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Good morning. Children may be dismissed to children's church. And we are going to open with a word of prayer. Glorious Heavenly Father, you are so amazing and so wonderful and you are worthy of everything we have to offer. God, as we go through this lesson today, please help us to understand that. Please speak to our hearts through your Holy Spirit to help us understand how beautiful and wonderful and amazing you are and how that you are worthy of all the glory that whether we eat or drink or anything we do, we should do it all to your glory. Help us to truly understand what that means. Help us to truly understand how worthy and deserving you are of that. I pray that as we study these scriptures that you cause them to leap to life within us. Help us to truly understand and pick apart what it is you are saying in your word. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen. Okay, so today I'm going to finish up what I started last week, which was talking about glorifying God. The Bible says that God is worthy of all glory. The Bible says whether we eat or drink or anything, we should all do it to his glory. And we've heard those kinds of verses, and we know that we're supposed to be doing that, but sometimes it's kind of hard to figure out how to do impracticality. And so what we're going to be doing today is going through examples of things that we glorify in our lives, the things that we love and obsess over, and looking at how we treat those things and applying that to how we should be treating and glorifying God. And what I would like to do is, for my first point, last week I had five points and I spent the whole time talking about just point number one. And it's such an important point that I'm just going to briefly recap it because we can't forget the first point. If your favorite author is going to be at a local bookstore, you go and you meet him. If you have enough money, an opportunity to buy a backstage pass to your favorite musician's concert, you buy the backstage pass. If you have an opportunity to get a walk-on role on one of your favorite TV shows and meet all of the cast members of your favorite show, you enter that competition or whatever it takes to try and get that opportunity to be around, be near the people you love, your heroes, your idols, whatever you want to call them. You want to spend time with them. You want to be near them. And that is the first point on ways we can glorify God is being near God. Don't neglect your relationship with him. When you are saved, when you put your faith in Jesus, he sets his Holy Spirit in your heart so that you can be with him and near him until the day you see him face to face. We looked at that verse, it was John 15, where Jesus is talking about he's the vine and we are the branches that we are to be growing out of him. And he says, abide in me, abide in me. And this is so important to our Christian walk. We must abide in Jesus. Oswald Chambers a few days ago said this. Jesus did not say make converts to your way of thinking. What he said was look after my sheep, see that they get nourished in the knowledge of me. We can't as service what we do in the way of Christian work. Jesus Christ calls service what we are to him, not what we do for him. Discipleship is based on devotion to Jesus Christ, not on adherence to a belief or creed. Quoting Jesus, if any man come to me and hate not such and such, he cannot be my disciple. There is no argument and no compulsion, but simply if you would be my disciple, you must be devoted to me. A man touched by the Spirit of God suddenly says, now I see who Jesus is and that is the source of devotion. Jesus didn't go to the cross to get you out of hell. Jesus didn't go to the cross to give you a real sweet after party up in heaven. Jesus went to the cross in order to create and reestablish this relationship between him and us. He wants real relationships. When you think of your friends, your good dear friends, when you think of the people you love and you're married to or that you hope to be married to, those heart connections, that is what God wants with us. That is why Jesus went to the cross. He wants a heart connection relationship with us. In 1 Samuel 13, we have the story of King Saul, who was going to be going up against the Philistines and the prophet Samuel, I think it just slipped my mind. I think of Samuel said, don't go up against the Philistines until I get there and offer the sacrifice to God. He said, I'll be here on this day and you just wait for me. And so Saul gets there and he waits and waits. And finally, the day arrives and Samuel's late and Saul's like, I'm just going to go ahead and do it. And Saul offers Saul goes ahead and offers the sacrifice. And Samuel shows up as promised and says, what have you done? He said, God would have blessed and extended your kingdom forever, but now you're going to be cut off because God is looking for someone. He's looking for a man after his own heart. He's not looking for a great military leader. He's not looking for a great king. He's looking for a man after his own heart. And that applies to the one who is king of Israel and applies to us today. He's not looking for employees. He's looking for people who love him, people who want to be in relationship with him. It's all about love. An employee is only really concerned with their own personal gain. They don't really care about the business. They're just kind of along for what they get out of it. God doesn't want employees. He wants people to have relationship, to have a heart connection to him. Be very careful of approaching God on your own merit. How worthy you think you are. Because if you think I'm super awesome and I