

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 13- Luke 13:22-30**

249- Are There Just a Few Who are Being Saved? Part 1

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Luke 13:22-30

22 And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem.

23 And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there *just* a few who are being saved?" And He said to them,

24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

25 Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.'

26 Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets';

27 and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; **DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.'**

28 In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out.

29 And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline *at the table* in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, *some* are last who will be first and *some* are first who will be last."

To the Glory of God

Now there are several loud voices coming from the leaders of the modern Church which put forth the teaching that it is possible for a

person to reject Jesus Christ as “Lord” and yet still possess Him as “Savior”. One such voice says,

“It is possible, but miserable, to be saved without ever making Christ Lord of your life”

Back in the early 1900’s- Lewis Sperry Chafer- the very first President of Dallas Theological Seminary wrote,

“The New Testament does not impose repentance upon the unsaved as a condition of salvation”

And nothing less than *The Ryrie Study Bible* calls repentance a

“... false addition to faith”

... when made as a condition of Salvation.

Now what I am describing to you in these quotes is an aberrant teaching called “Free Grace Theology”. And according to this teaching- there is no necessary connection between Saving Faith and obedience, no connection at all between *loving* Jesus and *serving* Him, no connection between being forgiven and being transformed, no connection between being saved and bearing godly fruit, no connection between being washed and turning away from sin. And even though this false teaching is relatively new- it is a very popular teaching and one that has completely taken over the visible Church- at least here in America.

But as with all teachings- you simply cannot teach something and then leave it at that- because all teaching- whether it is true or not- affects how you understand other teachings. One thing either strengthens or weakens something else, and so all Teaching about God and Salvation is interconnected to all other teaching about God and Salvation.

And this is so true that if you change one aspect of Essential Truth- you also change how a person understands what he must do or what he must say or what he must believe in order to be forgiven and justified. So this is a big deal.

And this is where the concept of Sola Scriptura that was hammered out in the fires of the Reformation shines the brightest. Because what we learned from this period of Church History is that it is a tragic mistake to teach and believe things that the Bible does not actually teach- even if that teaching is popular, and even if that teaching makes sense on a human level, and even if that teaching personally benefits you in some way. If the teaching cannot be conclusively proved by the preponderance of Scripture- then we must reject it as being the invention of Man and not inspired and thus not infallible.

We who have taken up the mantle of the Puritans say that we do not believe in "papal infallibility", but that we hold to the sufficiency of Scripture. But I say to you that there isn't a dime's worth of difference between "papal infallibility" and "pastoral infallibility" or "Board of Elders infallibility" or even "individual believers infallibility". They must all bow before the supremacy of Scripture.

You see, because every single one of us are fallen human beings- we all have the capacity to not only be wrong- but to be horribly wrong about the most serious of eternal issues that will dramatically affect our souls- while all the while thinking we are as right as rain. And that is precisely why we *cannot* trust our own individual judgment or our own individual experiences or our own individual wisdom about issues that the Word of God is clear about.

And so those who teach that there is no connection between belief and obedience- *whether they mean to or not*- have absolutely changed how we understand other aspects of the Christian Life- such as Sanctification.

For example- the notion that a person can trust in Jesus as "Savior" without submitting to Jesus as "Lord", which is just another way of saying that Jesus can save you without you having to repent and obey- those who teach that- also teach these things:

- ✓ Saving Faith is nothing more than a *momentary, mental* assent to Gospel Facts
- ✓ Bearing Fruit is *not* a legitimate test of Saving Faith's authenticity.
- ✓ The resulting sea of disobedient *nominal* "christians" are accommodated under the category of being mere "believers" as

opposed to being “disciples” which refers to the “stage-two Christian”- a person who has “made” Jesus the “Lord of his life” at some point after conversion.

