

SERMON NOTES

A. Analysis of the Text:

1. Objective 1: I am to **A**_____ in Christ
 - a. checkpoint 1: is my life directed by Christ's **T**_____?
 - b. checkpoint 2: are my prayers attuned to God's **W**_____?
2. Objective 2: I prove to be Christ's **D**_____
 - a. checkpoint: am I **B**_____ much **F**_____?
3. Ultimate purpose: that I **G**_____ God.
4. Throughout His ministry, the purpose of Jesus the Son of God was to (John 12:28, 13:31, 14:13) ...
5. Out purposes should be (1 Corinthians 10:31) ...

B. Westminster Shorter Catechism

1. Question 1: What is the chief end of man?
2. Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, {a} and to enjoy him forever. {b}
3. Supporting verses
 - a. {a} Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 60:21; Romans 11:36; I Corinthians 6:20; 10:31; Revelation 4:11
 - b. {b} Psalm 16:5-11; 144:15; Isaiah 12:2; Luke 2:10; Philippians 4:4; Revelation 21:3-4
4. *for study on your own:*
 - a. Do these verses show this to be a valid answer?
 - b. What does it mean to "enjoy God" in the light of these verses?

C. What does it mean to glorify God?

1. primary meaning of the word "glorify" is
 - a. can we actually do this to God? Why or why not?
2. secondary meaning of word "glorify" is ...
 - a. Psalm 29:2a explains it as ...

D. Objective One:

1. checkpoint one: the test of this is (John 8:31, 14:15, 14:23, James 1:22, John 13:35):
 - a. such Christians can (1 Corinthians 3:16) have ...
2. checkpoint two: the test of this is:
 - a. reasons for unanswered prayer
 - (A) 1 Peter 3:7
 - (B) Isaiah 1:15
 - (C) James 1:6-7
 - (D) James 4:3

E. Objective Two:

1. checkpoint or test for this is
 - a. includes (Galatians 5:22–23) the **F**_____ of the **S**_____
 - b. but also in other aspects of Christian life such as service
 - c. requires that we realize that this is not from our own human effort but (Philippians 2:13) ...

—{1}. **John 15:7–8** **To the Glory of God**

A. Our text this morning reads

1. John 15: 7–8 (NAS): *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.*
 - a. with these verses we are ending our short series in looking at the Vine (Christ) and the branches (Christians) as found in John 15
 - b. Carlos will be preaching next Sunday
 - c. then we will have a short series for Advent, on the theme found on our parade float, “born to be a Saviour” looking at the incarnation of the Son of God into the world as the pivotal event in God’s eternal purpose of salvation

2. but this morning

- a. in these two verses we see that for the Christian there are
 - (1) some objectives that are immediate targets
 - (2) checkpoints to ascertain if these are met(A) objective one: I am to abide in Christ
 - (1) checkpoints:
 - (a) is my life directed by Christ’s teaching?
 - (b) are my prayers so attuned to God’s will that they are invariably answered?(B) objective two: I prove to be Christ’s disciple (ie., not merely in name, but in reality)
 - (1) checkpoint: am I bearing much fruit?
- b. but we also find in them our ultimate purpose: to glorify God the Father
- c. here’s an interesting thought as voiced by John Piper *“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. Missions is a temporary necessity but worship abides forever. Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal of missions.”* —{2}. — that’s something for you to think about this week.
- d. throughout His ministry on earth Jesus’ purpose as God the Son was to glorify His Father
 - (A) John 12:28 (NAS): *“Father, glorify Thy name.” There came therefore a voice out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”*

- (B) John 13:31 (NAS): *When therefore he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him"*
- (C) John 14:13 (NAS): *"And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*

3. this too, is our ultimate purpose, as we walk on a daily basis with our Lord Jesus Christ, to seek in whatever we do, to do it all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)

B. Westminster Shorter Catechism

1. if you grew up in the Presbyterian church

- a. you would have spent time in Sunday School learning the questions and answers from this catechism
- b. these questions are not questions of fact, such as
 - (A) What were the names of the twelve disciples? or,
 - (B) How many loaves and fishes did the boy have?
- c. but questions of a more profound nature

