

“THE GLORY OF GOD”

Selected Scriptures

Johann Sebastian Bach was a church organist and composer who lived from 1685—1750. His pastor once confronted him about the congregation’s concern that the music he composed was too showy. Bach replied...

The main purpose of my music is to glorify God. Some people do this with music that is simple. I haven't chosen to use a simple style, but my music comes from my heart as a humble offering to God. This honors God no matter what musical style I use.

If you were to look closely at the bottom of his handwritten compositions, you would notice the initials, “SDG,” which stood for “*Soli (solee) Deo Gloria.*” Bach never desired to be famous. He had a passion for God alone to receive the glory.

Tonight, we will seek to wrap our minds around the enormous subject of God’s glory. Trust me. Exploring God’s glory is a massive challenge. I honestly feel that there is no better way to end our discussion of the doctrine of God. I want to offer four pegs we can hang our thoughts on.

1. THE MEANING OF GOD’S GLORY

The Hebrew word for “glory”—*kabod*—basically means to be heavy in weight. God’s glory refers to His significance and to His clout. The New Testament word—*doxa*—carries the idea of opinion, expectation, and praise. Here’s how Habakkuk used the Hebrew word...

Habakkuk 2:14...“For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.”

Whether you believe it or not, this world will one day be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

God’s Intrinsic Glory—This is the sum total of all of His attributes, character, and nature. We cannot add to His intrinsic glory. He already is full of glory. His weightiness, His significance, His clout never decreases, and it never increases.

Isaiah 6:3...And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.”

The angelic being did not declare that the whole earth is full of His *holiness*. Do you know why? It’s because God’s holiness is part of who He is—*a part of His intrinsic glory*.

God’s Extrinsic Glory—This is the praise and honor we and all of creation should give to Him.

Psalms 29:1–2...Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array.

Psalms 19:1...The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

Romans 11:36...For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

So, this is what is meant by the term—*the glory of God*. Now, let’s go a step deeper by taking a close look at...

2. THE DISPLAY OF GOD’S GLORY

The Garden of Eden--Beginning in this perfect paradise, the glory of God was evident. Every day the Lord would come to have fellowship with Adam and Eve. This special time continued until this couple disobeyed God and introduced sin into God’s perfect creation. Listen to this...

Genesis 3:8...They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Instead of seeking the presence of God and His glory, Adam and Eve hid from God’s presence. Things would never be the same for the crown of God’s creation. In fact, this failure to seek God’s presence and to give Him glory would define the human dilemma going forward.

Romans 1:21–23...For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Romans 3:23...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Sin cuts us off from God, and it makes us want to accumulate glory for ourselves. Therefore, every person falls short of His glory!

Mount Sinai— After God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, He brought them into the wilderness. There on Mt. Sinai the infinite, Almighty God revealed His glory for the whole nation to see.

Exodus 24:17...And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top.

You would think that the covenant nation would be in such awe of God that they would honor Him and give Him the glory He surely deserved. Unfortunately, in a short time, they chose to give their glory to the golden calf that Aaron himself fashioned.

The Tabernacle— God gave Moses the plans for a special place for God's glory to be with the people. When the tent and its furnishings were completed, we read this powerful description of another demonstration of God's glory.

Exodus 40:34–35...Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

Not only did they have the manifestation of God's glory in the Tabernacle, they also had the pillar of fire to guide them at night and the glory cloud to guide them by day. Did they humble themselves before the Lord and give Him the glory He clearly deserved? No, they didn't. They rebelled, murmured, and complained.

The Temple— After God established His people in the Promise Land, He told Solomon to build a temple that would be for the glory of the one, true God. Listen to what happened when the temple was completed.

2 Chronicles 7:1–3... Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house. **2** The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. **3** All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

Their response to the glory of God's presence was to bow down and to worship the Lord. Surely now God would receive the glory He and He alone deserved. Unfortunately, the devotion of God's people was short lived. It wasn't long before King Solomon and the people turned to idols and worshiped them. God sent both the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom into exile. God gave a vision to the prophet Ezekiel to show him the flagrant disregard for His glory *in the temple itself* (Ezekiel 8). If that weren't enough, God then showed His prophet Ezekiel how His glory was departing the temple.

Ezekiel 10:18... Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.

You see it, don't you? All through the Old Testament God called His people to give Him glory and honor. Was God going to give up on the human race and withdraw His glory from them forever? I'm glad to tell you that God demonstrated His glory to the human race again in a very special way in the New Testament age.

The Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ— He sent His own Son into the world to display His glory. The Bible speaks to this...

Luke 2:8–11... In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. **10** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid;

for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

John explains in even greater detail...