Now that last point is nothing more than the Southern Baptist way of teaching the very same thing that the Pentecostals teach about what John Wesley invented 300 years ago about “The Second Blessing”. So what I am trying to say is that there is essentially no difference in the framework between the Baptist “making Jesus the Lord of their life” as something they do after Salvation and the Pentecostal seeking to be “baptized with the Holy Spirit” after Salvation. Both of these wayward teachings come from the very same flawed foundation- that which Wesley taught about a subsequent supernatural event that happens at some point after a person is justified that energizes him into service and obedience.

All of these are simply made up, fabricated terms that have no basis at all in Scripture. Yet these concepts are frequently used today to try to explain how genuinely born again people can live with no conviction of sins and no measurable change in behavior- issues that are clearly and repeatedly spelled out in Scripture and subjects which the Church- at least on public record- says they believe.

Zane Hodges- the most well-known proponent of the false teaching of “Free Grace Theology” said,

“How fortunate that one’s entrance into the kingdom of God [does] not depend on his discipleship”

And this false teaching has taken the modern Church by storm. This “new orthodoxy” is best stated like this:

“Saving faith has nothing to do with commitment”

But what those of us who are endeavoring to be Biblical have to try to grasp, dear friends, is that if Jesus is not Lord- then He is not Savior. Or in the words of Augustine- 1700 years ago:

“If Jesus is not Lord of all- He is not Lord at all”

And by using the word "Lord", I mean the concept that Jesus is "Master" and "Sovereign" over every area of our lives- including aspects like:

- ✓ What we should believe
- ✓ How we should behave in the culture
- ✓ Whether we live or die
- ✓ How we should earn and spend our money
- ✓ How we raise our children
- ✓ Who we marry

We have to teach that those who reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ or who give mere lip service to His Sovereignty are not saved. And that is true because the very signature of Saving Faith is a complete and a joyful submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. So because that is true- those who refuse Jesus as being dominant over their lives- cannot consider Him to be their Savior. And that is why I say,

If Jesus is not worth obeying- then He isn't worth loving

The Bible declares very clearly that Saving Faith- that special kind of Sovereign Faith that is distributed to unworthy sinners as a free Gift of God's Grace- that has the Power to *cause* the hard heart to be soft and to *force* the blind eyes to see and to *make* the deaf ears to hear- so that this special Gift of Faith that saves the human soul loves and it seeks to obey the God Who gave it.

And so it is true to say that it is the *unregenerate* soul and it is the *unbelieving* soul that loves and that seeks to rebel. According to Jesus and the Apostles- it is the visible, tangible, measurable, and outward fruit of one's life that reveals whether that person is a believer or an unbeliever. Yea- the very nature of Sovereign Regeneration is not only that we are forgiven- but that the tyrannical power of sin that dominated our life when we were lost has been broken and destroyed and removed from that believer by the Power of Jesus Christ.

And that is not something odd or that applies only to certain people- but that is part of what it means to be saved. And so while it is true that we do not walk in perfect sinlessness- it is also true that saved

people sin less. And so while the lost person sins as a normal and natural part of his daily life- the saved person follows Jesus as a normal and natural part of his daily life, and while we don't serve and follow without fault- we do serve and follow honestly.

Another way of understanding the distinction between the sin of a saved person and the sin of an unsaved person is that a saved person is pressing into the things of God- he is striving to enter in at the narrow door and as he is doing that- he doesn't do it properly, he doesn't serve God without fault, he doesn't obey without failing in some area. So he falls down- but he falls down while walking up the mountain; he sins but he sins while endeavoring to love and serve Jesus Christ. The lost person is not even trying to serve and obey Jesus Christ, and so he sins while pursuing his own lustful desires.

So what is at stake in this discussion is nothing less than the very essence of Biblical Salvation and the very nature of Saving Faith. And the foundational problem that these people have is that they have failed to recognize Salvation as being a sovereign Work of God, and they have failed to see Saving Faith as being a very potent Gift of God's Grace.

True Biblical Salvation is a supernatural, Divine transformation- it is no less than a fantastic miracle that takes place in the human soul. Salvation is not the bettering of a human's potential; it is not something that makes good people to be better; it is not a tool that can be used to further that person's individual goals; it is not something that is used to assist the individual to be able to fulfill his dreams and to achieve his highest potential in this life.

