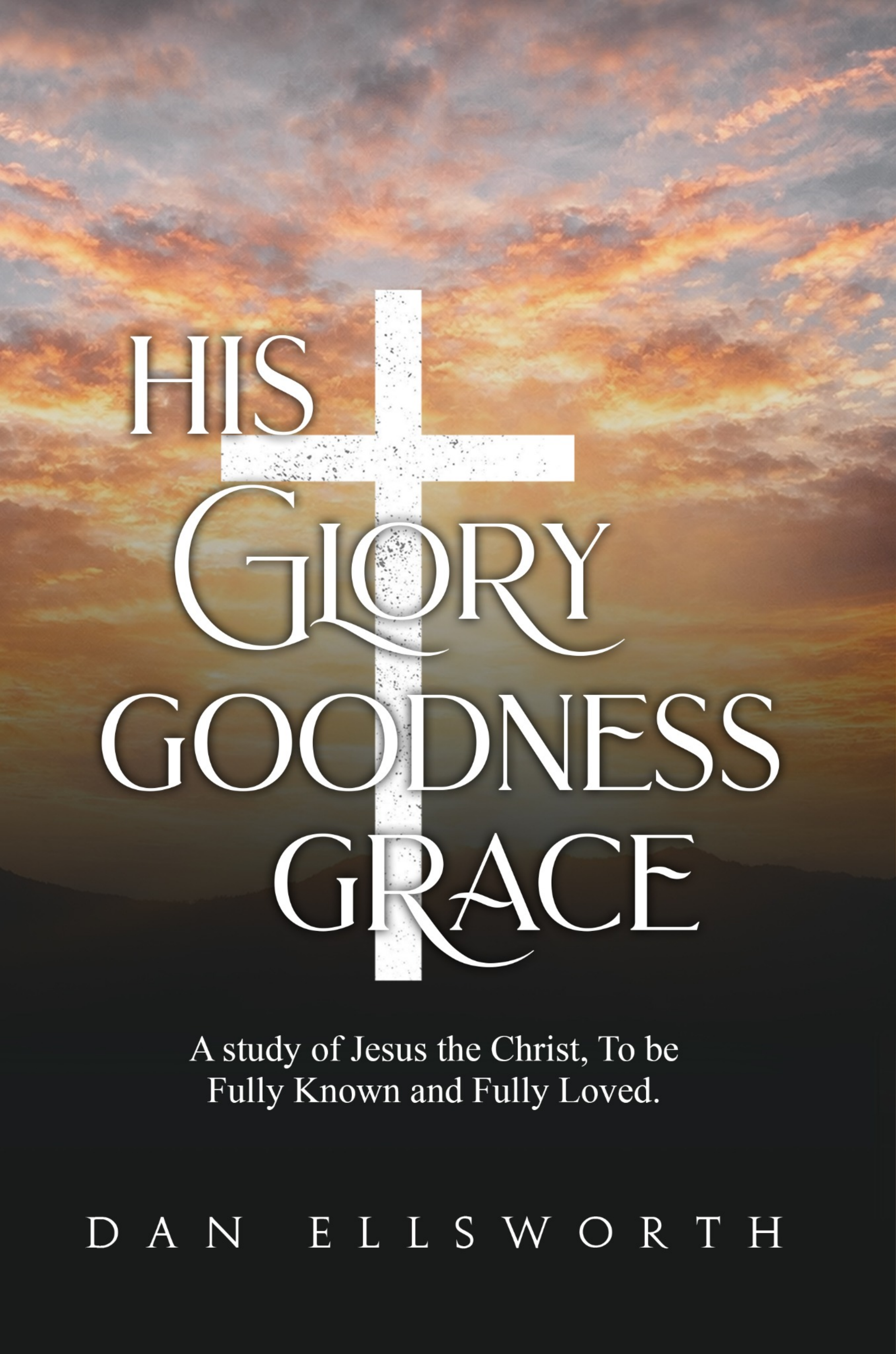




HIS GLORY GOODNESS GRACE

A study of Jesus the Christ, To be
Fully Known and Fully Loved.

