

The Three-fold Riches of God: glory, grace, and kindness

Ephesians 3:16 (NASB)

*that He would grant you, according to **the riches of His glory**, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner self,--- (Christ dwells in us through faith)*

Ephesians 1:7 (NASB)

*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our wrongdoings, according to **the riches of His grace**---(Our sins are forgiven)*

Romans 2:4 (NASB)

*Or do you think lightly of **the riches of His kindness** and restraint and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?---(Repentance)*

Introduction

Elon Musk is the richest person on earth in dollars (\$260 billion). Let me tell you. Compared to the riches of God, all the wealth in the world is nothing. Far beyond comparison. Our God is the richest from the beginning till the end. He owns the entire universe. The Scripture declares: *Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty, **indeed everything that is in the heavens and on the earth**; Yours is the dominion, Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all* (1 Chronicles 29:11). Amen.

Speaking of riches, it would be naïve of us to think that ‘material’ riches are the only thing that matters. We cannot live by bread alone. Let’s not forget the invisible riches such as glory, power, honor, integrity, blessing, love, wisdom, might, light, truth, compassion, and kindness. God is very rich on those things. *Oh, how I wish to be rich in those attributes!*

The riches of God are so great, so deep, and so boundless that they are unfathomable: *The depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!* (Romans 11:33, Ephesians 2:7, 3:8).

The best part is that God shares His riches with you and me, His children. Here on earth, first. Then, in Heaven. We are truly blessed. In what manner does He share His riches with us? Not stingily. Rather, abundantly and lavishly! I invite you this morning to join me in pondering the three-fold riches of God: **the riches of glory, grace, and kindness**. By the end of the sermon, I pray that we will be fully convinced that God lavishes on us the riches of His glory, grace, and kindness. I also pray that we all lavish on others the same riches of God. Amen?!

Content

Glory: This is what I mean by ‘God’s glory.’ **Anything that demonstrates God’s greatness** is God’s glory. **Anything that lifts up the name of the LORD high** is His glory. That includes (but not limited to) *divine presence, praise, thanksgiving, honor, majesty, and power.*

God is the Father of glory (Ephesians 1:17). He is the King of glory (Psalm 24:8). Christ is the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8). Our God doesn’t give His glory to idols (Isaiah 42:8). God alone is full of glory. Glory belongs to Him forever (1 Peter 4:11, 5:11).

Did you know that the LORD our God commits Himself to what brings Him glory? He does everything to His glory. It is His desire, will, and pleasure to do great and awesome things for us. Furthermore, He wants to do it over and over again. All to His glory. For instance, God provides our needs according to **‘the riches of His glory’** in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). At first, we may be impressed with *‘the riches’* part that provides our needs, but *‘His glory’* part is more important here. Of course, God provides our needs because He is rich and able, but the real reason behind is His glory. He loves doing that because every time He provides our needs it brings Him glory and joy. Even when we do not ask for them, God still does it all to His glory.

Consider His protection this time: He strengthens us with His power ‘according to the riches of His glory’ (Ephesians 3:16). Once again, He strengthens us because, whenever He does so, it brings Him joy and glory. It is His will to strengthen us. My favorite verse: Isaiah 41:10. God says, *I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*

There’s another thing God does for the sake of His glory. That is, turning us into Christ’s image (C. S. Lewis---‘little Christs’). We call this ‘transformation’ or ‘sanctification,’ which is a life-long process of becoming like Jesus. The King James Version says, “*But we all... are changed into the same image **from glory to glory**, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 3:18). Let’s consider the meaning of the phrase ‘from glory to glory.’

It means, every time we become one step closer to Christ’s image, God says, YES! He is delighted with the progress made. Every bit of transformation in us brings God pure joy and glory, and He wants to do it more. Over and over again! So, the phrase goes, ‘from glory to glory.’ Remember: It is His pleasure, purpose and plan to make us like Jesus Christ His Son. Famous quotes: *God is not done with me yet. I am a work in progress.* Be assured. For the sake of His glory, God is fully committed to *transformation, provision, and protection.* He will keep His commitment for the rest of our lives and beyond.