Salvation is the instantaneous forgiveness of all sins- past, present and future; it is the appeasement of the terrifying Wrath of God against those sins by the cruel and agonizing Death of the sinless Lamb of God; it is the immediate transformation of the human nature from being fallen to being Divine; it is the replacement of fallen loves and desires and wants with heavenly ones; it is the re-creation of the soul of man; it is the immediate imputation of the spotless Righteousness of Jesus Christ!

And other than Creation- Salvation is the most unique and truest Work of God- and, therefore- because that is true- Salvation makes a radical and an undeniable and an unquestionable difference in the life of the one whose eyes have been opened that is evident to all- both saved and unsaved alike. And as a sovereign Work of God- it *cannot* and

it *does not* leave the desires of the one who is saved- unchanged or his conduct unaltered.

And so contrary to what Hodges and Chafer and Ryrie all teach- Repentance and Submission are no more human works than is Saving Faith. They are every bit the sovereign Work of God and are simply human responses to the Work that God has already done and not human works *added* to Saving Faith. So a transformation in our behavior or bearing godly fruit, or serving Christ as Lord- these aspects- are simply essential outward manifestations of God's inward Work of Faith that has transpired in the human heart.

And if you buy into all this- which I pray you will- it is then incorrect to define God's Grace as being merely:

“God's Acceptance that *overlooks* sin” after we express a momentary mental assent to some facts about Jesus Christ”

I say that is not true. God's Grace is the Power of God that redeems us so that we may fulfill our New Covenant duties. Grace empowers us to obey by removing the *source* of our rebellion- the depraved fallen nature. And while that obedience isn't perfect- it exists and it grows as we are sanctified. Please turn with me to **Ezekiel 36:25-27**:

25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

26 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

27 “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Now remember that what Ezekiel is describing here is not Heaven- but the New Covenant, and he is speaking on God's behalf about why the New Covenant is infinitely superior to the Old.

But notice carefully that the first thing that makes the New Covenant so glorious is that God has promised that through Jesus Christ- He will sovereignly forgive us of all our sins- that is what verse 25 means when it says that God will:

... sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

And how will God do that? Sovereignly- all by Himself. Now so far- the New Covenant promises absolute Forgiveness without any cooperation or work on our part. But just how does God defend His justify sovereignly forgiveness of people who have belittled God's Glory? Through the horrific Death of God Incarnate on the Cross that absorbed all of God's Wrath against us. And we have studied that at great length. Now look at what the New Covenant promises next in verse 26:

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Now God begins verse 26 with the word "Moreover" to tell us that even though it ought to be enough that God has now forgiven all of our sins based on absolutely nothing that we have done for ourselves- He isn't through. There is yet more that God will sovereignly do for us through Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. God says that He will- all by Himself:

... give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

... and then to further describe to us what giving us a new heart and putting a new spirit within us actually *means*- He says this in verse 27:

I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

In other words giving us a new heart and putting within us a new spirit is God sovereignly putting His Spirit within us- which is part and parcel to what the New Covenant is all about. In other words- you do not even have the New Covenant without the sovereign giving of the new heart and the sovereign putting within us of God's Spirit- which will always lead to obedience and submission. But notice that we still haven't done anything yet and we still haven't even cooperated with God in any of this. God says that He and He alone is going to do all of

this for us- all by Himself. But then look what this new heart and this new spirit does for us and to us:

I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes...

Now God doesn't say here that He *wants* us to love and serve Him, or that He would *like* for us to obey Him periodically, or that He will be *happy* if we- every once and awhile- choose to be *somewhat* submissive to Him- I mean as long as it isn't inconvenient and doesn't interrupt too many of our plans or crimp our style too bad.