D A N E L L S W O R T H

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Dedication

This final study would not exist without the long and faithful friendship I share with Mike and Steve. We have known one another since grade school, and through the changing seasons of life, distance, success, struggle, and growth, that friendship has endured. Few gifts are as rare or as formative as friends who know your beginning and remain present for the journey.

Mike, your conversion to Jesus became the unexpected catalyst for this entire series. Watching your life marked so clearly by transformation, humility, and devotion stirred something deep in me. Your story reminded me that the gospel is not a theory to be defended, but a life to be changed. Your faith was not loud or performative; it was real, costly, and visible. God used your obedience to awaken fresh urgency and clarity in my own walk, and from that spark this work was born.

Steve, you have been the steady presence, the faithful friend who reflects the best of both Mike and me. You listen well, speak truth without spectacle, and show up consistently. Your loyalty, wisdom, and quiet strength have anchored our friendship and modeled what enduring faithfulness looks like. In recent years, I have seen your faith grow in clear and tangible ways through your unwavering commitment to Kathy, your children, and your grandchildren, a devotion that reveals belief not just in words, but in the way you love and lead those closest to you.

I am grateful for both of you. Your lives, friendship, and faith have shaped mine and this study bears your fingerprints throughout.

Biblical Reference

*All Scripture quotations in this study are taken from the
English Standard Version.*

INTRODUCTION
WEEK 1
Returning to Christ



His Glory, His Goodness, His Grace

Every journey of Christian discipleship. no matter how far it progresses. must repeatedly return to its center. Spiritual growth rarely comes from constantly chasing something new, but by seeing what is eternal with greater clarity, humility, and depth. The Christian life is not sustained by novelty, constant activity, or information alone. It is sustained by vision. And the heart of that vision is not a doctrine, a discipline, or a system of belief. At the center of the Christian faith stands a Person. The true center of everything is **Jesus Christ**.

This fourth and concluding study in the series in our small group journey is a deliberate return to that center. Over the course of the previous three studies, we have traced a clear and intentional discipleship arc. one that begins with God's initiating work, continues through Jesus' teaching and training, and now brings us face to face with the deepest most staggering truth of all: Jesus is not only to be known, but you are known by Him!

This study guide does not attempt to replace what came before. It completes it.

How We Arrived Here

In *The Word, the Water, and the Way*, we began where all true discipleship begins. with the movement of the Spirit of God. We encountered Christ as the eternal Word who speaks life, the living Water who cleanses and transforms, and the Way who calls us to

follow him. That study grounded us in revelation and response. God spoke. God moved. God invited.

In *The Truth, the Turn, and the Test*, the focus shifted inward. Jesus confronted the heart through the Sermon on the Mount, calling His disciples to repentance, surrender, and a righteousness that goes deeper than behavior. Faith was no longer theoretical. It was tested, refined, and proven under pressure. Jesus was no longer simply calling followers; He was forming them.

In *The Point, the Path, and the Promise*, we listened as Jesus taught through parables. stories designed not to entertain, but to pierce the heart and demand response. We learned that every parable carries a point that must be heard, a path that must be walked, and a promise that sustains obedience over time. This study guide trained us in perseverance, direction, and hope.

Across these studies, we listened carefully to Jesus as Teacher. But Jesus is more than a teacher.

More Than a Voice We Listen To

Many of us know what it feels like to feel close to someone we have never met. We listen to a favorite podcast, follow a public figure, or hear a familiar voice speak into our lives for years. Over time, that voice begins to feel personal. Familiar. Trusted.

For many years, I listened to Rush Limbaugh. His voice was a constant companion. on long drives, during workdays, and through countless cultural moments. When he passed away, there was a real sense of loss. It felt personal. Yet no matter how close I felt to him,

there was a simple truth that could not be avoided: **he never knew me.** He did not know my name, my story, my sin, or my fears. The relationship was one-directional. I knew of him. I felt connected to him. But he did not know me.

