

Live For One – 1 Cor 10:31

By now, I trust you're well aware that we're not only starting a new *message* series today, but we're also introducing a new bulletin design, and an entire new *theme* for the year

We like to do that for several reasons

1. Emphasizes and reinforces the main themes of the Bible
2. Helps us better retain the messages associated with that theme
3. Help us mark the years as we look back (show the inside cover of my Bible)
This year's – **Live For One** from 1 Cor 10:31

That's where we're going to focus our time this weekend

Talking about what it means to Live For One, and why we should

Then in subsequent weeks, we'll spend the rest of the series scrutinizing King David's life

in 1 & 2 Samuel, and discover *how* to Live For One

Covering such topics like – How to live for one when . . .

Nobody's looking or Nobody cares; Others don't; Despair threatens

Justice is lacking; Temptation knocks; Sin catches up with you

That's what's coming, and I'll be encouraging you to read 1 & 2 Sam throughout the week to see the big picture . . .

While we focus on individual episodes in his life each weekend, and apply them to ours

- But for today, I want to start with our theme verse in 1 Cor 10:31

After weaving his way through the issues of freedom/constraint in our Christian life . . .

Paul finally comes to the over-arching principle that serves to guide us in all things and all situations of life in v31, and says . . .

So, *whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*; IOW . . .

Live to glorify God

Live to make him look good in everything you do

Live with a passion to increase his fame and renown

Live to exalt his name; Live to reveal his splendor more and more

And do that, in all things

Thoughts; Speech; Actions – *Whatever you do*, live to glorify God

Not in some things, but *all* things

Including the mundane things of life – like washing dishes

And the secular things of life – like movies, ball games, or politics (salt and light)

Live to glorify **God in all things**

He's not looking for a piecemeal life from you

Where u glorify him a little bit here, and a little bit there; He's looking for whole thing

Nor are there aspects of your life that are *exempt* from glorifying him

We are to live in such a way, that *in everything God may be glorified* (1 Pet 4:11)

Which means we must not only live to glorify God in all *things*, but at all *times*

Not just when you feel like it; Or when you have a spare moment

Not just on Sundays; Or when you're around other believers

But *all* the time – at work, at play, and perhaps hardest of all, at home

Live for one **all the time**

- Now, that's pretty straight forward, but have you ever wondered why?
Why would we do such a thing?

I think there are 3 main reasons

3 Main reasons to glorify God in all things, at all times

1. God says so – through the pen of Paul, he tells us to live for him

And if that's where it stopped, that would be enough

2. God deserves it – he created the world, he gave us his Son, he rules over all, holy

So he *deserves* the focus of our life, for the glory of his

That too is a pretty compelling reason

But there's a 3rd one we don't often hear about, and that is . . .

3. God does – live to glorify God because God does

Do you realize how passionate God is, for his glory?

How passionate he is to display it? How passionate he is to receive it?

Over and over again, the Bible makes it clear that God is passionate for his glory

Listen as I summarize a litany of verses on this, for which I'm heavily indebted to John

Piper's book, "Let The Nations Be Glad" . . .

Is 43:6 – God created us for his glory

Jer 13:11 – God called Israel for his glory

Ps 106:7 – God rescued Israel from Egypt, for his glory

Rom 9:17 – God raised up Pharaoh to glorify his name

Ex 14:4ff – God defeated Pharaoh to show his glory

Ez 20:14 – God spared Israel in the wilderness for the glory of his name

1 Sam 12:20 – God did not cast away his people for the glory of his name

2 Sam 7:23 – God gave Israel victory for the glory of his name

2 Kings 19:34 – God saved Jerusalem for the glory of his name

Is 43:25 – God forgives our sins for his own sake (i.e. for his own glory)

Ez 36:22ff – God rescued Israel from exile for the glory of his name

Hab 2:14 – God's plan is to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory

Over and over again, the Bible makes it clear that God is passionate for his own glory

You might say, okay, okay – but most of those are OT references; What about the NT?

