

PLEASANT RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

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State Road, N.C. 28676

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What is the Deepest Desire of My Heart?

The created universe is all about glory. The deepest longing of the human heart and the deepest meaning of Heaven and Earth are summed up in this: the glory of God. The universe was made to show it, and we were made to see it and savor it. Nothing less will do. Which is why the world is as disordered and as dysfunctional as it is. We have exchanged the glory of God for other things (Romans 1:23).

“The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psalm 19:1). That is why all the universe exists. It’s all about glory. The Hubble Space Telescope sends back infrared images of faint galaxies perhaps twelve billion light-years away (twelve billion times six trillion miles). Even within our Milky Way there are stars so great as to defy description, like Eta Carinae, which is five million times brighter than our sun. Sometimes people stumble over this vastness in relation to the apparent insignificance of man. It does seem to make us infinitesimally small. But the meaning of this magnitude is not mainly about us. It’s about God. “The heavens declare the glory of God,” says the Scripture. The reason for “wasting” so much space on a universe to house a speck of humanity is to make a point about our Maker, not us. “Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these [stars]? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing” (Isaiah 40:26).

God at the Center

The deepest longing of the human heart is to know and enjoy the glory of God. We were made for this. “Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth . . . whom I created for my glory,” says the Lord (Isaiah 43:6–7). To see it, to savor it, and to show it—that is why we exist. The untracked, unimaginable stretches of the created universe are a parable about the inexhaustible “riches of his glory” (Romans 9:23). The physical eye is meant to say to the spiritual eye, “Not this, but the Maker of this, is the Desire of your soul.” Saint Paul said, “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2). Or, even more precisely, he said that we were “prepared beforehand for glory” (Romans 9:23). This is why we were created—that He might “make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy” (Romans 9:23).

The ache in every human heart is an ache for this. But we suppress it and do not see fit to have God in our knowledge (Romans 1:28). Therefore, the entire creation has fallen into disorder. The most prominent example of this in the Bible is the disordering of our sexual lives. Paul says that the exchange of the glory of God for other things is the root cause for the homosexual (and heterosexual) disordering of our relationships. “Their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature . . . the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another” (Romans 1:26–27). If we exchange God’s glory for lesser things, He gives us up to lived-out parables of depravity—the other exchanges that mirror, in our misery, the ultimate sellout.

The point is this: We were made to know and treasure the glory of God above all things; and when we trade that treasure for images, everything is disordered. The sun of God’s glory was made to shine at the center of the solar system of our soul. And when it does, all the planets of our life are held in their proper orbit. But when the sun is displaced, everything flies apart. The healing of the soul begins by restoring the glory of God to its flaming, all-attracting place at the center.

Starved for Glory

We are all starved for the glory of God, not self. No one goes to the Grand Canyon to increase self-esteem. Why do we go? Because there is greater healing for the soul in beholding splendor than there is in beholding self. Indeed, what could be more ludicrous in a vast and glorious universe like this than a human being, on the speck called Earth, standing in front of a mirror trying to find significance in his own self-image? It is a great sadness that this is the gospel of the modern world.

But it is not the Christian Gospel. Into the darkness of petty self-preoccupation has shone “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4). The Christian Gospel is about “the glory of Christ,” not about me. And when it is—in some measure—about me, it is not about my being made much of by God, but about God mercifully enabling me to enjoy making much of Him forever.

Greatest Good of the Gospel

What was the most loving thing Jesus could do for us? What was the endpoint, the highest good, of the Gospel? Redemption? Forgiveness? Justification? Reconciliation? Sanctification? Adoption? Are not all of these great wonders simply means to something greater? Something final? Something that Jesus asked His Father to give us? “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me” (John 17:24). “It’s not about my being made much of by God, but about God mercifully enabling me to enjoy making much of Him forever”

The Christian Gospel is “the gospel of the glory of Christ” because its final aim is that we would see and savor and show the glory of Christ. For this is none other than the glory of God. “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature” (Hebrews 1:3). “He is the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15). When the light of the Gospel shines in our hearts, it is “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6). And when we “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2), that hope is “our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). The glory of Christ is the glory of God.

In one sense, Christ laid the glory of God aside when He came: “And now, Father, glorify me together in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed” (John 17:5). But in another sense, Christ manifested the glory of God in His coming: “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). Therefore, in the Gospel we see and savor “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6). And this kind of “seeing” is the healing of our disordered lives. “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” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Taken from “Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ,” Revised Edition, by John Piper. ©2004 Desiring God Foundation. Published by Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois. Used by permission. All rights reserved. John Piper is founder and teacher of DesiringGod.org and chancellor of Bethlehem College & Seminary. For 33 years, he served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is author of more than 50 books.

GOD'S BLESSINGS JAN. 16, 2022

BUDGET NEEDS:	\$7,265.61
BUDGET RECEIPT:	

GOD'S BLESSINGS JAN. 23, 2022

BUDGET NEEDS:	\$7,265.61
BUDGET RECEIPT:	\$7,898.00
LOTTIE MOON	\$200.00

GOD'S BLESSINGS JAN. 30, 2022

BUDGET NEEDS:	\$7,265.61
BUDGET RECEIPT:	\$7,702.00
BAPTIST MEN DESIGNATED:	\$140.00



Service Times

Sunday

- 10:00 am - Children's Sunday School
- 10:00 am - Adult Sunday School
- 11:00 am - Worship Service

Wednesday

- 6:00 pm - Choir Practice
- 7:00 pm - Children Night Class
- 7:00 pm - Adult Bible Study
- 7:00 pm - Youth Bible Study

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WIFI: PLEASANT RIDGE, PASSWORD: PLEASANTRIDGE

WIFI IN NURSERY AREA: PRBC, PASSWORD: PLEASANTBAPTIST

Tri-C for February: 2lb Bags Flour Donations:

Ark Meal for Feb. 15: Debbie Garner

LifeLine Baby Bottle Campaign: Month of February All proceeds given through the Baby Bottle Campaign helps to equip Lifeline to serve women, men, and families in our community. At Lifeline, we believe each person should have the ability to receive physical, emotional, and spiritual support as they face family and pregnancy-related situations and circumstances.



Wedding Shower: PRBC, you're invited to Ashley Wood & Kristopher Stroud's wedding shower on Feb. 6! It's a floating shower from 4-5:00 pm in the fellowship hall. They are registered at Amazon.com and Walmart.com

Youth Snow Tubing: at Jonas Ridge, Sat. Feb. 19th. Please see Pastor Brandon for more info.

Youth Trip: to Snowbird Wilderness Outfitters, Fri. April 8-10th. Please see Pastor Brandon for more info.

PRBC Contribution Reports have been mailed if you hadn't picked them up.

PRBC, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

With the New Year, the church is looking to update our member records to keep this as accurate as possible. If anything has changed in your life: new address, phone number, family members or anything else regarding yourself and/or your family, please let PRBC Church Clerk Gala Calloway know. 336-480-1031 THANK YOU!

Pastor's Corner

"For you have not come this way before"... This is from our Wednesday Night Bible Studies, this week from the Book of Joshua. That is what the LORD told Joshua as he was appointed the new leader of the nation of Israel, and they were getting ready to go over the Jordan into the promised land!

We have been studying some life applications on Wednesday, this is part 2 of the 5th session as we take what God gives us to do, SERIOUSLY! In our walk of faith, He is consistently pressing us to the borders of our own comfort zones, building our faith and trusting HIM! You've heard it... "GET OUT OF THE BOAT"! There are victories to be won as we follow in obedience to God's leading!

Join us on Wednesday nights... "It's gonna be good ya'll"