Jesus is not like that.

Christianity is not built on a distant voice speaking into our lives from afar. It is built on the staggering reality that the Son of God knows you personally. He knows your name. He knows your story. He knows your failures. not in theory, but in detail. He knows your wounds, your doubts, your pride, your shame, and your fear. And He does not simply teach crowds. He calls individuals. While others climb ladders to be seen. Jesus carried a cross to know you.

Why We Must Return to Christ Himself

Discipleship does not move in a straight line. It moves in cycles. of seeing, responding, failing, repenting, trusting, and seeing again. If we are not careful, we can become familiar with Jesus without truly beholding Him. We can learn His words while losing sight of His heart. We can study discipleship while drifting from the Disciple Maker Himself.

Scripture consistently calls us back to *beholding*. Transformation begins not with effort, but with vision. Before we walk faithfully, we must see clearly. Before we surrender fully, we must know the One to whom we surrender.

This study guide. *His Glory, His Goodness, His Grace.* is an invitation to slow down and look carefully at Jesus in some of the most

revealing moments of His earthly ministry. These are not abstract teachings. They are personal encounters. moments where Jesus relates to individuals in ways that expose His heart and reshape theirs. We are not studying ideas. We are encountering a Savior.

Glory, Goodness, and Grace: The Rhythm of Relationship

When Moses asked to see God's glory, the Lord did not respond with a display of abstract power or distant majesty. Instead, He revealed His name and proclaimed His goodness and mercy, showing His glory is most clearly seen in His character. From the beginning, Scripture reveals that glory, goodness, and grace are not separate attributes of God, but inseparable expressions of who He is. In Jesus Christ, these realities no longer remain concepts to be studied; they take on flesh and step into our world, inviting us into relationship with the living God.

His **glory** reveals who He truly is. holy, obedient, and unwavering in devotion to the Father.

His **goodness** reveals His heart. compassionate, attentive, powerful, and near.

His **grace** reveals His rescue. freely extended to sinners, failures, and the undeserving.

The Journey Ahead

Over the coming weeks, we will encounter Jesus in deeply personal moments where His glory, His goodness, and His grace are revealed through relationship.

Week 2 Glory in the Desert (*Matthew 4:1 10*)

In the wilderness, we see His glory as Jesus enters our weakness, withstands temptation on our behalf, and remains faithful to the Father where we so often fail.

Week 3 Glory in His Father's House (*Matthew 21:1 13*)

In the temple, we see His glory expressed through holy zeal as Jesus confronts distorted worship. not to shame people, but to restore access to the Father and protect what truly matters.

Week 4 Goodness in the Face of Death (*John 11:1 44*)

At the tomb of Lazarus, we witness His goodness as Jesus stands with grieving friends, weeps with them, and shows that divine power flows from compassionate presence, not emotional distance.

Week 5 Goodness at the Well (*John 4:7 30*)

At a well in Samaria, we encounter His goodness as Jesus seeks out a woman marked by shame, knows her fully, speaks truth with tenderness, and restores her identity rather than condemning her past.

Week 6 Grace at the Cross (*Luke 23:39 43*)

At the cross, we see His grace poured out as Jesus offers forgiveness and eternal hope to a dying criminal who has nothing left to offer except repentance.

Week 7 Grace at a Campfire (*John 21:15 23*)

On the shoreline after the resurrection, we experience His grace as Jesus gently restores a broken disciple, reaffirms his love, and entrusts him again with faithful service.

Week 8 Conclusion

In our final week, we reflect on the Jesus we have encountered. glorious, good, and gracious. and consider how being fully known and fully loved by Him reshapes the way we live, trust, and follow.

The Invitation Before You

The goal of this study is not information, but transformation. Not familiarity, but intimacy. Not admiration, but surrender. Discipleship is not about mastering content; it is about being shaped by the presence of Christ.

