# Death and Glory Part 3

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Preacher: Kevin Smith, Senior Pastor

[0:00] Thank you, sir. I hope you will become acquainted with some of the confessions of the church that are, that was the Belgic Confession, of course, and so many beautiful statements, theologically correct and accurate and glorious, because they reflect the truth of Scripture.

That's why they're good. Otherwise, we don't need them. They reflect the truth of Scripture, and that is one of my favorite statements about the deity of Christ, personally. Sorry I missed you Thanksgiving, saying that we're in Philadelphia, but it's good to be home and back with you this morning.
Thank you, Pastor Billy, for preaching the Word of God on last Sunday, and please be in prayer. We have various members of our church who are grieving at this time. Please be in prayer for them. If you are aware, tell me, we want to lift up dear Sister Esther and Cornell and Janice and Kathy as they are grieving the loss of their sister, Denise, and we want to keep them in prayer and others who have lost.
The holidays like this are a beautiful time, but also a painful time. My family, we grieve Thanksgiving for the last almost 30 years, because just before Thanksgiving, we lost my dad and my wife's grandmother the same night in two different countries.
[1:27] So that blew our minds. God in his mercy took them. So please remember our family. We're going to finish up John 12 today, that passage we're looking at, 2026, Death and Glory, and then we will start an Advent series starting next Sunday.

It will be called Made Like Us. Made Like Us. The question is, why? Why did Jesus have to be made like us?
Why Christmas? So we look at some of those reasons in Scripture. Let's pray. Father, as we come to your word now, we are open to hear from you. May you cause your word to go forth and accomplish all that you purpose, that it would not return to you void, that it would not return to you empty or vain, that it would accomplish your will, that it would work in your people and work in all who hear it, that it would do its work because it is your word, and because your spirit is moving in all of our hearts and lives.
We would see Jesus. Show us Jesus. And may seeing him change everything for us. May seeing Jesus do such a work in our hearts that we're never the same again.
May seeing Jesus give us a new direction. Give us guidance. Give us hope. Give us joy. Heal us. Heal our grieving hearts.
[2:53] Certainly be with Esther and Cornell and Janice and Kathy as they are grieving. Denise, O Lord, be with them and comfort them. Be with many of our family members, Lord, who are grieving the loss of loved ones this time of year, some more recent than others, Lord.

O God, comfort ye your people. You are the God of all comfort and the Father of mercies. You said that, and we believe it, and we trust in you.
Now speak to us, O Lord. Reprove, rebuke, exhort. May your servant have great patience and give careful instruction according to your word. May Jesus, may Jesus, the glorious Jesus, be seen, adored, and obeyed because he loves us.
In his name we pray. Amen. Once again, and for the final time, part three of this series as we continue working through the passage, John chapter 12, verses 20 to 26.
Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, Sir, and this is all of our hearts, isn't it?
[4:20] We wish to see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew, Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

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Truly, truly, amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies and remains alone, but if it dies, if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves this life loses it. Whoever hates this life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me.
And where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.
O Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord. That is the word of the Lord. Please be seated.
[5:25] Thank you once again, praise team, for leading us in beautiful music. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. The German Christian martyr under Hitler, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote this in one of his classic works.

cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance baptism without church discipline communion without confession cheap grace is grace without discipleship grace without the cross grace without jesus christ living and incarnate christmas without christmas is grace without following jesus that's cheap grace some people used to talk about the carnal christian doesn't exist it's cheap grace if we're not following jesus and cheap grace is no grace at all you see true grace is very costly for it costs christ his life but it will also cost us our lives too but it leads to glory much glory great glory eternal glory question have you met the jesus who is so glorious so beautiful so full of eternal love giving everything for you that you have to follow him have you met that jesus the one that you you can't help but follow because he's so amazing he's so compelled the the love of christ paul says compels us have you met that jesus that you you just you want to follow and you do follow because he is so so beautiful christmas exists for death and glory this is why he came last time we begin looking at how our lord jesus applies his pursuit of death and glory by dying that he might bring forth much fruit how he applies it to us he makes that statement about the the grain of wheat falling he's the grain of wheat he's talking about who falls to the earth and dies and bears forth much fruit and then he says what does this mean for you and so in verse 25 last time we started looking at what it means for us to die to self and the world meaning our desires plans and will are no longer the driving force in our lives but the love and kingdom of christ are nor do we live for the fashions and promotions of this world system world system meaning the way of living loving and lounging that leaves god out that way of thinking dominates the cultures of the earth we're no longer of the world but we are in it we're no longer of that system we're no longer of the kingdom of darkness we've been brought into the kingdom of light and when that happens there is something else driving us and when our eyes are open and we realize this world system will be destroyed in the coming of the great king let's talk investments would you invest all of your money in a business that you knew was going to fail i mean you go into your piggy bank and into your savings account and you break out everything you got i don't care if you only got a hundred dollars or you got a hundred million dollars you take all you got you invested into a corporation and and you know it's going to fail
nope we would think you were crazy because you would be this world system is bankrupt and doomed living without christ without without following him is bankruptcy it's doomed but if you've come to know jesus in his rescuing transforming grace you've learned that to risk all for him to invest in his bank and i'm not talking about giving your money to the church i'm talking about investing your soul into his kingdom your life into his bank you recognize that is the best investment you could ever make because it's eternally secure better than the fda or whatever it is that secures us dying to self then what jesus says here dying to self sets us free to live in this to live his way in this world as he created us and live for his glory enjoying him and his creation for him you will be told it's a bad investment by the world system but do you know the truth now if dying to self is what he calls us to there's one other thing he wants us to know here about this death in seeking death and glory we are called to die to self but that also includes dying to sin if they're connected of course dying to sin specifically and be advised and understand we have to let god define what sin is when we talk about sin we have to let him define it why?
because it's ultimately it's rebellion against him so we don't define it our culture will define it differently if it even talks about it at all we don't define sin we let him define what that is so we go to his word to know what that means the gospel kills our old life the gospel kills our old life that's what he's just telling us because as pogo says we have met the enemy and he is us yeah the world system is crowding in on me and pushing in on me and is steeped and trapped in the life and the power of the enemy of our souls yes, yes, yes but there is a huge enemy much closer to you it's in you it's in you and until we learn to hate our sin not hate ourselves that's not going to help you

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hating yourself will not help you it will only feed into the devil devil's lies about you but hating your sin ah, that's different hating your sin until we learn to do that we will never die to it we will never hate our selfishness our self-centeredness if we don't hate it we'll never die to it
Romans 6.6 Paul says this so beautifully we're going to stay there for a minute by the way Romans 6.6 picking up what Jesus is really meaning here in John 12 Paul says we know that our old self is crucified with him the hour is coming the cross is coming our old self he says is crucified with him why?
[13:54] in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we will no longer be enslaved to sin you see the old you and the labels of sinful enslavement that went with it no longer define you child of God follower of Jesus you who have been bought by his blood that your old stuff does not define you you may still struggle with alcohol drugs sexual issues because because we're still fallen the technical term is we are still in the flesh but we're not defined by such sins any longer you can flee them we are told to flee temptation why?

because we are loved by Jesus because we have been we have been killed by Jesus the old you was killed Christ is our life now and therefore Paul goes on in Romans 6 so you must also consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey his passions do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life death and glory and your members to God as instruments for righteousness take me and use me for sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law brother Tolliver but under grace under grace grace here's the problem we don't believe it we've been told that we can't change we've been told that this is the way you're always gonna be we've been told these things and Christians sadly we actually believe it and yet the scriptures keep shouting at us
Jesus is calling us to die whoever verse 25 whoever loves this life whoever hates this life in this world will keep it he's calling us to hate our old life and we will keep it he's calling us to death to deny ourselves to take up his cross and follow him he's saying we and Paul just explains it so wonderfully that we had died to sin wow that deep cause I still sin I still do things at times many times when God but Paul is saying to us yes you do but that's not who you are you're not a slave any longer you can now you can now instead of presenting yourself to the old way of living in the kingdom of darkness you have a choice before it was just the way it was right it was just what I did it's just who I am
I'm like this but no you are in Christ you are a new creation in him now you child of God you've been set free do you believe it though that's where it starts he's done a work in you but do you believe it and believe in it do you now hate the old life hate that life in the world hate that life of rebellion against God hate that life that says you know Jesus he's alright but I got plans do you hate that you can't hate it if you think that's just how you gonna be you've forgotten Jesus is at work in you sin will no longer have dominion over you because of his grace his unearned undeserved unmerited favor he's giving you his love and kindness he's giving you that kind of reality is transformative it's rescuing it's delivering it's it doesn't leave you the same when you've been when you've been captured by that kind of love you want him to please him to please him because because he's the wheat that died for you he's the one that died that you might live and you don't deserve it you see and grabbing hold of that reality he says we're not under law but under grace and when under grace that means grace covers us grace is the roof above our heads that keeps the hail of God's judgment from falling on us that grace is a shield as it were it's better than the blood on the doorpost in Passover this this this grace when God and it will come when his judgment falls on all the earth we who are we who are covered in his grace will just stand there and marvel at God's goodness to us because we're in spiritual union with
Jesus when he died we died when he rose we rose he died the death to our sin to set us free he rose in newness of life that's your story that's your story spiritually speaking that death was yours your old life is tied to the cross killed off what's left new life in Jesus new life in Jesus new life he lives we live believe it your sinful passions are no longer the boss of you Christ and his grace are in charge so what are you going to do what does he tell us to do present the members of our body to God as instruments of righteousness you see the old life was I presented the members of my body which includes my mind by the way I presented all of my body everything that
[21:14] I am I presented it to unrighteousness to do that to not do the will of God to do the things that God says don't do to live the way God says no that'll kill you that's how I lived but now I got a

