

Lesson 2: Glory Displayed

Objective: The point of the lesson is that students would understand the role Jesus played in physically demonstrating God's glory on this earth, and that they would evaluate what effect truly "seeing" Jesus' glory has or could have on their relationship with Christ.

Scripture Focus: John 1:10-14, Hebrews 1:1-3, John 17:1-5, John 2:1-11

Overview: The idea of God's glory can sometimes be a mysterious and fairly complex concept for teenagers to get a grasp on. The truth is that it can be complex for adults as well! And this has always been the case. This is partly why Christ's incarnation is such a powerful tool in helping us understand this deep concept. Jesus came to earth, the Creator taking on the physical embodiment of that which He created. Jesus was 100% God and 100% man. As such, the glory of God was on display for those blessed enough to witness it. In the life, works, and teachings of Jesus, people could literally witness the majesty, awe, and might of God. How awesome would that have been! But, through God's Word, we can begin to grasp the same truths that these first century eyewitnesses did (even more so since we have ALL of Scripture to draw upon). In this lesson, your students will have the chance to understand exactly how Jesus personified God's glory. And, most importantly, they'll be challenged to consider exactly how they have or haven't interacted with Jesus' glory, and what, if any, impact it has had on their lives so far.

Teacher Prep Video

The *elements Teacher Prep Videos* are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "God's Glory Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/gods-glory-teacher-prep>

Bible Background

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book, while *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passages are used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **ym360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What's The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

The Details

Hebrews

- **Author:** Originally this letter to the Hebrews was entitled "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews." However, since the Reformation it's been widely recognized that Paul was probably not the writer.

There's simply not enough textual or historical evidence to prove his authorship. Early historians suggested the author is perhaps Barnabas or Apollos, though there is no way to know for sure.

- **Time frame:** Hebrews was almost certainly written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD since the author does not mention or give any hint to this catastrophic happening.
- **Purpose:** Hebrews was written to address Jewish converts to Christianity and challenge them to hold fast to their newfound faith. Many of them were resorting back to old traditions and some were even considering merging with certain Jewish sects. Because of increased persecution of Jewish converts to Christianity, many of them were tempted to resort back to old rites and rituals purely to avoid the pain. The challenge from this Hebrew Christian writer to Hebrew converts was to hold fast to their Christian faith and not to slip back to their Hebrew roots.

John

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John's stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John's goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

The Main Point

Since God created the Heavens and earth, His glory has been on display for all to see. However, God in His incredible grace and wisdom sent His Son as a living, breathing, walking around representation of His glory. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection all both attested to His glory and brought God glory. It's essential that we help students to understand the role Jesus played in physically demonstrating God's glory on this earth. This lesson will help them vividly see Jesus as glorious, as full of the glory that is rightfully His as the Messiah, fully God and fully man.

Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** The idea is to help your students understand the incredible way in which God displayed His glory through bringing His glory into full view of the world through Jesus.
- **Set-Up:** You definitely don't have to, but if you want you can either do an image search of some celebrities to simply liven up this activity, or you could actually Google "celebrity rescue" and bring some actual stories of celebrities rescuing people from perilous situations.

FIRST, introduce the idea of a brush with someone famous by talking about the numerous celebrities who have intervened to save or otherwise rescue someone. If you didn't know this was sort of a "thing," simply Google "celebrity rescue" and be prepared for quite a few stories. Explain to students that whether it's Ryan

Gosling breaking up a street fight or Patrick Dempsey rescuing a teenager from a burning car, there is story after story of people having dramatic encounters with celebrities.

THEN, lead students in a discussion. Ask:

- **Pretend you're in a dangerous but not life-threatening situation. Let's say your car hit a patch of gravel or ice or something, and you ran off into a ditch. You're not injured but you're hurt. Maybe a little woozy. As you try and come to your senses, suddenly, the door opens. You look up and there's _____.** Fill in the blank! Who would be the one celebrity that you would want to "rescue" you?
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **How would you react if you were face-to-face with your celebrity of choice?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, transition into a time where anyone who has met a celebrity can share his or her story. Allow this to go on for a moment or two, but don't get too carried away. You're just trying to set the table.