As you begin this final study, come honestly. Listen carefully. And allow your heart to be moved. The Jesus you are encountering is not distant. He is near. He knows you fully. He loves you completely. And He gave Himself, personally and completely, to cover your sin and provide for your salvation.

Application Questions

When you think of Jesus, what comes most readily to mind, and how has that shaped the way you relate to Him?

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WEEK 2
Glory in the Desert



Matthew 4:1-10

Entering the Wilderness With Jesus

Before reading further, return to the text itself. Go back and read Matthew 4:1-10 slowly and attentively. Place yourself alongside Jesus as the story unfolds. Imagine the vastness of the desert, the heat pressing down during the day and the cold settling in at night. Contemplate the thirst. Feel the hunger that comes after days without food. Sit with the silence and the isolation. Know that Jesus enters this place fully human, tested in every way we are tested. He does not observe your weakness from a distance, he steps directly into it.

Glory Affirmed Before It Is Tested

The wilderness is never accidental in Scripture. It is the place God repeatedly uses to reveal what is true about Himself, about His people, and about the hearts that follow Him. It is where illusions fall away and allegiance is exposed. Hunger sharpens clarity, silence amplifies temptation, and weakness becomes the stage upon which glory is most clearly displayed. Matthew tells us immediately after Jesus' baptism, after the heavens open, the Spirit descends, and the Father declares, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. This sequence matters deeply. Glory is affirmed before it is tested. Identity is declared before it is challenged. Jesus does not go into the wilderness to discover himself. He goes in knowing exactly who He is.

A Deliberate Confrontation

What unfolds next is not a random encounter but a deliberate confrontation. The wilderness becomes the arena where Satan directly engages the Son of God, not to learn His identity, but to undermine His mission, diminish His obedience, and distort His glory. Satan recognizes Jesus as the Christ. That recognition is not in question. The question is whether Satan can redirect the path of that Christship, whether he can coax the Son into glory without obedience, authority without suffering, a crown without a cross. He cannot. In the wilderness, the glory of Jesus is revealed not in outward power but in faithful restraint, not in spectacle but in submission, not in escaping weakness but in entering it fully and overcoming it on behalf of those who never could.

The Wilderness in God's Redemptive Story

The wilderness has always been a place of testing and formation in God's redemptive story. Israel wandered for forty years after the Exodus, not because God was absent, but because He was forming a people who would learn to trust Him daily. Moses encountered God in the wilderness at the burning bush. Elijah fled into the wilderness in despair and encountered the still, small voice of God. David learned dependence while hiding in caves. Time and again, the wilderness is where God strips away false securities and reveals true glory. Jesus' forty days in the wilderness deliberately echo Israel's forty years. Where Israel failed, Jesus succeeds. Where Israel grumbled, Jesus trusts. Where Israel doubted God's provision, Jesus rests in the Father's word. Jesus is not merely resisting temptation for Himself.

He is reliving Israel's story and rewriting its ending. This is essential for understanding glory, because glory in Scripture is not simply radiance or majesty. It is the visible expression of God's faithfulness, holiness, and covenant-keeping love. In the wilderness, Jesus clearly reveals that glory by remaining faithful under pressure.

Satan Recognizes the Son

One of the most striking features of this passage is Satan's language. Twice he begins his temptation with the phrase, "If you are the Son of God." This is not genuine doubt. It is calculated provocation. Satan is not questioning Jesus' identity but challenging the implications of that identity. The temptation is subtle but pointed. If you truly are who God says you are, why would you remain hungry. Why would you submit to suffering? Why would you wait for the Father when you have power now? This tactic has not changed since the garden. Satan does not deny God's words outright. He reframes them. He invites Jesus to prove His Sonship rather than trust it, to use power independently rather than obediently, to define glory on Satan's terms rather than God's.