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new life and I want to present my arms my hands my legs my eyes my dirty mind I want to I want to present it to him I want you I want you to take these hands and put them to work in ways that honor you I want to look at that which come on somebody I want to look at that which will feed me in a good way that which is beautiful that which won't corrupt me

I want my eyes to be focused on see I can't give my eyes to pornography anymore because that is not beautiful it's not you I want my eyes to be focused on what you what you say is beautiful and glorious and you've given me much to look at that is beautiful and glorious you can deny your flesh now and the power of the spirit by choosing the good in Jesus a culture always is trying to say identify yourself this way this is who you are but no no child of God no not saying you don't struggle but saying don't identify who are you who are you Jesus wants you to define and identify yourself by what he has done for you in his death and resurrection when your flesh wants to drive you to sex or substance or even just unjust anger and we struggle with those things amen you can counter with the truth that in
Jesus I choose a different course in sex I don't see people as usable tools for my gratification but they're created in an image of God and must be treated with respect and dignity not objects of my passion sex is good and healthy when enjoyed God's way you begin to recognize that your anger that you that you think is so you know you know I have a right to be but you begin to recognize that your anger often is because you're not getting your selfish way your selfish self-absorbed way and now now in Christ I can trust that God is in control it didn't go my way they didn't vote the way I wanted they didn't do the things I wanted but God's in control of all things I can now focus my anger toward fixing the problem and not dealing with people in an unjust way not seeking revenge and being bitter and destroyed by bitterness even when
I've been mistreated his will be done not mine not yours to my young people who I love greatly you no longer have to have lots and lots of alcohol to have a good time I remember some years ago I was pastoral interned at 10th Prez downtown Philly and I was preaching to Ephesians and at one point it says be not drunk with wine but be filled with the spirit and I was in that passage and it was around Christmas holiday time and we were going to have a big fellowship and the first thing they wanted to know how many kegs we're bringing and I was like guys we're having this party in the home of some brothers and sisters and brothers in
Christ who were guys living together and it was actually going to be in Delaware and we're having this and these guys have been trying to have a testimony in their community let me ask you a question we got we're going to have I'm not against alcohol and the Bible's not against alcohol believe that it is against drunkenness and being buzzed okay okay all right just checking I feel like Paul Green now you hear me thank you Paul I said they see us rolling up how is that going to they're going to say are people going to think that these guys what are you going to think of their testimony at this point I just was asking a question I just wanted them to think about it for a minute and then I asked them I have a question can you have a good time with that alcohol and man the room got quiet these are all young professional people bankers lawyers what not I'm like y'all can't have a good time with alcohol now I wasn't even against alcohol
[26:42] I wanted them to think we're so we think we let the world dictate even how we have fun something needs to change listen we're no longer slaves yeah I can have a cup I had a one you take five of those bad boys you drink five of those what do you think okay I'm moving one Jesus has given you come on for you for you computer hackers Jesus has given you new code it's rewriting the software of your heart and the programming of your life I hope that's right I hope I got that right I'm no hacker you have eternal life in you you are a new creation in Jesus seek this death and you will experience the glory now I gotta move on because I don't got much time left because seeking death and glory also means following

Jesus wherever he leads verse 26 if anyone serves me he must follow me where I am there will my servant be also if anyone serves me the father will honor him to serve Jesus literally there is to wait on tables the idea expanded to helping or rendering assistance being of use to be of use to Jesus he says we must follow him by faith trusting in him this shows therefore that the spirit is in us for this was the life of Jesus Jesus was a servant he called himself such Mark 10 for even the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many we talk a lot about Jesus serving us we make much of it and you better believe we should in the very next chapter chapter 13 of John he will wash his disciples feet including

