

Missions: For the Glory of God

Scripture Reading — [May this] grace ... cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 4:15

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What really motivates us to do missions? Too often it is guilt. Sometimes it's compassion. But the apostle Paul was motivated primarily by the glory of God.

Glory is sometimes a difficult word to grasp. It speaks of God's splendor, the qualities of his greatness, relating to who God is and how he deals with us.

God's glory is seen first in creation. The world God made bears his stamp of power, order, and beauty. This thought struck me a while back while touring a remote island with a visiting pastor. On the beach lived hundreds of little hermit crabs--creatures that inhabit other discarded shells. I took one into the palm of my hand. There we could see its amazing detail, the tiny claw spots and fragile leg hairs. I showed it to our visitor, who looked at it and then exclaimed, as if not speaking to me, "Well done, God! Well done!"

But we see God's glory most clearly in the person and work of his Son, Jesus Christ, who is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3). In Jesus' life we see clearly a part of God's glory that was mostly hidden before--God's grace, love, and forgiveness. This glory shines forth each time a sinner turns and experiences anew God's grace in Christ. And as it did for Paul, this glory can motivate us into missions wherever we are.

Prayer

Dear Father, help us to see your glory. Help us to point others to your Son, Jesus, so that they too will shine with your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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