

The Quest for Glory

I yearned for the glory of God to come into my brokenness. But it wasn't until I learned to truly humble myself that I experienced it.

In his book *Holiness, Truth and the Presence of God*, Francis Frangipane writes, "Think of yourself as one about to take a journey. Like all expeditions, our journey starts with a departure. Long before we arrive at holiness, we must depart from **self-righteousness** and **pride**. If we would live in the **presence of God**, we must first travel the way of humility and truth."

This is how my personal quest for God's glory began—with the truth. The truth was that my marriage of 15 years was in broken pieces. It had been built on a weak foundation, and now damaging cracks were exposed. My husband and I desperately needed a touch from God to change our earthly circumstances.

Reading and hearing about the evidences of **spiritual renewal** in the body of Christ brought me hope that things might change.

It was 1994. Miracles of glory (the tangible presence of God) were being reported in various locations around the world. Testimonies of healings documented the spiritual phenomenon flowing from Toronto, Canada, with pastors John and Carol Arnott. I thought, *Perhaps there is a miracle for me. Maybe the glory of God will heal my broken heart and my broken marriage.*

I was desperate for God. I longed to have His glory touch the brokenness. I wanted Psalm 63 to become a reality for us as a couple so that even in the barren areas of our marriage Jesus would be glorified. It was the cry of my hurting heart.

One night in the spring of 1996, God answered my cry. He

showed me the dead tomb of my marriage, where He desired to resurrect life in His glory. And He invited me to walk through the one door that led out of the tomb—humility.

The Visitation

It had been a wonderful time of worshipping, praying and seeking God's face together with a small group of desperate people at John R. Mott Auditorium in Pasadena, Calif., where Harvest Rock Church (now HRock Church) meets. Now home, I washed the remaining dishes of the day, wiped off countertops and cleaned the floor.

Suddenly, a loud rumbling of feet, voices of heavenly tongues and words of Scripture began to spring forth rapturously from the other room. My daughter Joy and her friend Christine had been camping there on the floor in sleeping bags. Apparently, God had other plans for what had originally been conceived as a 12-year-old's sleepover.

When I stepped into the room, I entered a realm not of this world. All three of us began to shake violently. Touching one another only intensified the shaking. It was as if raw voltage went through our bodies on contact. My first thought was, *This must be like the Day of Pentecost!*

Then, simultaneously, Joy and Christine both shouted, "Mott, we must go to Mott [Auditorium]. Angels are there. God is coming! There are flames of fire, flying doves, angels—so many angels of so many sizes. We must go!"

I gathered the two girls and my other two daughters, and we quickly drove to Mott. Entering the auditorium, part of an old Nazarene college facility, we immediately beheld a thick cloud resting all about the dim sanctuary. A lush fragrance filled the air. A realm of heaven was open before us as we stood there in the midnight silence at the threshold of God's glory. I was awestruck when I heard the girls describing in unison the dimension that they were seeing.

There were doves, tongues of fire and a myriad of angelic hosts worshipping from every seat with a beautiful, unfamiliar, heavenly sound. The invisible was made visible. Heaven was touching earth, and God was changing us in His glory.

My personal revelation of the glory of God on that calm night when He inhabited Mott was the deepest, most dramatic revelation of God I have ever experienced. All I could do was weep uncontrollably as I lay prostrate in praise and worship, while at the center of the large sanctuary, a thick, white cloud of pure, unending heavenly worship flowed in a sacred, vertical chasm from heaven.

Though it seemed as if only moments had passed, the glory of God consumed us for more than six hours. It was six hours of transformation, during which I was overshadowed, covered and consumed by the pure love and divine pleasure of this all-knowing, all-holy, perfect One who formed and made me. In that brief open heaven, I became intensely aware of who God is and who I am. My true existence was illumined.

In an instant, I was gloriously “ruined” for Him. I pleaded, “To seek You, Lord, to know You is my highest aim. I lay down everything. Every part of me is Yours, Lord. Even if my marriage never changes, as long as I have You, I will want for nothing else.”

The true condition of my heart was laid bare, and I clearly saw that no human relationship, no worldly possession, no human desire of any kind could or should satisfy the deepest longing of my heart and meet the greatest need of my soul. To Jesus alone belonged that honor.

The Lord shattered the tombstone over my heart. He called me forth, exchanging my grave clothes and dressing me with His glory.