The irony is profound. Satan, a fallen angel, recognizes Jesus as the Son of God even as humanity largely fails to do so. This pattern appears repeatedly throughout the Gospels. Demons identify Jesus correctly long before religious leaders or crowds do. When Jesus encounters demonic forces later in His ministry, their response is immediate and fearful. They cry out, "What have you to do with us, Son of God." They beg Him not to torment them. They recognize His authority instinctively. They know His identity, His destiny, and their

inevitable defeat. Satan's recognition of Jesus in the wilderness fits this pattern. The demonic realm knows who Jesus is. The confrontation in Matthew 4 is not about revelation. It is about resistance.

Temptation One: Provision Without Trust

The first temptation addresses physical need. Satan says, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." Jesus has been fasting for forty days. He is genuinely hungry. There is nothing sinful about eating. The temptation is not about bread itself but about source and timing. Satan invites Jesus to meet a legitimate need through illegitimate independence, to rely on His own power rather than the Father's provision, to act apart from God's will rather than within it. Jesus responds with Scripture drawn directly from Israel's wilderness story. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." In doing so, Jesus affirms that true life is sustained not merely by physical provision but by trust in God's faithfulness. This is glory revealed in restraint. Jesus possesses the power to create bread, yet He refuses to do so outside the Father's will. His obedience exposes the lie that self-sufficiency leads to freedom. Instead, Jesus reveals that dependence on God is the highest form of strength.

Temptation Two: Glory Without Obedience

The second temptation moves from hunger to spectacle. Satan takes Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and urges Him to throw Himself down, quoting Scripture to suggest that God will protect Him. This temptation is especially dangerous because it uses religious

language and biblical truth twisted for self-exaltation. Satan invites Jesus to force God's hand, to turn faith into a performance and obedience into entitlement. At its core, this temptation is about manufactured glory. It promises public validation without quiet faithfulness, recognition without submission, and affirmation without trust. Jesus again responds with Scripture, declaring, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." He refuses to demand proof of the Father's care. He refuses to turn intimacy into spectacle. Here we see a pattern that defines Jesus' ministry. Though demons recognize Him and crowds marvel at Him, Jesus repeatedly silences premature acclaim. He avoids self-promotion. He resists being made king on human terms. His glory is not self-asserted. It is revealed through obedience.

Temptation Three: Authority Without the Cross

The final temptation strips away subtlety altogether. Satan shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and offers them in exchange for worship. This is the most audacious temptation of all and a direct attempt to redirect Jesus' mission. Satan is offering Jesus a version of messianic rule without suffering, power without sacrifice, kingship without crucifixion. It is a counterfeit gospel, a promise of influence divorced from obedience. Jesus' response is decisive. "Be gone, Satan. For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'" With this declaration, Jesus exposes the core issue at the heart of every temptation. Worship. Glory belongs to God alone. Any path to glory requiring divided allegiance is false. Jesus will receive the kingdoms of the world, but not by bowing to

Satan. He will receive them through obedience unto death. In this moment, Satan's attempt to diminish Jesus' glory collapses entirely. Jesus does not negotiate, compromise, or delay. He commands Satan to leave, and Satan obeys.

The Recognition of Glory and the Call to Obedience

This wilderness encounter establishes the tone for the rest of Jesus' ministry. Again and again, demons respond to Him with fear and recognition. They know His authority. They know His holiness. They know He has come to overthrow their dominion. When Jesus casts out demons, they do not argue theology. They plead for mercy. They ask for permission. They recognize that His presence signals the collapse of their power. This contrast is sobering. The spiritual forces of darkness recognize Jesus immediately, while human hearts often resist or misunderstand Him. Knowledge alone is not faith. Recognition does not equal surrender. The demonic realm recognizes Jesus' glory but refuses to worship Him. Humanity is invited not merely to recognize His glory, but to receive it through trust and obedience.

