

A large wooden cross stands on a grassy hill, silhouetted against a bright, golden sunset. The cross is reflected in the calm water in the foreground. The sky is a mix of warm orange and soft yellow, with a few wispy clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

*Reflecting*

God's Glory

January

## Reflecting on The Glory of Salvation

“Just be a Good Human.” This is a common slogan I see these days on bumper stickers and t-shirts. According to a recent wellness article, being a good human is defined as “having kind eyes, speaking kind words, and operating from a kind heart. Good humans take care not to cause unnecessary harm to those around them and are motivated by seeing others doing well. More than that, they desire to do good because they can.” That sounds like an acceptable standard, right?

But what does the Bible say about our ability to truly be good?

Isaiah 64:6 says, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

In the beginning, God created man, and He called him good (Genesis 1:31). And mankind, in the beginning, was good, but sin entered the world through man and infiltrated every aspect of humanity. When Jesus walked the earth, He said, there is none good except the Father (Mark 10:18).

The Bible tells us the glory of the cross is this: that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:8). He so loved us all that He died on Calvary to bridge the gap between Holy God and sinful man that whosoever believes on Him will never die but will live with Him forever (John 3:16).

We must remember without Christ, we are depraved in every area—thought, word, will, and deed. Even the “good things” we do, unless they are in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ, are, at best, just achieving the world’s feeble standard of being a “good human.”

We aren’t called to merely be nice but to mirror Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9; 11-12 (ESV) says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works,

so that no one may boast. Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh . . . were . . . separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world”.

It has been said if we treasure all we have in Christ, we must remember who we were without Him.

## *A Hymn of Thanks*

*Shackled by a heavy burden,*

*‘Neath a load of guilt and  
shame.*

*Then the hand of Jesus  
touched me,*

*And now I am no  
longer the same.*

*He touched me, Oh He  
touched me,*

*And oh the joy that floods my  
soul!*

*Something happened and  
now I know,*

*He touched me and made me  
whole.*

## Application:

Take a moment to reflect specifically on what He has saved you from (a sinful lifestyle, destructive relationships, dangerous situations, etc.).

Write out a list of blessings God has bestowed upon you through salvation in place of the curses of sin.

## Reflecting the Glory of Redemption

According to John 8:34, we have all been enslaved: “Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin” (ESV).

In this context, Jesus spoke to those who thought they were good, religious people. They had rejected the idea they were enslaved to anything or anyone. But Jesus saw the stronghold sin had on their hearts.

### *Hymn of Praise*

*Amazing grace how sweet  
the sound*

*That saved a wretch like me*

*I once was lost, but now I'm  
found*

*Was blind, but  
now I see*

*My chains are gone,  
I've been set free*

*My God, my Savior has ransomed me*

*And like a flood His mercy  
reigns*

*Unending love*

*Amazing grace*

*(Lyrics by Chris Tomlin)*

Did you know you are always laboring in the spiritual realm? We are never in neutral. Our lives are being lived to further the kingdom of darkness or for God.

Slavery is defined as the ownership of a person as property, especially regarding their labor. Slavery typically involves compulsory work, with the slave's

location of work and residence dictated by the party holding them in bondage. Enslavement is the placement of a person into slavery.

When we walk in darkness and gratify our flesh, we contribute toward the schemes and goals of the evil one. He plans to steal, kill, and destroy that which God created to be good (see John 10:10). Sin sullies our ability to reflect light, rendering us ineffective to those who desperately need the Lord. Because of this, our sin doesn't just affect us; it negatively affects all we encounter.

However, when we walk in the Spirit and reject evil in every aspect of our lives, we radiate the glory and goodness of God! We are choosing to labor for Him and His amazing, redemptive plan for mankind.

### Application:

In John 8:32, *what* did Jesus say makes us free?

In verse 35, *who* sets us free?

When God saves us, we are still not our own. We are bought with a price; we are redeemed. Redemption is defined as the deliverance from sin and the atonement for guilt. It is the repurchase, as of something sold.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

### Application:

Because our bodies are now the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, how should that change how we treat them to honor Christ? Are you determined to live a godly life?

Read Ephesians 2:1-9. What are the comparisons of what we were before we were redeemed versus who we are in Christ?

You are God's workmanship, created in Christ to do the good works He has prepared for you to do

(Ephesians 2:10). You are a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). In Christ, you are alive to God—living in unbroken fellowship with Him (Romans 6:11).

“As a result of grace, we have been saved from sin’s penalty. One day we will be saved from sin’s presence. In the meantime, we are being saved from sin’s power.” (Author and Bible teacher Allistair Begg)

## Reflecting the Glory of Sanctification

As the redeemed of Christ, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Each day, our primary focus should be to worship and to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. When this is our desire, the Holy Spirit works inside us to continually grow and guide us into God’s plans and purposes.