Transformation

I believe that the extent to which we humble ourselves is the extent to which we receive the grace to accept who we truly are. This acceptance allows the glory of God to dwell in our lives. As we decrease, God increases. Jesus Christ then is exalted among the people and places we influence: our homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, marriages, families and relationships.

The glory of God, the manifest presence of God residing within a human life is powerfully impacting. When heaven touches earth, remarkable changes take place. The glory of God in each of us has the supernatural, life-giving power to penetrate and heal the desolate places of the soul and to touch and revive every dead region of the earth!

“Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth” (Ps. 108:5, NIV).

We need to allow His glory to arise. There are tombs of death within every human heart. God desires to call forth the Lazarus in all of us so we may take off the grave clothes and exchange them for the glory of the living God. Humility is the door for the actualized presence of God to permeate those places of death.

Until I humbled myself on the floor of Mott Auditorium, my prayers for a changed marriage had been self-directed idolatry. I had wanted God to change my marriage so that I could be a “happy wife” and have a “happy family.” I had been seeking the “happily ever after” blessing that I thought every Christian deserved. With deep sorrow, I confessed and repented of that sin. For the first time, I could see my husband Ché as God saw Ché, and I wanted to love him as God loved him—unconditionally.

Then and there, I wholeheartedly vowed to Jesus every part of me. Any loss, even the hope for a good marriage, was nothing

compared to the gain of knowing Him. I had now tasted the depths of His love, and I knew that all other love paled in comparison. Gaining Jesus means lacking nothing. Just Jesus—Jesus is enough.

The Lord showed me that there is a higher, more sacred romance even than marriage, a consecrated communion with Jesus that is incomparable to any earthly relationship. It is the relationship of Jesus, our Bridegroom, with His glorious bride, the church.

Relationship is preeminent in the heart of God. God values people supremely. He proved it by His death and resurrection. Now He seeks to make Himself known, face to face, to each one of us in every aspect of our lives.

Our Maker created man and woman in His divine image so that we could fellowship with Him and then uniquely reflect and communicate His love, glory and holiness back to Him and to those with whom we interact. This is how we bring glory to His name—by being filled with Him and sharing Him with others.

The glory of God is the actual nearness and personal closeness of the unseen God. Intimate relationship is the earnest desire of God, who seeks to make Himself known face to face to each one of us every moment of the day and in every aspect of our lives. The Bible says that God “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14, NKJV) and if we “draw near to God ... He will draw near to [us]” (James 4:8).

God paid the ultimate price to give us the privilege of His presence. He sacrificed His only Son, Jesus, on the cross. He paid the highest price of love in His desire for relationship with us so that the void in our lives would be filled with the life of God.

More than ever, I need God. In my personal quest for glory, I have found Him through humility and continual repentance. For Him to increase, I must choose to decrease (John 3:30). I am

continually learning that in the lowliness of humility, the grace of God abounds.

It is this grace that prompted the mutual forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation that allowed God to resurrect, restore, and renew my husband, Ché, and me to Him and to one another. His redemptive love caused all things to become new. Christ the Lord is now the firm foundation of our marriage.

A new and genuine respect and trust began to grow agape love between us in which the glory of God could thrive. A true security was established in each of our hearts by the Father's love, enabling us to love each other more and give to each other freely. This same blessing is available to anyone who will call on God based on the finished work of His Son on Calvary.

Ché and I continually consecrate our lives to God with the desire to become more holy and more loving. Our marriage belongs to God; it is a place we invite His glory to inhabit. Ché and I daily choose the gift of forgiveness. We are ever learning humility through discovering our mutual need for one another and choosing to daily receive each other.

Together, we are seeking to know Him. In unity, we pray. We are being continually reconciled, man to woman, husband to wife. God offers these same privileges to all of us that each might be called a child of God. He is looking for vessels to receive His glory, vessels who want His love, vessels through which He can pour out His love upon the broken lives around us.

The Lord Jesus longs to begin with each of us, one life at a time, so that He will ultimately fill the whole earth with the glory of His Father. This is His quest for glory. And it begins with you and me.

Read a companion devotional.

Sue Ahn has served in pastoral ministry for more than 30 years. She and her husband, Ché, are senior pastors at HRock Church in Pasadena, Calif.