2. this catechism was completed in 1647 by the Westminster Assembly and continues to serve as part of the doctrinal standards of many Presbyterian churches; to it have been added in recent years a list of verses supporting the answer

3. Now the first question in that catechism you may know

- a. **Question: What is the chief end of man?**
- b. **Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, {a} and to enjoy him for ever. {b}**
- c. you will find this and the verses in your handout and you can check for yourselves see how good is the answer (as well as find out what they meant by "enjoying God")
- d. now, when you stop and think about it, this first question in the catechism exactly mirrors what is found in our text
 - (A) our abiding in Christ is intended ultimately to glorify God; to make His glory known among men
 - (B) our abiding in Christ is how we can experience Him with ongoing delight

4. The catechism goes on from this beginning in a step-by-step fashion to lead a person in the way of salvation, so that
 - a. the second question is: "What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?"
 - b. and its answer: "The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him,"
 - c. directs to where and to how a person can be saved

C. What does it mean to glorify God?

1. whenever we see that Latin suffix "-fy" in an English word, it indicates making something (for example: mortify, to make *mort* or dead; rectify, to make *rectus* or right; solidify ...), so you will find the first meaning given in the dictionary for "glorify" is something like "to make glorious" or "to give glory to"
2. but can we actually
 - a. make God glorious?
 - b. give God any glory?
3. cast your mind back to Psalm 29, which we read a few moments ago, wherein the writer hears and sees the glory of God in His creation ... in particular in a storm
 - a. "The God of glory thunders"
 - b. "The voice of the LORD is powerful"
 - c. "The voice of the LORD is majestic"
 - d. "In His temple everything says 'glory'"
 - e. "Yes, the LORD sits as King forever"
4. no; you and I can add absolutely nothing to the glory of God
5. that same catechism we mentioned a moment ago has this
 - a. Question: What is God?
 - b. Answer: God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth

c. God is perfect; you and I can add absolutely nothing to His perfection; God's perfection stands independent of all that we may do or say or think; so also His glory

6. so, Psalm 29:2a explains what it is to glorify God

a. "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name"

b. thus, in glorifying God, it is the secondary dictionary meaning that is in view: "to honour and lift up in worship"

c. let us now return to our text, looking at the objectives noted, and the ways of ascertaining if they are being met

d. John 15:7–8 (NAS): *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.*

D. Objective One: "... If you abide in Me ..." — Abiding in Christ

1. checkpoint one: "... and My words abide in you ..." — is my life directed by Christ's teaching?

a. the test of abiding and the test of discipleship seem to be the same: that we hear, we hearken and we obey Christ

(A) John 8:31 (NAS): *Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;"*

(B) John 14:15 (NAS): *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*

(C) John 14:23 (NAS): *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him."*

(D) James 1:22 (NAS): *But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

b. such lives give evidence of abiding in Christ

(A) John 13:35 (NAS): *"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

(B) so that Paul's words may be true of us, "... But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16)

c. are our, are your and my lives being directed by Christ's words or by the pervasive influences and mores of our society?

2. checkpoint two: "...ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you..." — are my prayers so attuned to God's will that they are invariably answered?
- a. the Bible tells us of a number of reasons that our prayer may not be answered or that the answer may be delayed
 - (A) a poor attitude as a husband: 1 Peter 3:7 (NAS): You husbands likewise, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honour as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.
 - (B) continued, deliberate sin: Isaiah 1:15 (NAS): So when you spread out your hands *in prayer*, I will hide My eyes from you, Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood.
 - (C) faithless prayer, even for something in God's will for us, such as wisdom: James 1:6–7 (NAS): But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.
 - (D) but most of all, prayer will not be answered that is for our own pleasure and not God's will: James 4:3 (NAS): You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.
 - b. so, this second checkpoint will be satisfied, when we align our lives with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ — at least in our will and purpose despite the fact that we fall short in the performance
 - c. do our, do your and my prayers (which are the expression of our desires toward God) give evidence of our being in tune with God's will by how God answers them?

