

Inhabited
February 2, 2025
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Exodus 40:16-21, 34-38

When you were a kid did you play Simon Says? In Simon Says how can you do your best to not be “out”? How could “Simon” (who calls out the commands) help players? Why would Simon Says be a good way to teach children about obeying God and parents? How does that illustration fall short of teaching about serving God?

We are in Exodus 40, the last chapter of Exodus. We are building on our study last week. The Tabernacle was now finished, and God’s presence came to inhabit the tent.

(NLT) — 16 Moses proceeded to do everything just as the Lord had commanded him.

Moses set up the Tabernacle as God commanded, placing the Ark of the Covenant with the stone tablets inside it behind the inner curtain.

(NLT) — 34 Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. **35** Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. **36** Now whenever the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out on their journey, following it. **37** But if the cloud did not rise, they remained where they were until it lifted. **38** The cloud of the Lord hovered over the Tabernacle during the day, and at night fire glowed inside the cloud so the whole family of Israel could see it. This continued throughout all their journeys.

Think of these instructions: Behold glorious beauty, follow directions and you will be blessed. When you boil it down those were God’s instructions for the Children of Israel. This lesson is all about the glory of God becoming the focus of their lives and journey. In scripture God’s glory was described as “glowing” (Ez. 1:27-28). Scripture also says that those who had witnessed God’s glory temporarily glowed (Ex. 34:29-35; Matt. 17:2).

- The point: I want to use that word GLOW as an acrostic to help us think of how a follower of Christ can apply this text about God’s glory to our lives today:
 - G-lory – Focus on God’s glory
 - L-isten for God’s directions
 - O-bey what He tells you to do
 - W-atch what He will do in your life
- Verse 34: A cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled it.
- The Hebrew word for “Glory” (kavod) means to “be heavy” or “weighty.”
- John MacArthur describes God’s glory as “...*the manifestation of His character, attributes, and presence, much like brightness is to the sun or heat is to fire. It is intrinsic to His nature and inseparable from who He is.*”
- The “shekinah glory of God,” refers to God’s dwelling in the tabernacle.

- God displayed His presence (and an indication of His glory) in a cloud in the day that also contained fire at night hovering over and filling the tabernacle in the center of the camp. They couldn't ignore God's presence in their midst.
- Our first point in the word GLOW is to focus on God's **GLORY**.
- What are some ways we see God's glory today?
- **Creation - Psalm 19:1 (NLT) — 1** The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. [Nature, newborn babies, etc.]
- **Scripture - Isaiah 40:5 (NLT) — 5** Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. The Lord has spoken!"
- **Jesus Displays God's Glory Today** – He replaced the cloud in the temple.
- **John 1:14 (NLT) — 14** So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.
- **Lives Transformed by Christ** – More on this when we look at OBEY below.
- **ACTION: Pray and ask God what Moses asked for in Ex. 33:18 (ESV) — 18** Moses said, "Please show me your glory." (Remember how God did it then?)
- We need to strive to **FOCUS** on **SEEING** God's glory every day.
- The **L** in **GLOW** is for **LISTEN** for God's directions.
- Our text says the children of Israel only moved when the cloud of God's presence moved and stayed put as long as the cloud didn't move.
- How do we **LISTEN** for God's directions today? (See Is. 40:5 above)
- The **O** in **GLOW** is for **Obey**. That seems straightforward: Listen and obey.
- Verse 16: Moses did "everything just as the Lord had commanded him."
- Back to Psalm 19: **Psalm 19:7–10 (NLT) — 7** The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. **8** The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are clear, giving insight for living. **9** Reverence for the Lord is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the Lord are true; each one is fair. **10** They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. [Obeying God is a "sweet" life!]
- Let's talk about that! The action verb related to God's **GLORY** is **GLORIFY**.
- What does it mean to glorify God?
- We can acknowledge God's greatness by worshiping Him daily.
- We can give Him (not ourselves) the glory for the great things He has done.
- We can live for God's glory – **1 Corinthians 10:31 (NLT) — 31** So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
- Earlier we said lives transformed by Christ display God's glory.
- Paul wrote in **2 Cor. 3:18 (NLT) — 18** ...all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.
- The "veil removed" – In the Old Testament God's presence was behind the veil of the temple. Jesus removed that with His death. We have direct access to God.
- Christ followers can "see" God's glory and we can "reflect" it in how we live.

- Because Christ gives us the Holy Spirit to live in us (remember last week?) that verse says the Spirit “makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” Sanctification = Becoming more like Christ.
- We won’t be perfect this side of eternity, but we CAN be a “witness for His glory.”
- Jesus said we can GLOW! **Matt. 5:16 (NLT) — 16** In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.
- The W in GLOW stands for **WATCH**. If we Focus on His glory, listen and obey His direction just WATCH what He will do in and through us!
- **Ephesians 2:8–10 (ESV) — 8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- Any other thoughts on God’s glory?

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- We CAN experience God’s glory today thanks to Christ. We can GLOW by...
 - G-lory – Focusing on God’s glory
 - L-istening for God’s directions
 - O-beying what He tells us to do
 - W-atching what He will do in our lives
- Think of that last point: Watch what God can do in your life if you follow Christ.
- We can marvel at creation and say, “*How can you see this and not believe there is a God.*” That’s an appropriate response!
- It is even greater to marvel at how God makes us new creations in Christ.
- Of course, I thought of a song, more accurately, a hymn: “*I Stand Amazed in the Presence.*” Listen to these words:

*I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner condemned, unclean.*

*He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calv’ry,
And suffered, and died alone.*

*When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me.*

*How marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Savior’s love for me!ⁱⁱ*

- This week let's pray like Moses did: "Lord, show me your Glory!" Then let's live in a way that we GLOW so others "glorify our Father in Heaven."

ⁱ <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/80-9/the-glory-of-god>; <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/43-4/jesus-glory-grace-and-god>; <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/1224/how-to-glorify-god-part-1>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/290>