Glory Revealed in Faithfulness

The wilderness reveals a profound truth about glory. It shines brightest in faithfulness under pressure. Jesus' glory is not diminished by hunger, isolation, or temptation. It is revealed through them. This is why the wilderness matters for discipleship. Every believer will face seasons of testing, moments when obedience feels costly, shortcuts seem appealing, and God's silence feels heavy. The question is not whether temptation will come, but how we will respond. Jesus does not merely model resistance. He provides it on our behalf. His victory

in the wilderness is credited to those who belong to Him. Where we fail, He remains faithful. Where we are weak, He is strong. This is not moral inspiration. It is redemptive substitution. Jesus withstands temptation as the faithful Son so that we might be restored as beloved children. Hebrews 4:15 “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin”

Living in Light of His Glory

Week Two ultimately invites us to reconsider how we define glory in our own lives. Do we seek recognition without obedience, provision without trust, influence without surrender. The wilderness exposes our motives and reshapes our desires. It teaches us that glory is not found in avoiding hardship, but in trusting God within it. Obedience is not loss but freedom. True authority flows from submission to the Father. Jesus emerges from the wilderness not diminished but confirmed. Angels minister to Him. His mission advances. His glory remains intact, unshakeable, and undefiled. And in His victory, we find hope. The same Jesus who overcame temptation now walks with us through our own wilderness seasons. He does not abandon us there. He meets us there. And in our weakness, He reveals His glory once again. Hebrews 4:16, “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of our need.”

Application Questions

Where in your life are you currently experiencing a “wilderness” season, and what temptations are you facing there to seek relief, recognition, or control apart from trusting God’s timing and provision?

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Which of the three temptations Jesus faced feels most familiar to you right now, and what would faithfulness look like in that area if you chose obedience over a shortcut this week?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Week 2 Devotional Guide

Glory in the Desert

Day 2

God's glory is not spectacle. It is the revelation of His holiness, faithfulness, and authority. Jesus displayed glory through obedience, humility, and surrender to the Father's will. True glory draws attention to faithful devotion more than visible power. When we honor God above self, His glory becomes clear in our choices.

Scripture: John 17:4 5; Hebrews 1:3

Question: What obedient decision will I make today that reflects God's glory over my preferences?

Day 3

The goodness of Jesus is personal and attentive. He sees individuals, not interruptions. His compassion is purposeful care for real people in real need. God's goodness moves toward brokenness with patience and intention. When you remember His goodness, you stop treating love as optional and begin practicing it as worship.

Scripture: Psalm 145:8 9; Matthew 14:14

Question: Who will I intentionally serve today as an expression of Christlike goodness?

Day 4

God's glory is often displayed through steady faithfulness rather than dramatic spectacle. Jesus glorified the Father by completing the work given to Him, day after day, without wavering. Quiet obedience in ordinary moments reveals a glory the world overlooks but heaven honors. Faithfulness is a daily offering that makes God visible through your life.

Scripture: John 17:4; Luke 16:10

Question: What specific act of quiet faithfulness will I complete today without needing recognition?

Day 5

Obedience is not a restriction on freedom. It is an expression of trust in God's wisdom. Jesus' obedience revealed His devotion to the Father and unveiled divine glory through humility. Glory shines where surrender replaces self-direction. When you obey, you declare that God's way is better than your instincts. Obedience becomes worship in motion.

Scripture: John 14:31; Philippians 2:8-11

Question: What clear command of Christ will I obey today, even if it costs me comfort?

Day 6

God's holiness reveals His perfection and purity. When Jesus lived without compromise, He displayed a glory untouched by sin. Holiness

is not withdrawal from the world but devotion to God that shapes life within it. Holiness becomes visible through choices that resist compromise and honor God's presence. A holy life quietly testifies that God is worth obedience.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 1:15 16

Question: What practical boundary or choice will I make today to pursue holiness with clarity?

Day 7

Jesus redefined glory through humility. Though fully divine, He chose servanthood over status. His willingness to kneel, serve, and suffer revealed a glory unlike earthly power. God's glory is often found where pride has been laid down. Humility does not diminish influence. It purifies it. When you serve without self-protection, God is seen clearly.

Scripture: John 13:3 5; James 4:10

Question: Where will I choose humility today by serving someone without seeking credit?