What about this side of the cross? (As if that matters in this case) But fair enough

Eph 1:4ff – God chose his people, his elect, for his glory

Jn 7:18 – Jesus sought the glory of his Father in all he did

Mt 5:16 – Jesus told us to do good works so that God gets the glory

Jn 5:44 – Jesus warned us that not seeking God's glory makes faith impossible

Jn 14:13 – Jesus said that he answers prayer so that God is glorified

Jn 12:27 – Jesus suffered for God's glory

Rom 15:7 – Jesus receives us into his fellowship for the glory of God

1 Pet 4:11 – God tells us to serve in a way that will glorify him

Phil 1:11 – Jesus fills us with the fruit of righteousness for God's glory

Rom 3:23 – All are under judgment for falling short of God's glory

Act 12:23 – Herod was struck dead because he failed to give glory to God

2 Thess 1:9 – Jesus is coming again for the glory of God

Jn 17:24 – Jesus' ultimate aim is that we see and enjoy his glory

Rom 9:22 – Even in God's wrath, his aim is to make known the wealth of his glory

Rom 11:36 – God's glory will last forever

Rev 21:23 – In the New Jerusalem the glory of God replaces the sun

And . . . 1 Cor 10:31 – God instructs us to do everything for his glory

Do you see it? God is passionate for his glory

- **Now, lest you** think otherwise, that does *not* make him an egotistical megalomaniac
Somebody who's obsessed with their own greatness and power
Not at all; Why? Because he not only deserves the glory, as we just said, but . . .

He **loves us**

EM's don't *love* those who worship them, they *use* those who worship them

Like Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Edi Amein, or any one of number of dictators/despots

They didn't love their people, they used them to further fuel/inflate their own egos

Think of Husain Bolt, the Olympic sprinter from Jamaica (thumping his chest)

Why? Because he craved the applause/attention of the crowd, not to satisfy *them*, but to satisfy *himself*

To further inflate his ego; To satisfy what he lacked

Not so with God – he lacks nothing; there's nothing to inflate

So what's his motive? It's love, pure love

He wants us to glorify him in all we do and for all he does, because he knows there's nothing in the world more soul-satisfying for us to do

He created us that way – we have a built-in longing to do so (Is 43:6-7)

Why do you think we love to glorify sports heroes?

Because he created us with a longing for worship – it's how we're made/wired

So it's an act of love for God to *exalt* himself, that we might do the same, and so satisfy our souls

God's passion for his glory, is not only well-deserved, but it's an act of love to elicit the same **passion from us**

Live to glorify God in all things at all times . . .

Because he says so, because he deserves it, because he does, and because you want to

And God alone (Is 48:9-11)

Is 48:9-11 – for 39 chapters, God had been telling his people that judgment was coming

But when he gets to ch 40, the tone starts to turn – we begin to see messages of hope and deliverance

And in the midst of that, God throws in ch 48 to remind us that he's the one in control . .

And therefore deserves *and* demands all the credit

For example, in v3 God says (read v3-5) . . .

God's like – "I told you things that nobody could know, and then did them myself"

"And I'm not sharing the credit with anyone, especially your idols"

Then, he goes on to say that he's doing new things as well

Things they've never even heard or conceived . . .

Lest they take the credit themselves and say (v7b) – '*Behold, I knew them*'

"I knew that; I knew it all along; It's not news to me; I saw it coming"

God's like – that's not happening; because it diminishes me and elevates you

Knowing full well that would be our tendency, rebels that we are, he says in v9-11 . . .

9 – I'm deferring my anger toward you, because my reputation and praise is on the line

If I don't defer it, I'll forsake you, and then people will not only think poorly of me, but they'll withhold their worship because I don't fulfill my promises

10 – I haven't cut you off or destroyed you, but neither have I left you to your own devices; I've tried to work with you

Then in v11 he tells us why (v11)

11a – "I withhold my anger" God says, "because it's unthinkable that my name should be drug through the mud; I won't allow it

Nor will I share my glory with anyone else (read 11b)

11b – God is possessive of the praise/credit that's due him; He's jealous for his glory

That's why we should live for *One*; That's why we should glorify God and God alone

Because he won't have it any other way – he deserves it and demands it

You may withhold it and *temporarily* escape his wrath and judgment for doing so . . .

But he won't allow you to run forever – the fame of his name is too important

Not others

Somebody once said – half the people in this world go around worrying about what the other half thinks about them

That's true, isn't? We're constantly seeking the approval of others, aren't we?