don't smoke or chew or go with girls who do, and because of that, that you have the right to approach God, then you're approaching him with pride. And that's actually a wall between you and God. But at the same time, if you think you're horrible and you're terrible and you've sinned and messed up so many times that you can't approach God, well, that's also pride. Because you are contradicting what God says, and God says that he is able to wash you clean by the blood of Jesus, completely forgive you of all your sins, and that you have as much right as Jesus Christ himself to stand before the Father and make your request known and to be God's child. When you are forgiven, you are covered with the blood of Jesus. And what that means is that every good thing Jesus ever did is credited to you. And every bad thing you ever did was credited to Jesus on the cross. So thinking you're all special and cool just denies the cross. So don't do that. But thinking that you're miserable and weak and worthless is also wrong because it also denies the cross. It denies that your sins were covered, your debt was paid, and that you have the right to approach God. Jesus went to the cross so that you could do that, so that you could approach God boldly and yet humbly remembering that it wasn't by your merit that you approach. He did all that because he wants relationship with you. And this is just the most important thing. And so as we live our lives in this relationship with God, and as people see us stopping to pray before our meals, when people see us entering into catastrophe with prayer and faith, when we say, "Sorry, I can't do that with you Sunday morning because I'm going to go spend time with the family of God," when people see you setting aside time to be with God, when they see you rescheduling your priorities around God, that's when God will be glorified. The first way we can glorify God is to not neglect our relationship with him. The second way we can glorify God is to not neglect our relationship with him. The second way we can glorify God is to not neglect our relationship with him. The second way we can glorify God is to not neglect our relationship with him. The second way we can glorify God is to not neglect our relationship with him. That you don't quite agree with because you love your boss or you love your job or whatever. Or if you really love the government of the country we live in, I'm not talking about individual politicians, but if you love the idea of democracy and what we have going here, then you vote, you obey the law, you act as a good citizen. But if you hate your boss and you hate your job, then you're rebellious and you don't obey the company workplace policies. You come in late, you're not clean shaven, you don't care. And when you don't love the government that we live in, the country we live in, then you break laws, you develop an attitude of anarchy. And what we can learn from this is that we glorify God when we obey him. When we obey him. John 15 verse 10. You're going to have to give me just a moment because I didn't have time to print these out at camp when I was covered in chocolate syrup. It was crazy. John 15 10 says, "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love." And if we jump back to verse seven and eight, it says, "If you abide in me and my words, you will ask what you desire. It shall be done for you. And by this, my father is glorified when you bear much fruit." So what we see here is that by obeying him, we put ourselves in a position to abide in him. And through that abiding in him, our prayers get answered, and answered prayers glorify God. I remember growing up here in Carmel, I went to Carmel High School for a couple of years, and one of my history teachers was named Mr. Brown. And my mom had the same history teacher, so he was a long-term teacher. And one of the stories I remember him telling us was how when Martin Luther King was assassinated, Robert Kennedy was here in town to give a campaign speech, and he just threw out the speech he was going to give. And instead, he gave this speech where at first he announced to the audience, who hadn't heard the news yet, that Martin Luther King had been assassinated. And if you listen to the recording, you just hear these shocked screams and gasps when he tells them. But then he goes on to say, "This is a chance for us to show what kind of country we're going to be. Are we going to be a people who just turn back to anarchy when something doesn't go our way? Are we going to pursue the ideals that Martin Luther King wanted of peace and equality and forgiveness? And even though rioting broke out all over the country in the wake of that tragedy, here in Indianapolis where he gave that speech, we did not have rioting. And it was because these people liked Robert Kennedy, and so they obeyed what he said. They glorified him by obeying him. And that is the same way that when we obey God, we will see that even in opportunities, there are things you can do in this country, which are legal and they are culturally acceptable, but according to the Bible, they're sin. You know, it is culturally acceptable not to wait until you're married to start sleeping with your girlfriend. And sorry, that's the first one that popped into my head. But there are things like that that culture says, "Just fine, just do it, whatever." And yet we as Christians, we say, "You know what? No. I'm going to, even though you guys are going to look at me funny, even though everyone says it's fine, go on, do it, jump on the bandwagon, I'm going to do what God says. And when people see you obeying God, it will glorify God. Even though people might mock you for doing what's right, it may make your life difficult with people outside