

DCF:

When he was in high school, he was a wrestler on a team that took second in state. His team received a beautiful trophy for their efforts, and the school placed it in their trophy cabinet for everyone to see. He admired that trophy for a few months and took great pride in it. He then graduated and moved on in life. Over the years he forgot about that trophy. It really didn’t mean as much to him as it once had.

Then came his 20 year class reunion. Wandering the halls of his old high school, he came across the trophy he had forgotten about. He hadn’t seen it in 20 years, and was amazed that they still kept it around. He had forgotten about it, and assumed the school had, too. But no, there it was.

Are there times in life when you feel like a forgotten trophy? Are there times when you feel like Jesus has locked you away in a cabinet and gone on to other things? Then I’m glad you’re tuning in today. Today our Lord lovingly reminds us that He’s never forgotten us. He still treasures us and cares for us each day. Come with me to the cabinet of God’s Word and see “**THE TROPHIES OF GOD’S GLORY**”.

Part One: Jesus

Was there ever a more jam-packed Thursday than this one? Jesus had washed His disciples’ feet and given them the command to love one another. He identified Judas as the betrayer. He instituted the Lord’s Supper. He once again told His disciples that He would die for the sins of the world. Jesus spent hours instructing them on many topics and reminded them again and again of His love and concern for them. And how does He end this last session with His disciples before His death? With a prayer.

Not just any prayer. This was a prayer that Jesus wanted His disciples to hear. He wanted them to know how He felt about them and what He wanted for them. Oh, Jesus could have just said to His disciples “You’re in my prayers” like we do so often. He wanted them to know exactly what His prayer was. So, He spoke this prayer out loud.

Notice how easy and intimate this prayer is. And notice how confident Jesus is when He prays. He’s talking about events in the next few hours and weeks as if they are already accomplished. Look at verse 1: “**Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that Your Son may glorify you.**” Let’s dig into that a bit, shall we?

To glorify someone means to give praise and honor to someone. Let others know what a person has done, or what a person is. In a way, Jesus is praying that God the Father would put Him in His trophy case, a display of God’s love and power.

He certainly did that, didn’t He? Jesus was glorified - He was given honor and praise in several ways. The first way Jesus was honored and praised was in His crucifixion. He gave eternal life to sinners by suffering and dying on the cross. That’s worthy of honor and praise, isn’t it? He was glorified when He rose from the dead, showing that death was conquered. That’s worthy of honor and praise, too. He was glorified when He ascended back into heaven and received all the honor and praise as God Himself. “**Glorify your Son,**” Jesus prayed. Almost as if it was already accomplished.

Truly, Jesus is the ultimate trophy of God’s glory, the honor and praise that are rightfully His. No one deserves more praise. No one deserves more honor. No one deserves more glory than the ultimate trophy, Jesus Christ.

Do you see His glory in God’s trophy case? Many people in this world of ours don’t even know that Jesus is deserving of glory. Oh, they’ve heard His name, sometimes used as an expletive. They know Christmas and Easter have something to do with Him. But they don’t know what He did and why He deserves honor and glory. But today it’s not about them. It’s about you. Do you see Jesus’ glory? Do you let others see the glory of your Savior? Have you polished the trophy that is Jesus in your life?

How can you do that? Oh, there are several ways. First, by using Jesus’ name in a respectful manner, thanking Him specifically in your conversation with your neighbor. Second, by living your life in a way that gives Jesus honor and praise - loving your family and teaching them about Jesus. Being honest in all your dealings and loving in the way you treat others. Looking for ways that benefit your fellow human being. Oh, you could go down the list of the 10 commandments and find all sorts of ways to give glory to God. Obeying your superiors, watching out for the health of your neighbor, keeping sexual jokes out of your vocabulary, watching out for your neighbor’s stuff and guarding his reputation. All of these actions bring glory to Jesus, but the best way to glorify the Lord is by honoring and praising His voice. That voice sounds out in the Word. Read it. Quote it. Live it. Honor and praise it.