We worry so much about what others think of us, that we worry ourselves sick, sometimes literally

And instead of living for an audience of One, we live for an audience of many

Instead of seeking God's approval, we seek every one else's

You know what that does? Once again, it glorifies them, and diminishes God

And that's idolatry

Seeking the approval of someone other than God is the most basic form of idolatry

You're replacing God's approval, with theirs

Or at the very least, you're adding theirs to the mix b/c God's approval isn't enough

It could be the approval of your mom, your dad, boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, boss, co-worker, teacher, students, coach, or your leader . . .

Whoever it is, when u seek their approval first/foremost, instead of **God's – it's idolatry**

It's no different than the ancient pagans who sought the approval of their *gods*

It's no different than Buddhists who seek the approval their *statues*

It's not different than the Hindus who seek the approval of their *thousands* of deities

It's no different than the psychics who seek the approval of the *spirits*

We should be living for an audience of one, and one alone – and that one should be God

It's his approval we should be seeking; His applause; His praise

His commendation of, "well done, good and faithful servant"

Anything **else is idolatry**

- **If we could get** this right, and drop our self-imposed chains of needing the approval of others, we wouldn't know what to do with ourselves

Some of you know exactly what I'm talking about, because you've done so, and you walk with a spring in your step and a peace in your heart . . .
With more freedom, relief, and joy than you ever imagined possible

Others of you know exactly what I'm talking about because you *haven't*
You haven't dropped the chains
You're still bound by a self-imposed need for the approval and applause of others
Meanwhile, God *longs* to lavish you with his

Zeph 3:17 says – *he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing*
That's approval – you don't rejoice over someone with gladness, or quiet them with your love, or through a party for them, if you don't approve of them

And that's exactly what God does to show his approval to those who seek it from *him*, and not others
To those who live for him, **and him alone**

Live to glorify God and God alone, not others . . .

And not yourself

Anybody else struggle with this?
Anybody else struggle with wanting to make yourself look good?
Or wanting to make yourself look good in *addition* to God?
Or somehow rationalizing that by making yourself look good you're making God look good?
We live for one alright – unfortunately it's far too often me, myself, and I . . .
Instead of Father, Son, and Spirit

Or maybe it's not nearly that blatant for you
Maybe you live for yourself by making God the convenient *means* to your end
You're all about living for him as long as he . . .
Restores your marriage (he's the means to your end)
Blesses your business; Or heals your sickness; Or spares you from suffering

That's like the bumper sticker I saw this morning that said – Try Jesus
The implication being that he might be able to cure *your* problems
He might be able to meet *your* need
And if he doesn't, try something else
That mindset may be more subtle, but you're still living 4 yourself because it's all about u
Your still making God the convenient means to your end

The life we live in Christ, is not about us – it's about him
It's not about our glory, but his
Live for that; Live for him; **Live for One**

There's probably no better way to commit ourselves to that at the beginning of this ministry year, than at the Lord's Table . . .

The Lord's Table

The time and place where we . . .
Remember that Jesus lived for One, by dying for many
Reflect on the fact that he glorified the Father in heaven by dying for us on earth

If Jesus is Lord of your life; If you live for One – join us
You don't have to be a member, you just have to be a believer
Because by eating and drinking, you're saying that . . .
Jesus died for you; He's Lord of your life
You're incredibly thankful to him because of it
That's the symbolism of participating at the Lord's Table
So take this time to examine your heart, confess your sin, and renew your commitment to Live for One

But if Jesus is not Lord of your life; If you can't honestly say, "I live to glorify God"
Let the bread and cup pass . . .
And take the time to reflect on what's preventing you from doing so
Better to do that, than participate in what the Bible calls an unworthy manner, and risk bringing judgment on yourself

After we pray and distribute the elements . . .
Take the bread whenever you're ready – as a means of emphasizing your *personal* commitment to Live for One
But hang on to the cup, and we'll drink that together – as a means of emphasizing our *corporate* commitment to Live for One

Pray – thanks; sacrifice; commitment

- In 1 Cor 11, after eating the bread as a foreshadowing of his broken body
Jesus said – *this cup is the new covenant in my blood* . . .
This cup and what it contains is symbolic of the promise of salvation that Christ's blood bought/guaranteed
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me