---**His plan:** When God created us for His glory (Isaiah 43:7), He also planned to share His glory with us, both here and in Heaven. On earth, God shares the riches of His glory with us by ‘revealing His mystery to us’ (Colossians 1:27). He has chosen and called us to ‘obtain the glory of our Lord’ (2 Thessalonians 2:14). His glory is our ‘inheritance’ (Ephesians 1:18). In our resurrection, ‘eternal glory’ awaits us (2 Timothy 2:10). The Lord will give ‘the crown of glory’ to those who served Him well (1 Peter 5:4).

---**His command:** Do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). When people see our good deeds, they will glorify our Father in Heaven (Matthew 5:16).

Grace: The second riches of God is grace. What is grace? It is God's favor on us. It is a gift from God to those who believe in Jesus as their Savior. We got saved after receiving God's unmerited and undeserving grace through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8,9). The God of grace extends His grace to all people for salvation (1 Peter 5:10, Titus 2:11).

The same God doesn't want us to receive His grace in vain or nullify it (Galatians 2:21). Instead, He wants us to imitate Him and share His grace and mercy with others. Christ our Master commands: *Reciprocate grace to others.* As the stewards of God's grace (1 Peter 4:10), we ought to pass onto others the same grace we received from God (Ephesians 3:7), even to our enemies. Freely received. Freely give. Listen to a parable of Jesus.

Matthew 22--the parable of unforgiving servant. ²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴And when he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵But since he did not have the means to repay, his master commanded that he be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment be made. ²⁶So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.’ ²⁷And the master of that slave felt compassion, and he released him and forgave him the debt.

²⁸But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe!’ ²⁹So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you.’ ³⁰But he was unwilling, and went and threw him in prison until he would pay back what was owed. ³¹So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their master all that had happened.

³²Then summoning him, his master *said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³**Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?’** ³⁴And his master, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he would repay all that was owed him. ³⁵My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.”

Kindness/mercy: The third riches of God is kindness/mercy. The Hebrew (טוֹן) and Greek word (χρηστοτης) for ‘kindness’ can also be translated as ‘mercy’ or ‘compassion.’ Kindness, mercy, and compassion they all go together. God's mercy is abundant (Numbers 14:18), great in extent (thousand generations, heavens and earth, Deuteronomy 7:9), and everlasting (Psalm 100:5).

God's acts of mercy never end, and His compassions never fail (Lamentations 3:22). The same kindness of God led you and me to repentance while we were yet sinners.

Romans 2:4 declares: *Or do you think lightly of **the riches of His kindness** and restraint and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?* We are saved “not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His **mercy...**” (Titus 3:4-5).

Listen to Jesus one more time. Luke 6:32-36: ³² *If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.* ³³ *And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.* ³⁴ *And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount.*

³⁵ *But love your enemies and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is **kind** to ungrateful and evil people.* ³⁶ *Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

If you have tasted the **kindness** of the Lord (1 Peter 2:3), be kind to one another. Put on a heart of compassion, **kindness**, humility, gentleness, and patience (Colossians 3:12). Be compassionate and forgive each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32). Those who continue in God’s kindness and mercy (Romans 11:22) will bear the fruit of ‘kindness’ in the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22— love, joy, peace, patience, **kindness**, goodness,...).

Conclusion

God lavishes on us His glory, grace, and kindness (Psalm 84:11). As grateful children of God, let us commit ourselves to the things that will bring glory to God. Let us strengthen and edify our loved ones. Let us forgive one another as Christ has forgiven us. Let us accept each other as Christ did. Let us be like Jesus in all we do and say. Let us be gracious and kind to each other. That’s God’s will for us.

Amen.