Why would you want to polish the ultimate trophy of God’s glory? Why, because you also are trophies of God’s glory, my friends!

Part Two: Believers

There are days, aren't there, when we don't feel as if that's true. We sometimes feel as if Jesus has left us alone. We sometimes feel that if we are His trophies, He's forgotten where He put us and isn't interested in finding us. Oh, there are days... Life is tough. Sin has corrupted our lives inside and out. There are days we hate our boss and our jobs. There are days we hold a grudge, or are upset that we didn't get our way. There are days we find it very hard to love our neighbor. And, there are days we find it difficult to trust the Lord. He's not doing things the right way, we are tempted to think.

And sometimes there are days we feel all alone, abandoned by the One who promised to never leave us or forsake us. Really? I don't have anyone in my life to pour out my heart to, no one to comfort me when things go wrong. I don't have anyone in my life to give me a hug or a sympathetic smile. No comforting voice. All I have is some friends who ignore me when life treats me bad, a sinful nature that constantly attacks my faith and a world that doesn't care at all about me. I feel so alone. Abandoned. Friendless. Hopeless.

Let Jesus, in His prayer to the Father, remind you of something very important. You have been personally selected by God to be one of His trophies. Listen again to verse 6: ***"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word."*** Jesus spoke this prayer on behalf of His disciples, and He also includes you in this prayer. If you have your Bible handy, take a look at verse 20 of chapter 17. Jesus says this: ***"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message."*** You are one of God's trophies of glory, my friends!

Still not sure of that? You look at your life and say "How can I bring glory to God? I'm sinful. I've done some absolutely awful things in life. I'm not always honest or dependable. I'm probably the worst Christian I know. How can I be a trophy of God's glory?" Remember this phrase "See what Jesus did?"

You are sinful, absolutely unable to earn your way to heaven. And yet Jesus paid for every single bad thought, word and action in your life. He has made you perfect in God's eyes. See what Jesus did? He made you a trophy of God's glory. Your salvation is a tribute, a display of God's love and power.

He keeps us in the faith, even though we are attacked by Satan. He keeps us in the faith, even when our sinful nature wants to give up and give in. See what Jesus did? He made you a trophy of God's glory. Your faith is a tribute, a display of God's love and power.

He guides us in life by His Word. He shows us what is true. He shows us how to grow in the grace and truth of God. See what Jesus does? He not only made you a trophy to God's glory, He also polishes you by that Word to reflect His glory even more. Sometimes the most glorious of God's trophies here on earth are the people who have lived absolutely horrible lives, and then come to faith. That shows God's grace. It shows His love. It shows the glory - the honor and praise - that are due Him. Remember the hymn "Amazing Grace"? Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me? That's a trophy of God talking, giving glory to the One who saved him from spiritual death.

Such precious trophies aren't locked in a cabinet far from Jesus. He treasures us. He polishes us by His Word. He holds us in His hands every day of our lives. He is with you right now, sitting next to you on your couch. He is physically present with each one of us.

Oh, we can't see Him, but He's there. Remember that Jesus is true God, and God fills heaven and earth. He's everywhere at all times. Jesus, being God, is as well. His human nature was fused with His divine nature, so wherever God is, so is Jesus, body soul and spirit.

There's a banner here at church that may help you understand that you are never alone in life. Next time you get to worship in this building, take a look at it. It's titled "Footprints in the Sand." A man had a vision of his life here on earth, picturing his walk with Jesus. He noticed that as he went through rough patches in his life, there was only one set of footprints. He asked the Lord "Where were you when I was going through those tough times? I thought You would always be there with me." Jesus replied, "Those were the times when I carried you."

God does not forget us or leave us. He still treasures us as much as He ever has.

Now, there may be trophies in this world that are long forgotten. Maybe you have some in a box in your basement. The Little League trophies, the spelling bee trophies, the 4H fair trophies. You may have even forgotten them by now. But please, never forget that you are a trophy of God's glory that He never forgets and never leaves alone. You are a trophy of our God!

AMEN