E. Objective Two: "... and so prove to be My disciples ..." Being Proven Disciples

1. only checkpoint: "... that you bear much fruit ..." — fruitfulness
 - a. now, fruitfulness is a quality which people admire
 - (A) if take, for example the fruit of the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV), "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." ... few there are who will argue against these being desirable qualities in a person
 - (B) or take productivity: people admire those who with a limited amount of time, resources or energy

can achieve great things: the Newtons, the Mozarts, the Churchills, and so on

b. but, let us not get out of context: remember the ultimate purpose of this fruitfulness ... to glorify God

(A) When soldiers are engaged in what is called target-shooting, or firing at a mark, they have a large board set up at some distance from them. The surface of this board is painted all over in black and white rings or circles. In the center of the board is a small black circle, sometimes called the bull's-eye. Every soldier, as he takes aim, tries to hit the bull's-eye, or black circle, in the center of the board. The aim of the soldier is that which he tries to hit with his gun. So, if when the officer calls out "Make ready — take aim — fire," the soldier fires in all directions willy-nilly, then he has failed to fully observe the commanders instructions ... to take aim. —^{3}.

(B) so likewise, if we are seeking fruitfulness

(1) be it those marvellous traits found in Galatians

(2) or be it in service to the Lord

(3) or be it in whatsoever

(4) and it is being done to raise our own prestige, our own praise, our own glory

(5) then we have missed our Commanders call to "take aim;" our orders to glorify Him in all things

2. so, therefore, our orders respecting fruitfulness, are met when God is given the glory; when we are indeed proven to be Christ's disciples ... when our lives tells others about Christ

a. so, yes, those things we mentioned

(A) the fruitfulness of character given by the Holy Spirit

(B) the fruitfulness in service to Jesus Christ

b. are valid checkpoints to test our being proven disciples

(A) when our words and testimony give all credit to God

(B) when their very sincerity show them to be the work of God and not the result of our own human effort

(C) when "... it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure."
(Philippians 2: 13 NAS)

3. Are we, are you and I, letting God the Holy Spirit do His work making our lives fruitful to prove the reality of our discipleship to people around us and for the purpose of God's glory?

F. Conclusion

1. so there is a question for each of us here this morning: "what compartments of your life have you given over to God?"
 - a. if you have never accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour, the answer is clear, it is brief, it is shocking: "None; absolutely none!"
 - (A) Oh, you may attend church
 - (1) and sing the hymns
 - (2) and pray the prayers
 - (B) Oh, you may do any manner of good deeds
 - (C) Oh, you may do mighty exploits in the Lord's name
 - (D) but in the end, if you have not, in simple faith, claimed the salvation provided in Christ Jesus
 - b. but what about those here who profess to be Christians?
 - (A) how many of the compartments in my life and yours have we opened to the Lord? ... how many of them do we keep closed, as our private reserve?
 - (B) do we say, "Yes, Lord, Sunday is yours, but Monday through Saturday is my own; Oh, and yes also Sunday afternoon!"?
 - (C) is our desire and prayer life His? ... are we seeking His will in all things?
 - (D) in the questioning words of the hymn-writer
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour? ...
Are you walking daily by the Saviour's side? ...
Do you rest each moment in the Crucified? ⁻⁽⁴⁾.
 - (E) as has been noted by another preacher, "Christ must be Lord of all, if He is to be Lord at all!"
 - c. meditate for a moment on what Jesus our Saviour has done
 1. Oh how He loves you and me,
Oh how He loves you and me;
He gave His life — what more could He give?
Oh how He loves you,
Oh how He loves me,
Oh how He loves you and me!

2. Jesus to Calv'ry did go,
His love for mankind to show;
What He did there brought hope from despair:
Oh how He loves you,
Oh how He loves me,
Oh how He loves you and me! —{5}.

2. our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever
 - a. we cannot have the second, without the first
 - b. our text today tells us the way in which we will realize this purpose in our life: it is a matter of surrendering our walk and our will to Him on a daily basis
 - c. then, indeed, we can sing with out lives as with our voices, "To God Be the Glory"

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. “Worship Is The Ultimate Goal Of The Church” by John Piper, at the United States Center For World Mission – Holwick illustrations #3807
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