is why blood made atonement on the altar. So when Jesus gives us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, he is giving us his own life — “allowing us participation into his very self in the deepest of ways.” It is the same logic under baptism: [united with him in a death like his](#), [united with him in a resurrection like his](#), and the same logic under

the command to put off the old self and put on the new. Matt was honest about how it lands: “This seems too good to be true.” He prayed for the Spirit to come in power, because he did not think we would believe it otherwise.

Sown in dishonor, raised in glory

► 1:33:04

“What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”

1 CORINTHIANS 15:42-44 ↗

Paul spends the verses before this cataloguing glories — sun, moon, stars, one differing from another — before applying the word to bodies that get buried. Matt read the dishonor and weakness as ours right now: short lives, tired lives, frustrated lives, hoping at some level to belong to something significant. “You feel like there is more out there because there is more. You have been called into the very family of God, which is scandalous beyond description.” The analogies Scripture reaches for are the most intimate ones available — father to child, bride to groom. Matt was careful to say those are the Bible’s pictures, not his.

► 1:34:17

“One more, Michael” — and Michael kept going to the end of Paul’s argument, where the two bodies get names:

“The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit... as was the man of dust, so a
We have borne the first image already, without ever choosing it. The promise of Easter is that we will bear the other one. The reading ended where the argument ends: “Thanks be to God.”

What to remember on Monday

► 1:35:48

“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

1 JOHN 3:2 ↗

So “in the midst of madness and pain in this life — troubles, persecutions, fear, loss,” Matt said, remember what you have been called into, and remember that “there’s nothing quite like the return on investment for everything you give to him in this life.” Remember it while you fight sin, resist temptation, walk in godliness, grow weary, spend yourself on his callings. “He intends to reward you abundantly, like you’ve never seen ever happen on this planet — but even more than that, he desires to walk with you in intimacy and in glory.”

The desire for dignity and belonging did not come from nowhere, and it is not a futile hope, “because he will satisfy that desire. He gave you that desire to walk in dignity — a place of respect, a place of belonging. Your heart will be filled of it more than you can even predict.” Which is why the arithmetic comes out the way it does: “Everything you give him in this life is worth it, and beyond — well worth it.” Matt closed short and hoarse: “With a mighty arm and outstretched hand, help us believe you. Fill our hearts with hope.”

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- Job 19:25–27
- Matthew 28:5–6
- Matthew 28:8
- 2 Timothy 1:9–10
- Genesis 1:27
- Acts 17:25
- Mark 9:39–40
- Mark 9:41
- 1 Peter 5:8–9
- 1 Peter 5:10
- Romans 8:16–17
- Isaiah 42:8
- John 17:22–23
- 2 Corinthians 3:16–17
- 2 Corinthians 3:18
- Romans 8:28–30
- 2 Peter 1:3–4
- Leviticus 17:11
- Romans 6:3–5
- Ephesians 4:22–24
- 1 Corinthians 15:42–44
- 1 Corinthians 15:45–49
- 1 John 3:2

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Matt asked what God gets out of his own mission. Before hearing this message, how would you have answered that question?
2. The women left the tomb with fear and great joy. Which of those two is thinner in you on an ordinary Sunday, and what has thinned it?
3. Matt said we long for glory because God put the longing in us. Where does that longing surface in your life, and where have you talked yourself out of it?
4. Where are you taking the janitor's closet — refusing something God wants to give you because refusing feels more humble than receiving?
5. Jesus promises a reward for a cup of water. What is one small thing you could give him this week, and what changes if you actually believe he intends to reward it?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlBjoecwtk&t=4130s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.