In his devotional book, Oswald Chambers wrote, “The greatest characteristic a Christian can exhibit is this completely unveiled openness before God, which allows that person’s life to become a mirror for others. When the Spirit fills us, we are transformed, and by beholding God we become mirrors. You can always tell when someone has been beholding the glory of the Lord, because your inner spirit senses that he mirrors the Lord’s own character. Beware of anything that would spot or tarnish that mirror in you.” (*My Utmost for His Highest* – January 23rd)

Even, or rather, *especially* in the mundane and ordinary tasks, the way we live our lives should reflect the character of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “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” (ESV).

The Word of God is a mirror to our souls—it shows us who we are and who God is.

Of God’s glory, Psalm 104:1-2 says, “O Lord my God, you are very great!

You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering

yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent” (ESV).

Our human nature is described this way in Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way.”

Our tendency is not toward God but toward self. The more time we spend with Him praying, reading and studying the Bible, and applying its teachings to our daily lives, He transforms our thinking, attitudes, desires, responses, and actions.

Galatians 5:22-25 is an excellent “mirror verse” to gauge where we are spiritually: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”.

## Application:

According to this verse, what areas have you experienced significant growth in Christ?

Growing in Christ and reflecting His glory are to be a part of the ongoing Christian journey. In James 1:22-24, we are warned, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing” (ESV).

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12). Though none of us have arrived at perfection, we continue striving toward living godly lives.

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one

has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Colossians 3:12-14, ESV).

### Application:

We are God’s chosen. His holy (set apart) ones. His beloved. Meditate on this truth.

How does this empower you to “put on” the godly qualities listed in this verse?

In what areas can you ask God to grow you so you can bear even more fruit for Him?

### Reflecting Light in the Darkness

We have been saved. We have been redeemed. We have been sanctified. What are we to do now? We are to reflect God’s light!

Did you know that the moon has no light to shine of its own? Without the sun, it wouldn’t be visible at all. Just as the otherwise darkened moon reflects the sun’s brilliance, we have the privilege of reflecting Christ’s glory in our lives amidst the backdrop of the desperate darkness pervading our neighborhoods, cities, and world!

Matthew 5:14-16 says, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (ESV).

“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life’” (John 8:12, ESV).

## *Hymn of Dedication*

*Take my life and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee.*

*Take my moments and my  
days;*

*let them flow in endless praise,  
let them flow in endless praise.*

*Take my will and make it  
thine;*

*it shall be no longer mine.*

*Take my heart it is thine own;*

*it shall be thy royal throne,  
it shall be thy royal throne.*

*(Lyrics by Frances R.  
Havergal)*



## *Hymn of Challenge*

*I just wanna speak the name of Jesus*

*Over every heart and every mind*

*‘Cause I know there is peace within*

*Your presence I speak Jesus*

*Your name is power Your name is  
healing Your name is life*

*Break every stronghold Shine  
through the shadows Burn like the  
fire*

*Shout Jesus from the mountains  
Jesus in the streets Jesus in the dark-  
ness over every enemy Jesus  
for my family I speak the  
holy name Jesus*

*(Lyrics by Charity Gayle)*



When we align our lives with the Word of God and ask Him to use us for His glory and purposes daily, lost souls around us are illuminated with the Gospel, strongholds of sin are broken, and chains are falling off from the captive in the spiritual realm.

This is why it is imperative we keep our lives free from sin and daily meditate on Scripture and apply it to every circumstance. The closer we are to the Lord, the more brilliantly our lives reflect Him and point others to the reason for our hope!

Regarding our behavior toward unbelievers, 1 Peter 3:15 says, “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (ESV).

We honor Christ as holy in our hearts when we give Him the rightful throne of our lives—to be the supreme ruler over every aspect of our being.

When others watch you respond to life’s challenging circumstances in godly ways, you are sure to get questions about your faith (see 1 Peter 2:12). To be prepared for the inevitable questions, you must read and study the Bible, listen to the Spirit of God, and pray for wisdom, courage, and opportunities to share your faith effectively.

### Application:

How are you preparing to make a defense for the hope you have?

Who is lost around you that needs your prayers and a godly influence?

In what specific, purposeful ways today can you reflect God’s light to someone you know who is living in darkness?

Every Christian has the incredible privilege of living a godly life empowered by the Holy Spirit, sharing the Gospel, and making disciples. It isn’t an exclusive calling reserved for the pastor, a deacon, a Sunday School teacher, or the “super-Christian” down the road. The Great Commission is for us all!

Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20, ESV).

### Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for the amazing grace You have lavished upon our lives. We are grateful for Your salvation and Your redemption. We rejoice to be called the children of Light! We long to shine like stars in the heavens, our homes, our communities, and our world.

We believe You have purposefully placed us where we are to display Your glory to those around us. Enable us then, Lord, to labor for You and for Your purposes alone so that You may be clearly and beautifully reflected in the mundane and grand moments of our fleeting lives. We confess that You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we lift Your name high for all to hear and see.

Prepare our hearts.

Prepare our souls.


Prepare our minds.

Prepare our mouths.

Prepare our feet.

Prepare our hands.

All for Your glory and all for Your sake.

Amen 

### About the Writer:

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