

ECHOES OF THE REFORMATION: Five Truths that Shape the Christian Life

Session 6: GLORY TO GOD ALONE

Question: What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

- Westminster Catechism, 1647

Isaiah 6:1-3 (ESV)

¹ In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; **the whole earth is full of his glory!**"

Psalm 19:1 (ESV)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Psalm 57:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!

Psalm 72:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!

Psalm 108:5 (ESV)

⁵ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!

Habakkuk 2:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Luke 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

Romans 1:18-23 (ESV)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Revelation 19:1-2 (ESV)

¹ After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, ² for his judgments are true and just ...

Revelation 21:22-23 (ESV)

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

SOLA DEO GLORIA VIDEO NOTES:

How God's glory is revealed in scripture:

1. God's "_____"
 2. The external _____ of God's glory
- *Luther didn't believe in a theology that brought glory to the sinner or to the church. It was a theology that brought glory to God alone, pointing to His saving work on the cross.*
 - *You're not the center of all things. You don't have to be the center of all things. And you'll never have the joy that you can have in Christ until you realize that that burden is not meant to be yours.*
 - *God's glory assures me that I will be saved and eternally that I am safe and secure in this self-glorifying God's promises and power.*
 - *Wisdom comes by knowing God and His glory, and then you understand your own fallenness and humility in how far from that you are.*
 - *God alone is worthy of glory.*
 - *Our greatest joy is going to be to glorify God forever.*

Notes:

THE FIVE SOLAS – A REVIEW

- **Sola Scriptura:** *The Bible is the sole written divine revelation and alone can bind the conscience of the believer absolutely.*
- **Sola Fide:** *Justification is by faith alone. The merit of Christ, imputed to us by faith, is the sole ground of our acceptance by God, by which our sins are remitted, and imputed to Christ.*
- **Solus Christus:** *Christ is the only mediator through whose work we are redeemed.*
- **Sola Gratia:** *Our salvation rests solely on the work of God's grace for us.*
- **Soli Deo Gloria:** *To God alone belongs the glory.*

Why is **Soli Deo Gloria** so important?

1. It is the overarching _____ of the other 4 solas. It is the glue that holds the others all together. The other 4 all _____ this final statement.

...the fact that salvation is by faith alone, grace alone, and Christ alone, without any meritorious contribution on our part, ensures that all glory is God's and no our own.

- David Vandrunen

The deepest passion of the heart of Jesus was not the saving of men, but the glory of God; and then the saving of men, because that is for the glory of God.

- G. Campbell Morgan

Romans 1:22-23 (ESV)

²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Romans 1:24 (ESV)

²⁴ Therefore God gave them up ...

Romans 1:26 (ESV)

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up ...

Romans 1:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up ...

Romans 3:9-12 (ESV)

⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

Romans 9:19-26 (ESV)

¹⁹ You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?"

²⁰ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? ²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— ²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵ As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'beloved.'" ²⁶ "And in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

2. It helps ensure a right view of _____. If _____ is our most basic sin, then rightly understanding God is the only antidote. Rightly understanding God in view of scripture enables us to truly worship Him.

Isaiah 42:8 (ESV)

⁸ *I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.*

The fundamental problem in the evangelical world today is not inadequate technique, insufficient organization, or antiquated music, and those who want to squander the church's resources bandaging these scratches will do nothing to stanch the flow of blood that is spilling from its true wounds. **The fundamental problem in the evangelical world today is that God rests too inconsequentially upon the church.** His truth is too distant, his grace is too ordinary, his judgment is too benign, his gospel is too easy, and his Christ is too common.

–David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland*, 30.

3. It helps ensure a right view of _____. If idolatry is not our most basic or pernicious sin, then _____ is. Rightly understanding ourselves in light of God's glory (via scripture, faith, Christ, and grace) enables us to humbly receive His salvation.

By holding forth *solī Deo Gloria* as the lifeblood of the *solas*, we remind ourselves that the biblical religion recaptured by the Reformation is not ultimately about ourselves, but about God. Our focus so easily becomes self-centered, even when we ask the same important questions that occupied the Reformers: Where can I find God's authoritative revelation? How can *I* escape the wrath of God? What must *I* do to be saved? The other four *solas* provide necessary and life-changing answers to such questions, but *solī Deo Gloria* puts them in proper perspective: the highest purpose of God's plan of salvation in Christ, made known in Scripture, is not our own beatitude, wonderful as that is. The highest purpose is God's own glory. God glorifies himself through the abundant blessings he bestows upon us.

- David Vandrunen, *God's Glory Alone: The Majestic Heart of the Christian Faith and Life*, 15.

4. Properly understood and applied, it _____ our lives – our values, our priorities, our choices.

What are you really living for? It's crucial to realize that you either glorify God, or you glorify something or someone else. You're always making something look big.

- Ken Sande

5. It is the grand _____ for which we all are made.

"To whom be glory for ever." This should be the single desire of the Christian. I take it that he should not have twenty wishes, but only one. He may desire to see his family well brought up, but only that *"To God may be glory for ever."* He may wish for prosperity in his business, but only so far as it may help him to promote this — *"To whom be glory for ever."* He may desire to attain more gifts and more graces, but it should only be that *"To him may be glory for ever."* This one thing I know, Christian, you are not acting as you ought to do when you are moved by any other motive than the one motive of your Lord's glory.

- Charles Spurgeon