the church. With God, it will bring him glory. And so our obedience glorifies God. Number three. Maybe you have a favorite actor or director, and you know that they have this movie coming out, and you're so excited to see it, or maybe it was based on your favorite book or something. And before it's even released, all the critics get a chance to see it, and the critics come back and say, "Oh, it's terrible." That's probably happened to most of us. Or maybe that happened with a book or a music album. Before you even have a chance to see it, you start telling you, "Oh, it's terrible, just don't even bother." Or when there's a little kid at school, and his friends come up to him and they say, "There's no such thing as Santa." You know what he does? He goes home on Christmas Eve, and he still stays up late, and he still listens for jingle bells and looks for Rudolph out the window. And in your case, you still go to that movie, and you still read that book, and you still listen to that album. Even though people have said, "Don't do it, it's not worth it," you still do it. You still partake. You still give them the chance. The third thing we can do to glorify God is to trust Him, to trust God, even when people say that trusting God is foolishness, even when they say there's no one listening on the other end of your prayers, even when they say the way you're going about these things, because you're doing it the biblical way, they say that's foolishness, that's never going to work. Just trust God, and when you trust God, that will bring Him glory. Proverbs 3, 5, and 6, most of you probably have this memorized, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Trust in the Lord with all your heart. There's expectation involved there. The Bible is full of promises about God. He will never leave you or forsake you. He will hear and answer your prayers. When you are faced with temptation, He will provide you a way of escape. Before you were born, all the days of your life were recorded in His book. And He knows the plans He has for you, plans that prosper you. All these promises about God's character and who He is and what He has in store for you. So trust those promises. Believe what the Bible says. Lean on Him. There's been so many times in my life, personally, where actually relying on the promises seems to actually make them happen. You know, it's like it's when I step out in faith that God's there to catch me. It's when I take that leap, God catches me. And when I make that leap in a public, visible manner, and everybody's watching, God catches me, and that brings Him glory. When you trust in Him in a public way, He will glorify Himself by taking care of you, by keeping His promises. The next point. This seems like one of the obvious ones. If you have a favorite movie author or whatever, you buy the book, you buy the movie ticket, you buy the CD, you pay extra for the backstage pass, you pay extra for the autographed copy of the book, pay extra for the t-shirt. You can glorify God by financially supporting Him. This is not some veiled attempt at me to get you to start getting out your wallets. We're not taking an extra offering or anything. But when we truly love God and when we want to glorify Him, one of the ways we can do that is by using our money for His purposes and for His kingdom. As I was thinking about this, I was thinking, "Wow, we spend so much money on other stuff and not so much on God." But then I realized it's not really a fair comparison because when we're spending money on other stuff, we're bartering. We give money and we get something back. And that's not really how it works with God. With God, we're just giving. We know that we can't buy blessing from God, we can't buy forgiveness from God with our money. We don't give our money to God in order to get something. So trying to compare that with how the world works with buying and bartering, it's not really fair. And I started trying to think, "Well, what areas of our life do we just give money away and we're not getting something back from it?" And there's not much. Our society is so cautious and so protective of our money that it's very rare. I mean, people at the store are like, "Would you like to donate a dollar to the little Dyeing Children's charity?" And we're like, "Ehh, it's like a dollar." And yet we're like, "I'm not sure if I want to just give away a dollar." And we're very protective about what happens to our money. We don't just like to just send it away and give it away. And that is why even more so when we put our money towards the kingdom of God, it glorifies God. Because people look at that and they're like, "That's money you could be spending on your vacation or your RV or on something. You could be getting something for that money and you're just giving it away. You're not getting anything from it." And that is what glorifies God. When we use our money for God's glory instead of our own, we build His kingdom instead of our own. So we can glorify God with our money. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6, 21, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Don't obsess over money. Don't hold on to that too tightly because it'll just drag you down. And I've been fortunate in my life that I've been kind of transient up till now. And so I have not had the luxury of being able to have a lot of stuff. And so it's been a little easier for me to be able to give it away because it's like, "Well, I can't really buy a bed. I haven't owned a bed. I haven't owned my own bed my whole life. I had a bed when I was a little kid, but I've never actually owned my own bed. It's still there. Yeah. And they're always trying to get me home. But yeah, you know, it's like that's not something that I can... I don't have the space for that. If I have to pack up and God calls me somewhere, then carting a bed around the country or the world or wherever is just not an easy thing to do. And yet I've found that having that freedom of not having a bunch of stuff to worry about, not having to worry about, "Oh, if there's a fire, what's going to happen to all my stuff?" It's like there's nothing really there to lose. It's not even worth ensuring it, you know? I've got just a couple thousand dollars of possessions and you look at all my clothes and books and board games. Board games. I've definitely hit the point where I cannot have any more board games. I just... I could not fit anything else in my car if I tried to move. No more board games. I'm sure you'll hang on to them for me. So we can glorify God when we financially support Him. Finally, the last point. This is the other really obvious one. If you're a Colts fan, I'm positive that your friends know that you're a Colts fan. Or if you're a fan of some actor or some author or some musician, I'm sure that your friends know that you're a fan of that person, of that musician, author, whatever. And that is because you've told people that you're a fan. We can glorify God by telling people about Him. And as I say that, it sounds so simple coming out of my mouth, and yet we make it so complicated. And we worry about memorizing the Romans road and making sure that we cover all of these points of theology. And really, if you have remembered the first point, if you have developed this actual, loving, loving, amazing relationship with the God who loves you and went to the cross just to be with you, if you have this joy and this strength and this friendship with Jesus and being a child of the Father, if you have that, then you don't have to worry about all of that theological nonsense. You're just going to be so happy to be able to spend time in God's presence every day that it's going to be second nature to tell people about Him. Just the way it's second nature for you to tell people about your favorite book or your favorite sports team or whatever. If it's still difficult for you to talk to people about Jesus, it's either because you're trying to make it too complicated or...and that's okay, and that's a problem, is because another thing that we do wrong is when we tell people... If you tell someone about the cults, let's say you're a cults fan, and I'm sure that's not a stretch for this audience, if you tell someone about the cults, you're not really concerned about winning them over to making them a cults fan. It would be great if they were. It would be great if you could share that joy and that experience with them, but really you're just expressing to them something that you love, and you don't get hung up on the conversion. I know saving souls is important and all that, but really when we get so caught up on that, when we have that little hidden agenda behind sharing our joy about God with people, when we tell our unsafe friends about the joy of Jesus, but we have this agenda and we're really trying to kind of steer the conversation, and you know, trying to get them to make that statement of faith, and they see through that, and it spoils it because there's that agenda there. When I say share Jesus, share your love of God with people, just talk about how great he is to you. Talk about what he's done for you. He is good and wonderful, and I hope you've experienced that, and if not, it's my prayer that you spend some time with him this week and just say, "God, I want to just know you as a friend and stop being this employee, stop being some monk who has to work. God, I just want to know you. You're supposed to be wonderful. Help me to understand that you're wonderful, God, and allow him to just speak to you as a friend and as a father." And that is what we're supposed to share with people when we tell them about Jesus. We're supposed to just introduce him to their new best friend, and if he's not your best friend yet, you need to work on that, because that's what it's all about. It's all about this relationship. He's still Lord and he's still King, and we still owe him respect. I'm not trying to make light of it, but at the same time, there's a heart connection there. He's not just some mean dictator tyrant. He loves us like children, and when you have that relationship, then it's just so easy to tell people. You're the first one to volunteer for prayer and say, "Who wants to pray?" It's so funny to just see everyone look around nervously, because it's like, "Yes, I'll talk to my best friend. No problem. Yeah, I'd love to pray. I pray to God all the time because we're like this." And that should be the nature of your relationship, and that was what was going to make it easy to tell others about him. So get to know him on a personal level, become friends with him, become his child. Obey what he has to say. Trust in his promises. Use your money to glorify him instead of to glorify yourself, and once you finally know him, like really actually know him, share that relationship, share that joy with other people. We're going to have our time of open worship now, and if maybe this is the first time you've never really thought of being friends with God, and we are the Friends Church, take this time and just say, "God, I want to know you in this way. I want to understand what it means just to be a friend with you, Jesus. I want to understand what it means to be your child, Heavenly Father." And if you've got that figured out, then just examine your life and just say, "God, what are the areas that I can trust you more, obey you more publicly? What are the ways that I can use my money, God, for you?" Search your heart now for ways that you can glorify