

We Have Seen His Glory  
Luke 2:8-32

December 15, 2019  
Grace Bible Church

Introduction: A great danger for Christians reading the Christmas story is the old saying "Familiarity breeds \_\_\_\_\_." For example here are a list of things that did no happen on the first Christmas:

- Magi were \_\_\_\_\_ present at Jesus' birth.
  - Jesus was probably not born in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - There was no \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Angels did not \_\_\_\_\_ to the shepherds.
  - Jesus was not "\_\_\_\_\_."
  - Barn, cave, or stable are not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - There was no "\_\_\_\_\_."
  - Jesus was not born on \_\_\_\_\_.
- One thing that is true: the first Christmas was a \_\_\_\_\_ for all who witnessed it.

Key thought: The shepherds were transformed because they saw the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. How did the sight of a new born baby transform them? How will it transform us?

- I. Because of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's glory.
  - A. The glory of God is the manifest presence of God. It is something you can see with your eyes. (Exodus 16:10–12) "Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights." (Exodus 24:17–18)
  - B. The glory of God was to reside in the tabernacle and temple in the most holy place. (Exodus 29:42–43) "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel!" because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband." (1 Samuel 4:21)
  - C. The glory of God guided the people of God on their journey. "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys." (Exodus 40:34–38)
  - D. Exposure to God's glory physically transformed Moses. "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him." (Exodus 34:29–30)
- II. Because this glory of God reveals the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
  - A. While human beings are made in the image of God, we are not God nor are we identical to him.
  - B. There was a strict boundary placed around Mt. Sinai to keep the people from approaching it while God was uniquely present on the mountain. "Moses alone shall come near to the Lord, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him." (Exodus 24:2)

- C. There were strict rules put in place regarding the packing and transportation of the tabernacle.(2 Samuel 6:5–7)
- D. There were specific families chosen to care for the various articles of the tabernacle. Numbers 3.
- E. There were restrictions placed on who could enter the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement. Leviticus 16

III. God's holiness reveals our \_\_\_\_\_ . "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.'" (Isaiah 6:1–7)

IV. Because God's glory reveals \_\_\_\_\_ .

- A. God's glory had departed the temple due to Israel's idolatry and rebellion. God sent His people into exile. "Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist." (Ezekiel 9:3; 10:19; 11:22-23)
- B. God's glory did not appear in the rebuilt temple. The vision God gave Ezekiel of his glory was only seen by Ezekiel.
- C. God's glory was seen for the first time in approximately 600 years by shepherds in the field surrounding Bethlehem.

V. Because God's glory is ultimately seen in \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

- A. We are told who he is: A savior
- B. We are told how to recognize him: a cross and empty tomb
- C. We must do what the shepherds did: come and see and go and tell
- D. Moses prayer, "show me your glory" is answered in Christ

Conclusion: The glory of God transforms

- For Simeon Christmas was a promised kept. God can be trusted
- For Anna Christmas meant her waiting was over. Hope fulfilled
- For the Magi- a journey completed. They found what they were looking for.
- For Stephen- strength in the midst of a great trial and death.
- For us- transformation into Christlikeness. "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)
  - In Christ death we find the price has been paid
  - In Christ's resurrection we have the power to overcome the world.
  - In Christ's return God's work is complete