THEN, begin to transition to your time of Bible study. Say something like:

- **This week, we're continuing our discussion on God's glory. If you recall, last week we talked about being in awe of God simply for who He is. Well, this week we're going to bring this thought forward some. We're going to look at the concept of God's glory through the person of Jesus.**

FINALLY, explain to students that God's glory has been seen in His creation from the beginning of time. His glory was spoken about from generation to generation as stories of Moses' encounter with God were passed down from fathers to their children. Say:

Can you imagine the response when suddenly the Son of God shows up on earth and begins to heal people, cast out demons, and teach with the greatest wisdom? For the disciples, meeting Jesus face-to-face was greater than any of the famous people we have just mentioned. God's glory was now standing in front them! We're going to discover that we can have the same kind of encounter with Christ when we see Him for who He really is. Let's take a closer look.

The Main Event

- **Goal:** The idea is to help students understand the role Jesus played in physically demonstrating God's glory on this earth.
- **Set-up:** None

FIRST, review a little from last week's lesson on God's glory. Ask students if they can recall any or all of the definition of God's glory. Explain that you defined "glory" as the immense weight, or worthiness of God's character, combined with His awesomeness, splendor and majesty. Remind them that you mentioned that God's glory is kind of like taking in all of who God is at once. It is a sight so powerful that people would fall face down when confronted with the sight of a representation of God's glory in the Old Testament.

THEN, kick things off by asking students if they understand the following term:

- **The word *incarnate* means what?**
 - Answer: The word *incarnate* means to "to give bodily form and substance to" a concept or something that is almost always unseen.
- **So, what does it mean that Jesus is the incarnation of God?**

- *Answer:* So, if Jesus was the incarnation of God, it simply means that Jesus was the literal, walking around, representation of God on this earth. Jesus was human; He was both God and man at the same time.

NEXT, hit “pause” for a moment on this train of thought. You’ll come back to it. For now have your students turn to John 1. While they are finding the passage, give them some context for the book using the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read John 1:10-14. Then, ask:

- **John says “the world” did not know Jesus, did not accept Him. If Jesus was the incarnation of God, why do you think the world did not recognize or receive Him?**
 - Answers will vary, but help students to consider that the world’s expectations or ideas of God were inaccurate and different from whom Jesus was.
- **Why do you think the world does not recognize or receive Him today? What are some of the roadblocks in the way of people being able to recognize and receive Jesus?**
 - *Answers will vary.* But the answer is much the same. People don’t see Jesus for who He is because they don’t want to. They don’t listen. They don’t truly look. And they miss Jesus when He is right in front of them.

Stop where you are before finishing your discussion of this passage and read or have students read Hebrews 1:1-3. Then, ask:

- **Hebrews 1: 3 states that, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” When you think of “the radiance of God’s glory,” what comes to mind? What do you think that means?**
 - *Answer:* Radiance means brightness, brilliance, or light. Therefore, Jesus is the light of God’s representation.
- **How do you respond to that?**
 - *Answers will vary.* But help students be a little blown away by the fact that Jesus, who most if not all of them have a personal, saving relationship with, is described as the exact representation of God! It’s just amazing if you think about it.
- **Now, jump back to John in light of what you just read in Hebrews. Take time to imagine you are John the disciple. He says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14). Describe what it might have been like to be in the company of Jesus for three years.**
 - Answers will vary, but try to help them imagine and consider that John’s words are communicating that God’s glory was seen through an incredible three-year journey with the Son of God.
- **Do you know anyone who is “full of grace and truth” all of the time? What would it be like to spend your days with someone who was constantly forgiving, gracious, and honest ALL the time? And who, oh by the way, was the literal representation of God Himself?**
 - *Answer:* There’s no one who lives like this all the time, of course. It must have been incredible.

If you haven’t picked up on it yet, part of what you’re trying to achieve in students is a jaw drop-level of awe in response to Jesus. Try and help students grasp that for Jesus to enter into our world, fully God and fully human, enduring human suffering, sacrificing His throne in heaven to live on our earth for 33 years . . . this was just a gigantic statement to humanity! The God of the universe reached down to us through Jesus. Try and help your students see that no other religion in the world claims to have a God entering into humankind in this way. While every religion requires its followers to imagine their particular god’s power, we are able to get an incredible view of the One true God’s glory through His Son, Jesus. And when we can see it clearly, it’s powerful.