God with everything you think, say, and do. I have to come up front because this is sort of a visual thing, and it's so good to have a Quaker quiet time again. Wow, you don't know how we miss that. I think that's what every church that's not Quaker in America is missing, is open worship, because it's so great just to share what the Lord has been laying on your heart. And Mike and I, of course, pray for Carmel friends every day. We love you all. You're our family. Always have been, always will be. And when I have prayed of late for the past several months for the church, I keep getting this visual picture. And first, I want to say, I think the church over the years has glorified God in so many ways. I think of Easter baskets and vacation Bible schools and the food pantry and steak booths at the festival and all this kind of stuff. Just different ways that you all have reached out. And I think in that way, you as a body of believers have been glorifying God. I kept getting this picture, and I was thinking of your new pastor, Keith, coming in. And then I think of, how is this all going to work together? Because I know he may have some ideas that are not what the way we've always done things around here and things of all that nature. But you know what I got to thinking? The picture I got was really clarified today in the scripture that your interim pastor shared. "I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener." Now, that is John 15, verse 1. And you go on down to verse 5, and it said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing." And I know that you all have many plans, dreams, and visions for this church and in the future and everything. And I kept seeing parts coming together, like Keith coming from Australia. Every time I tell somebody that you all have a pastor coming from Australia, they're like, "Whoa, I didn't know I had Quakers in Australia." I say, "Yeah, you know." But anyway, I see this part coming this way, and I see this part coming this way, and then going outward, and I couldn't put it together, and I finally realized the Holy Spirit has called you here. The Holy Spirit has called Keith here. He is a vine from Australia, and your ministry and counsel is another vine. And then you have the members, the Body of Christ, and what I see is everything coming together, and this vine is going out into the community. And I really believe this is an exciting time for this church. We are so happy for you, and let's all remember to keep praying this whole thing through, because as the word says, you know, abide in me, abide in me, and together we will do great things. And I know that's going to happen for you. God bless you. As many of you are aware, Caroline and I got married last Sunday right here, and last night we got back from Florida, and we spent the evening opening up all the cards and gifts that we've been blessed with from so many people. And I just wanted to say that so many of you have given us such generous gifts, and we really appreciate it. So we are very blessed to have you all in our lives. Thank you so much. When Jake first put that picture up, I kind of rolled my eyes and snickered at it. But I started thinking about it, and I was like, that is a depiction of the relationship we were supposed to have with God. I mean, that I'm sure is not what Jesus looks like, but when you think about Him, do you think of yourself just as this happy, content child who is just joyfully running into his arms? Or do you see sadness and work and... That's what it's supposed to be like. It's supposed to be peace and love and joy and friendship. God says that if you want to come to Him, you have to be like a little child. Next week, I won't be here. And so, I have asked our... I'm going to say youth group leader, because he just does so much work in a youth group. Kyle May is going to come up here, and he's going to be the interim, interim pastor next Sunday. And he's invited down Kevin Lipsey from Quaker Haven to lead worship for us. And it's going to be fantastic. You're going to get to see what it's like to have a youth-style lesson. And one of the things Kyle has the gift of that I can't seem to ever figure out is knowing what he's going to be preaching about next week. And he's going to be preaching about the wisdom of the world. And so he would like you... This is what we do in a youth group. We tell them this is what you need to read in a Bible for next week. Look at Ecclesiastes. You can go over all of it, but pay attention especially to chapter 7 verse 12. A lot of Ecclesiastes deals with the wisdom of the world and that kind of thing, but focus on 7/12 especially as you're going over the rest of that book. And I'm just real bummed I'm not going to be here for it. I'm bummed I'm not going to be here for Kevin leading worship, but you guys are going to have a really great time. And yeah, you're going to be blessed I promise. Let's close in prayer and then we'll sing our closing song. Heavenly Father, thank you that you have called us your children. Dear Jesus, thank you that you have called us friends. Thank you for the great price that you paid on the cross. It's the greatest act of love throughout all human history. It was right there on the cross and you are worthy of all our glory. Everything we're doing pointing somehow in some way back to you. Our lives always just being this spotlight that's shining on you in whatever way we can manage. As we go, God, throughout this week, throughout the rest of our lives, help us to consider everything we do and what way we can turn that light off of ourselves and onto you, God, because you are worth all the glory. Thank you so much for your love in your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.