

GLEANINGS — August 21, A.D. 2016  
Fame!

"It is not good to eat much honey; so to seek one's own glory is not glory", said wise Solomon under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (Proverbs 25:27)

Philosopher George Santayana (A.D. 1863 – 1952) grasped the gist of that godly wisdom when he said, "the highest form of vanity is love of fame."

One notable Biblical example of this inglorious seeking of one's own glory is recorded in the Gospels, and the future apostles James and John are the perps.

"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." (Matthew 20:20,21)

(Mark's account, 10:35-37, makes clear that James and John were complicit with their mother, and not innocent of her wrongful desire to see her sons in the limelight.)

One evil in our lust to shine brighter than anyone else is the desire for that which belongs to God alone, in direct rebellion to God's own jealous (*Exodus 34:14, Deuteronomy 4:24, Nahum 1:2 et. al.*) declaration about His glory: "I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images." (Isaiah 42:8, cf. vs. 11)

And the folly of this particular sin is made clear by the truth that no frail creature could even bear such glory! If the light in which He dwells is unapproachable and which no man can see or has seen (1 Timothy 6:16), how much less could any creature be the source of such light?

Our place is to reflect the light of divine glory, attributing all glory to God as its source as we show it forth to others. Those who will receive praise from God...those who will hear those thrilling words, "well done, good and faithful servant" therein have enough to fill their hearts with everlasting satisfaction and joy!

"Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven." (Psalm 148:13)

The allure of glory was what the evil one used when he vainly tempted our Lord to worship him. "...the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'all these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me'." (Matthew 4:8,9)

But let's consider what His Father's ultimate purpose was for the Son: "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name." (Philippians 2:8,9)

So because He did not seek glory, but to do His Father's will, the Man Christ Jesus ultimately received an eternal renown that the evil one could never have given! And so it is for His disciples, when we aim at obedience instead of looking to be famous, well known, and admired. For the inspired prophet Daniel writes: "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." (Daniel 12:3)

And the same Holy Spirit proclaims through the apostle that there will be "... glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Romans 2:10)