THEN, instruct students to flip over to read John 17:1-5. Help your students to see that Jesus is preparing His disciples for His crucifixion. Explain that soon He will be betrayed and arrested. And yet even in the midst of such serious moments, Jesus is focused on displaying God's glory. Read the verses aloud, then ask:

- **Imagine being one of the disciples (probably John), listening to Jesus' prayer. What would be some of the thoughts and feelings you would be having?**
 - Answers will vary, but you can imagine John reflecting back on this time. He would have been amazed at the incredible focus Jesus had in bringing glory to God the Father. While most of His disciples ran away when He was arrested and crucified, Jesus was transfixed on God's glory and the salvation for all people.
- **How did Jesus bring God glory on earth? What are some of things you know about His life that would have brought glory? Create a list of all the ways you can think of:**
 - *Answers like:* Healings, miracles, teachings, kindness, patience, gentleness, and finally, His suffering, death, and resurrection.

FINALLY, have your students turn to John 2:1-11. As they're flipping over to it, explain that you're about to see Jesus at a wedding banquet. Explain that in weddings of that time, often the wedding party or the host would provide the best wine at the beginning of the gathering. As more people drank they would often bring out the cheaper wine since most people would not notice. With that as the backdrop, read or have a student read John 2:1-11 as your group follows along. When you're finished, have a student or two summarize the account.

- **Looking at verse 11, what stands out to you about the significance of this miracle?**
 - *Answers like:* It was Jesus first miracle. This was the first time His disciples had seen Him perform a miracle. By doing this He revealed His true glory. The outcome was that the disciples believed in Him.

Transition into the Last Word by saying something like:

- **Up until this point in the disciples' relationship with Jesus, they had been on a "getting acquainted" basis. At the wedding in Cana, they suddenly come face-to-face with the Savior of the world who revealed His glory to them. In a second they moved from being interested in who Jesus was, to being fully invested. All because they saw His glory for what it was. Let's talk about how we can apply the same experience in our relationship with Christ.**

The Last Word

- **Goal:** The goal of this section is for the students to be challenged to consider just how much they are seeking a close relationship with Jesus that allows them to glimpse His glory and, like the disciples, move from being interested to being fully invested and consumed by Him.
- **Set-Up:** Either print the following narrative and have it ready to pass around to students, or simply pass around your phone or tablet so they can read it.

FIRST, explain to students that you want their help reading the following narrative. It's divided up into a few sentences at a time. Have some volunteers pass it around and read as the rest of the class listens.

The disciples spent three years with Jesus on an incredible adventure. They were on mission with Him. They saw His glory expressed through amazing miracles, incredible teaching, and extraordinary life change. But maybe most of all, *their* lives were changed.

But they could never have imagined it would end like it did. As Jesus hung on the cross, His disciples saw yet another reminder of God's glory expressed through extravagant love as Jesus breathed His last breath. Their Master, their friend, died for their sins and the sins of all people.

When Jesus rose from the dead, they were shocked, astounded, and amazed by the ultimate show of power and glory! Even at Pentecost, after Jesus had been taken up to Heaven, they and thousands of others were amazed by the glory of God as the gift of the Holy Spirit came upon them. But it had all started with some water at a wedding.

They were witnesses because He called and they said yes. Because they were interested in who Jesus was. They spent time with Him because something about Him drew them in. And because they made it a point to stick with Him in the early days, when they weren't really sure of who exactly He was and what exactly He was sent to do, they had a front row seat to His glory, at the wedding feast, and at countless other places.

What about us in this room? Are we close enough to Jesus to see His glory?

THEN, ask:

- **Do you really know Jesus with the depth that allows you see His glory in your life? Or, are you simply going through the motions? Do you find yourself distant from the brilliance of God?**
 - *Allow students to wrestle with this for a bit.*
- **What steps can you take to make sure that just like the disciples, you are close enough to Jesus to see His glory? What does this look like in a modern day context?**
 - *Answers will vary.* Help students flesh this out in a practical way so that they might follow through with some real practices and attitudes that lead them closer to Christ. It's not that they have to work to get to God, it's simply a reminder that the closer we are to Jesus, the better we're able to recognize Him for who He is.

FINALLY, encourage your students to really contemplate this idea of closeness to Christ in relation to experiencing His glory. Challenge them to focus in on one or two changes in their focus or attitude that would clear the way for closer interactions with Jesus.

Close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the "God's Glory: Lesson 2" devotions to your students. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Consider texting students a couple of times during the week to encourage them to follow through with reading the devotions.

We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.