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Jesus he takes the role of a slave the lowliest slave in that culture to wash people's feet Jesus yes we must make much of him as a humble servant because in serving us he lays down his life for us but more importantly Jesus was the father's servant the father calls him such in Isaiah 53 11 out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied by his knowledge shall the righteous one my servant make many to be accounted righteous he shall bear their iniquities the father speaks of the son as my servant who will bear the iniquities of many and without being the father's servant he could not serve us that's why theologians refer to that prophecy in
Isaiah as the prophecy of the suffering servant but to serve Jesus is to follow him being his disciple that's how Jesus calls his disciples he says follow me all the gospels use this phrase six times John records it and we've looked at a few of them already when Jesus calls you to faith in him when Jesus I'm telling you all the language you use Jesus saves us he calls us to follow salvation is follow me that's the good news follow me because I've made it possible for you to follow me follow me not raise your hand doing a prayer of repentance not pray a sinner's prayer not even ask me into your heart none of those are in scripture by the way not one of them we use those phrases but they're not in scripture
Jesus call to discipleship is believe and follow me that means you've seen his death as the death for your sins paying the debt you owe to God and now you've turned away from following the world in your own ways in order to live your life for him according to his word follow me you're learning the word disciple means a learner you are learning him and his ways so you can think about it so you can compare his ways to a disciple is learning Jesus and his ways to live it to be like the master that's what disciples were in the Jewish that's what they meant when they said rabbis had disciples this is what it meant following him has to mean following him and laying down your life dying to self dying to sin for the glory of the father because if you're following
[32:20] Jesus where is Jesus going where is Jesus going to the cross and to glory for death and glory are you following once again Bonhoeffer in his book the cost of discipleship when Christ calls a man he bids him come and die when Christ calls a man he bids him come and die following him means allowing what he values to determine how you spend your time your talent and your treasure more and more more and more we're growing we're going to start something we're going to start as babes and we're going to hopefully grow up to be more mature as believers in Jesus we're all at different phases and stages you're not and the growth in Christ is not like this

I wish it was I really do it's more like this I can't tell you but but there's life in you so something is happening and did you catch what he said must follow me did you see the word must I'm not making this up it's there you saw it right must follow me literally must continually follow me it's not optional yeah we may have moments in our life where we get off track and the Lord of his grace will bring us back as he sees fit amen to that but but if you're off track you will have no security in knowing if you're truly saved and you should wonder
I can't tell I don't know I'm over here I've been over here for a while that's okay repent come back coming back demonstrates that yes he really is at work in you he's follow me it's your way of life imagine you're going somewhere in Tennessee I mean I love my GPS I don't man I used to remember we used to have maps we moved to DC man anybody would I would say how do I get to I got to go up to to East Capitol Street in DC how do I get here from Virginia people would draw me a map not give me one they actually draw it you take 95 north hit 395 north you go right into the city you turn left I mean it was a little map but now we got GPS I love GPS I love Siri or whoever it is that's talking to me suppose you're using your GPS going to some place you've never been before but instead of listening to it you decide you know better and you don't and you get off track and end up driving to nowhere
I been there middle of the field talking about you've reached your destination and you sit out there it's dark and you're looking at grass baby and trees I've had that happen but let's just say it's right this time okay you thought you were being smart you thought you were being innovative you thought you were being cutting edge you thought you were being progressive by not listening to the GPS which knows where it's going and you don't what do people call you when you do that be nice you know we call you lost you're just lost if we're not following Jesus we're lost you may think you're in a good place it may feel good remember
I told about that investment you invested your money in a company that's going to fail it may give some dividends at first that's that's how scams get us by the way give you a few trinkets give you a few things up front you get a few things oh look I got an extra hundred dollars got an extra thousand

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dollars woo but the company is heading for bankruptcy you never got the memo you don't know what's behind the door you lost even though you feel pretty good at the moment it won't last without following Jesus that good feeling won't last now following Jesus could mean material prosperity well it could mean you just have enough that's up to him but it will always mean servant service to others it could mean being in a place that is not perfect a perfect fit for you but in that place you are useful to him you are available to him sometimes it's in those places that feel like they fit the worst that we are more available to
[38:00] Jesus because we're crying out to him the places where the places where I have felt the least comfort have been times when I've cried out to Jesus and he began to work in me in ways I can't even explain that still bless me to this day following Jesus you're no longer your own Christian he doesn't necessarily tell us each step of the journey beforehand he just says follow me the ultimate destiny he's told us the new heavens and new earth that you'll be with me he's told us that we know that's true but the journey to get there he didn't clarify that and he's not he will show you as you follow Paul Tripp puts it this way he gives us grace in motion he gives you grace to follow and as you follow and more more grace at crucial moments when you need it grace to follow grace as you're following and more grace when those times of deep pain deep confusion more grace when you need it it's all of grace the grace to follow is the grace of transformation the grace of his love and action in us grace produces following if it doesn't then it's not grace well you could this doesn't sound very encouraging maybe to some people all this talk of death and dying