But God is saying here that what makes the New Covenant superior to the Old is that in the New Covenant- God will sovereignly *cause* us to walk in His statutes. In other words- the original problem with us and God is that we were disobedient. That is what started this whole thing- remember? Adam wanted to sin and disobey God. And the Old Covenant in the Law didn't provide us with a way to overcome that natural and normal resistance to obeying God- it simply damned us when we didn't.

But the New Covenant allows for God to first forgive us and then cause us to become obedient. And how does God do that? How does God cause us to walk in His statutes? By sovereignly giving us a new heart and by sovereignly putting His Spirit within us.

And then what does the end of verse 27 say will be the result of God sovereignly giving us a new heart and sovereignly putting His Spirit within us and *causing* us or *making* us or *forcing* us to walk in His Statutes?

... and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

So it is very hard to read the Bible with any degree of honesty and not get that the end result of us receiving the New Covenant through the Life and Death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is that we will walk in God's Statutes and Observe God's Ordinances, and that is simply another way of saying that the end result of true genuine Salvation is obedience.

So what the proponents of "Free Grace Theology" have done is to *reduce* Saving Faith to manageable human terms so that steps to Conversion are possible without any transformation of the heart. And

then they go about to teach that the Assurance of Salvation is possessed without any evidence of Authenticity.

And so the only thing that people have that they can put their trust in and gain assurance of their Salvation from is the prayer that they prayed or the aisle that they walked down or the preachers hand that they shook or the water that they were baptized in or the emotional feeling that they experienced or the tears that they shed or the tongues that they supposedly spoke in.

Go ahead and ask people how they know that they are saved and they will almost always talk about something they did or how they felt or some personal experience that they had. It is very rare indeed to hear anybody in the modern Church say that they know that they are saved only because they are trusting (ongoing, present tense) in Jesus Personally and in His finished Work.

But we have to know that there isn't any difference in a Protestant trusting in some prayer he prayed or some personal experience that he had that than there is in a Roman getting assurance of his Salvation in the Communion that they took or the Mass that they attended or the Rite of Penance that they went through.

And there isn't any difference in a Roman trusting in Communion or the Mass than there is in a Hare Krishna taking confidence in his Salvation by growing his hair into a pony tail so that God can grab it and pull him up into heaven or a Hindu reaching "Nirvana" or a Muslim driving an airplane through a building in a legally declared jihad. It is all the same- take your pick.

No matter how you slice it or dice it- *whatever* we are placing our trust in and *whatever* we are taking assurance of Salvation from- other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself Personally and His finished Work- is all idolatry and it will all lead to the every same legalism and the very same hell. And that is why the songwriter said,

On Christ the Solid Rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

So the issue at stake here is the Reality and Presence of God- working all by Himself in the act of Saving Faith and of that Saving Faith producing tangible, visible, and measurable obedience in us after

we have been converted. And without that- we are simply whistling Dixie.

Among the tragic consequences of this “de-supernaturalizing” of Conversion is the false security given to millions of churchgoers who do not follow Christ and who are not truly saved.

The fallacy of today’s popular approach to evangelism is that the Call to believe the Gospel and repent is connected to a totally inadequate explanation of what it actually means to believe. Therefore, the fundamental pattern of modern evangelism is to take people through a formula- with the goal being to get them to pray a prayer, sign a card, or whatever- and then tell them they are saved and that they should never doubt it.

So I am convinced, dear friends- that the popular evangelistic message of our age actually lures people into satanic deception. It promises a wonderful, comfortable plan for this life. It obliterates the offense of the Cross. And even though it presents Christ as being the Way, the Truth, and the Life- it says little or nothing of the small gate or the narrow way. Its subject is the Love of God- but there is no context of that Love because it is never associated with the Wrath of God and of the fact that we patently deserve that Wrath, and, therefore, this type of Love is reduced to human emotional love.

The modern “gospel” sees people as being “deprived”- not “depraved”. This message proclaims that mankind is *deprived* of more of this world’s goods, and *deprived* of fame and recognition, and of reaching their fullest potential, and of fulfilling their inner most desires, and *deprived* of not living in the finest homes and of not driving the nicest cars, and of having to suffer the humiliation and indignation of having to shop at K-Mart.