John 1:14...And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 1:3...And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

In essence, God was saying to people everywhere, *“Will you give Me the glory I deserve?”* You would think that the entire world would have fallen at the feet of Jesus and would have given Him glory, honor, and praise. But no, they turned their back on Him and crucified Him. After His resurrection, they continued to reject Him, replace Him, and revile Him!

So, where can the glory of God be found today? It is found in...

The Church—God displays His glory through believers who make up the church. We are to take the message of the gospel and declare it to the nations so that they might join us in glorifying the Lord our God.

Ephesians 3:20–21...Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

3. THE IMPACT OF GOD’S GLORY

You were created to glorify God. The Westminster Shorter Catechism was completed in 1647 by a council of English and Scottish theologians and laymen. In its very first article, the question is asked, *“What is the chief end of man?”* To which the answer was given, *“Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.”* To glorify God means that we recognize His immense

significance and we give him the praise and honor He deserves. This is the essence of salvation. The essence of sin is a failure to glorify God.

Daniel 5:23...but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified.

So, how can we glorify the Lord? Let me give you a list straight from the Word of God.

Honor Jesus As Lord

Philippians 2:9–11...For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Paul gives us an in-depth look at our salvation in Ephesians 1:3-14. Three times he highlights the Lord's purpose in saving us and he says it is "to the praise of His glory." There is nothing that honors and glorifies God more than you receiving Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

Live For God's Glory

1 Corinthians 10:31...Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

In any situation, ask yourself this question. Will this glorify the Lord?

Confess Your Sin

Joshua 7:19...Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I implore you, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not hide it from me."

Bear Spiritual Fruit

John 15:8...“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

Make Sexual Purity a Priority

1 Corinthians 6:18–20...Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? **20** For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Serve The Lord

Matthew 5:16...“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Live By Faith

Romans 4:20...yet, with respect to the promise of God, he (Abraham) did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God

Share The Gospel

2 Thessalonians 3:1...Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just *as it* did also with you.

Endure Suffering

1 Peter 4:14–16...If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. **15** Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; **16** but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

Worship the Lord

Revelation 5:13...And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.*”

The glory of God demands a response from those whom He created. How can we not give Him the glory He deserves?

4. THE REVELATION OF GOD’S GLORY

Since the fall of Adam and Eve the human race has only seen God’s partial glory. One day everything is going to change, and the human race will be exposed to the fullness of God’s shekinah glory.

Jesus Is Coming In Great Glory

Matthew 24:29–31...“But immediately after the tribulation of those days **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.** **30** “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. **31** “And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Matthew 25:31...“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

When the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to use the term “*great glory*”, He was using that term for the first time. This is the unveiled glory of Jesus. Before Jesus died on the cross, He prayed to the Father...

John 17:24...Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Believers Will Be Glorified

Colossians 3:4...When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

2 Corinthians 3:18...But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Romans 8:28–30...And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; **30** and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

What does it mean for us to be glorified? That word refers to our *being conformed to the image of His Son*. Our being glorified means that we become like Jesus. That's exactly what John was referring to when he wrote...

1 John 3:2...Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

Instead of being mortals burdened with a sin nature, we will be changed into holy immortals with direct and unhindered access to God's presence, and we will enjoy fellowship with Him throughout eternity.

CONCLUSION

Glorifying God does not mean that we make Him glorious. It does mean that we are to see Him as glorious, to treat Him as glorious, and to celebrate Him as being glorious. This is the essence of true salvation.

The essence of sin is a failure to give God the glory He deserves. In many cases, the result is that we end up glorifying ourselves.

Lecrae, the American Christian rapper, songwriter, and record producer went to a department store to buy a T-shirt. Not a fancy silk or diamond studded shirt—

just a plain cotton T-shirt. As he pulled one from the rack, he noticed the price tag and thought to himself that it must be mis-marked. So he pulled another only to find the same price on the tag. Incredulous, he approached the salesperson to question the exorbitant price—\$640!

The salesperson told him the price was correct—\$640 was the “special” sale price!

He began to question what could possibly be so special about this T-shirt to warrant such a value. “Am I going to be healed of some disease when I put this on? Am I going to get some kind of super-power?”

“It’s the designer’s name on it that adds value to it,” she replied.

Are you a true Christian? You are not considered to be of much value to this world which has turned its back on Jesus and has refused to give Him the glory He deserves. Here’s what you need to realize. Your value is determined by the *ONE whose name is attached to you*. You are a *CHRISTian*. His name is stitched into your DNA and you are here to glorify Jesus. No wonder Paul wrote these words in his letter to Timothy...

1 Timothy 1:17...Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Are you glorifying Jesus with your lips and with your life? Don’t waste your life.