I mean really when I death called no don't get that crazy but notice there's something here and we end with this this glory in death this is what Jesus says there you follow me there were my servant where I am if you follow me where I am there will my servant be also and my father will honor him two things he promises here's some of the glory that in following Jesus no matter where you are no matter where he leads you no matter how tight or difficult the situation may be he's led you there he's promised he's there and you're with him where I am see remember we're following him where is he going to the cross if we go with him if we go with him he promised to be with us but that's the story for him he says
I'm going to glory I'm returning to the father and he promises that he'll make a room for you there too there's room at the cross for you and there's room in glory for you he promises to be with you that is one of the great blessings you ever sensed this presence you ever in worship maybe or in reading your own scriptures on your own have you ever sensed this presence and times in your life where it just made you weep you ever come to worship and sing and cry and just as you singing the Christmas hymns always draw me into worship in such a powerful way and as those words wash over me as I uttered them to the Lord I sense his smile I know he's present it's the reality that he is with us he is
Emmanuel God with us not God away from us but God with us his presence gives me confidence should give you confidence to keep going that gentle touch now I'm not saying you always feel his presence but the word says he's always with us so whether you feel him or not believe the word believe what he said I am with you always even into the end of the age with you he has he has prepared a place for you Debbie it's just what you need and it will take away all of the pain and the suffering you felt with it in this life he's got a place for you and you can never be evicted and then he adds one last thing this blows my mind the father will honor you the living
God father will honor me me a worm he's gonna honor me I'm inconsistent Kevin Smith he's gonna honor me why would he honor me I live to honor him but he's gonna honor me the father will honor you why because you love his son because you're in his son he will honor you because he he he loves Jesus like his own he loves himself the father loves the son and that's why the son resurrects because the father says I love you I will not let death have the last word over you he will praise you he will exalt you are you kidding me no I'm deadly serious because Jesus said it he honors the grace that he gave you that transformed you that helped you follow
[44:16] Jesus and he honors that gift come on come on he's not honoring what you did Kyle as if you did it of your own righteousness he's honoring what he did in you as if you did it man I gotta stop this sermon it's gonna for death and glory there's glory there saints there's glory well my pastor was preaching on this passage and he tells us traveling and preaching in many pulpits Dr.

Boyce would travel from time to time he says he would preach in different pulpits he says some pulpits had clocks so the preacher knows when to stop he said some had a actually had a red light that goes on letting you know you have two minutes left some have signs that say the service ends

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at noon but one little chapel he went to he loved it the stony brook school had a I think that's in New York if I remember correctly had a simple note that faced the preacher and it said sir we wish to see Jesus so when the preacher stepped into that pulpit many times I thought about putting that sign up here on this pulpit and it laminated it and sticking it down because that is my prayer every Sunday sir we wish to see Jesus we wish to see Jesus but I wonder if our culture maybe in one sense may be asking the same thing of Christians and our churches today I wonder if the culture is asking us can we see Jesus Mahatma Gandhi India's celebrated civil rights leader said I like your Christ I do not like your Christians your Christians are so unlike your Christ I've known those words for many years they haunt me I want Jesus to reveal himself in me I hate that statement he said I hate it because you know he had a point now he was living in colonial rule
Christians but but still if that is true it's because we love our lives so much we don't live for death and glory well glory through death I'm afraid that we find it much better to just live for our own glory will you look at the cross with me will you see the prince of glory dying that he might and we might live forever ever will you look at the manger with me in light of the cross low in the grave he lay before that low in the manger he lay it's a direct line from the manger to the cross will you look will you give yourself to his cross and his way family I'm telling you you will find life in death and glory you will find life have you met in
Jesus a love worth dying for for death and glory is Christian living it's what we're created for will you follow Jesus oh lord our god help us we the world keeps telling us we need our best life now and we need to go get it and by any means necessary we need to identify ourselves in all kinds of ways that really don't reflect your word and we're told that if we do these things we'll be happy the culture believes it and so many people fall for that but will you deliver us lord we're your people you brought us to yourself you brought us out of the world the world's way of living and thinking in that sense you brought us out that we may be transformed and renewed and then you send us back in to demonstrate your reality will you empower us will you deliver us from idolatries and deliver us from ourselves deliver us from the sales pitch of our culture around us so that we might live for death and glory for Jesus so lord please help us make
[49:58] Gandhi's words a lie make us like Jesus may his life live in us and be manifest in us revive us even this Christmas season revive us in Jesus name we pray amen same you you

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