But while the modern “gospel” teaches that people are “deprived”- the Bible teaches that people are “depraved”; fallen and sinful. God says that human beings- all of them- are utterly sinful, and that they insult and offend God on a regular basis. What came out of God’s Mouth says that human beings love darkness rather than light, and that they are God haters by virtue of their conception. The inspired and infallible Word of the living God teaches that all human beings are fully deserving of God’s Wrath and that nobody deserves Mercy, and that God would be perfectly Just to condemn the entire human race right now.

The modern "gospel" teaches that Mankind is "lacking"- but not "lost". It proclaims a message that it received from human Psychology and Psychiatry but not from Scripture that says that what is wrong with Mankind is that he is *lacking*. It says that we *lack* opportunity and education and money and that if we receive those things- then we can lift ourselves out of the rubble by our own bootstraps and by the power of our collective will and that we will become not only good people- but many today boldly proclaim that we can actually become "gods" ourselves.

But God Word says that Mankind is "lost"- not "lacking". That we are lost- entirely separated from God and without any hope at all in our own strength and power to fix that problem.

The modern "gospel" is full of love and understanding and tolerance- but there is no mention of a holy God- Who hates sin, and, therefore, there is no summons to repent, no warning to flee from Divine Judgment, no call for brokenness, no expectation of a contrite heart, and no reason for deep sorrow over sin.

So the modern message is a message of "easy Salvation"; a call for a hasty decision that has not been thought out as to its long term consequences and is often accompanied by false promises of health, happiness, and material blessing.

In short- this is not the Gospel that Jesus and the Apostles preached, and it is not the Gospel of Scripture. Therefore, if anyone at all is being saved- they are being saved *in spite of* this message being preached and not *because* of it.

Now contrast this modern bubble gum pop psychological silly surface sugar coated message with what Jesus says here in **Luke 13:24** when He said

Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

Now this is a shocking statement. Jesus just said that there are going to be many people- *many people*- not a few- who will seek to enter the Kingdom of God- or who want to be saved- and yet the Lord says here that they're not going to be able! Wow!

Now keep in mind what question Jesus is answering here. This guy just asked Jesus in verse 23:

Luke 13:23b

... Lord, are there *just* a few who are being saved?...

... and Jesus could have answered him by saying either, *"Yes- it will only be a few."* or *"No, there will be many."* Instead- Jesus turned the tables on this guy and told him to do whatever *he* had to do to make sure that *he* was saved. And this is really just another way of saying,

It is none of your business how many are going to be saved- just make sure you are.

Now for Jesus to say this really goes against the grain of what all of us have pretty much been exposed to by the modern "gospel". We hear the Gospel presented in ways that make it seem very easy to be a Christian. *"Just pray this prayer or just say these words- it's a gift, so just reach out and receive the gift. That's all it takes. It's really simple to be a Christian. It's really easy to be saved. Jesus died for you and if you want your sins forgiven just accept Jesus into your heart and repeat these words..."*

Jesus save me

... and you're in."

But if that is true- then what is all this "striving" that Jesus is talking about here? What is all this about many people wanting to enter but not being able to enter? What Jesus says here makes Salvation seem to be very, very difficult. And that's completely contrary to everything that the modern Church has been teaching.

Most of us are familiar with what's often called "The Invitation" at the end of a sermon when you play "Just As I am" thirty-four times during what we call "The Altar Call"- which was just flat out invented by Charles Finney back in the 19th Century- who didn't even believe in the Blood of Jesus and probably wasn't even saved.

And Finney invented what was called "the anxious bench" which was up in the front where people would come and they would get down to the anxious bench and they would be given a prayer to pray and

anything that could move them down that path, so you could even develop a sequence.

You first get them to do something that was easy to do like raise their hand when everybody had their eyes closed, and then you manipulate them to step two- which was get them to walk down the aisle while the music is playing. And another way to do that was, and it's still being done today, when you hold an evangelistic meeting and you want people to come forward, you get counselors or other people who are already Christians to start coming and pretend that they are actually running to the altar to be saved. And this creates an artificial flow that manipulates people to get up and come similar to the way an insurance agent gets you used to saying yes three or four times before he asks you to buy his policy.

And people get caught up in the emotional flow and they come down because you've made it easy for them, and they get down to the altar or the anxious bench or whatever and somebody leads them in a memorized prayer.

And the goal is to get as many people as possible to say some words and then they're in, and you can say that 10,000 came to Christ last night, and then you lie to them and tell them that if they were sincere and meant what they prayed- then Jesus forgave them.

Yet there is not a single word in all the Bible that even hints that it is the sincerity of the one who is praying that determines who gets saved. Finney just flat out made all this up and used it because it brought tangible and visible and immediate results.

But the reason that the Holy Bible doesn't mention human sincerity is because human sincerity is probably the single most subjective aspect of humanity in all the world. A person can be really sincere one minute and totally insincere the next. And we do this all the time which is why it is only in Church where human sincerity is raised to the level as being the single most important ingredient. Nobody else and no other discipline does this. And this is just another example of how the modern "gospel" is all about Man and is not at all about God.

Now I have been faithful to warn you many times about the danger of "easy believeism". I have suffered persecution and lost attendees because I have taught against "cheap grace" and "shallow repentance". But the reason that I do this is because Scripture is very

clear about this- even though it's pretty much the dominating approach in the evangelical world in which we live.

Now listen to me because it's not wrong to want people to come to Jesus Christ and be saved. It's not wrong to want people to embrace Jesus. And it's not wrong to call people to repent and to believe the Gospel. It's right to do all that. That's what we're supposed to do. Jesus was always calling sinners to repent and believe. The Apostles went and preached the Gospel and called people to repent and believe. And the whole New Testament tells us our mandate is to go into all the world and call people to repent and believe.

But the true Gospel demands not just a passive "acceptance" of Jesus into our hearts, but requires active submission to Him as well. And that active submission is *ongoing*- so the way you must understand this is that you *keep on* repenting, you *keep on* turning to Jesus, you *keep on* rejecting evil, you *keep on* pressing into the Truth, you *keep on* refining your walk and refining your understanding, and you *keep on* denying yourself, and you *keep on* taking up your Cross, and you *keep on* following Jesus.

And so unlike many of the modern preachers today- who avoid upsetting someone's assurance at all costs- Jesus was absolutely determined to destroy the hope of anyone who falsely thought they were redeemed- which is why He tells this man,

Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

We have to understand, dear friends, that it is a terrible mistake to try to set the teachings of Paul and the Apostles over against the Words of our Lord, or even the Teachings from the Old Testament as though they contradict one another or speak about different ways of being saved.

The way of Salvation from cover to cover in the Holy Bible is unified and the same- namely,

“God saves unworthy sinners who come to Him in faith and repent”

But I believe that we have to go deeper in our analysis of the nature of Saving Faith until we discover not only that it must yield obedience- but *why* it must.

The reason that this is important is because we will best guard against the accusation of preaching a "Salvation by Works" message if we can show that there is something inherent in the very nature of Saving Faith itself that produces obedience- rather than merely saying that Saving faith is always somehow accompanied by our obedience.

We have to recognize that the basic essence of Saving Faith is being completely satisfied with Jesus Christ as being the Solution to all of our longings and desires, and that we do that by hoping in His Promises. When our hearts are satisfied in all that Jesus is for us- then our hearts will be weaned from the deceptive satisfactions of sin and "the Commands of the Lord will not be burdensome" (**1John 5:3**), but God requirements and Commands and expectations will delight our hearts, and thus be irresistible because we will understand that obedience to God- regardless of what that might require of us personally- not only brings Glory to God- but it is the pathway to our own everlasting Joy.

Amen. Let's pray.