

I. The Glory of God

- A. Psalm 36:5-9 . . . Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. [6] Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O LORD, You preserve man and beast. [7] How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. [8] They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; and You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. [9] For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.
- B. Psalm 86:11-13 . . . Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. [12] I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify Your name forever. [13] For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, and You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
- C. Since the beginning of our study on the glory of God, we have looked at God's glory as revealed through His supremacy, His perfect goodness, His immeasurable worth, His desire for relationship with us, His only son – Jesus Christ, His holiness, His love, His unrivaled wisdom, His unending loving-kindness, His unfailing faithfulness, His impartial justice, and His sovereignty.
- D. Prayer

II. A review of the past eleven Sundays

- A. What is God like?
 - 1. If by that question we mean, what is God like in His entirety – that is, in all that He is, says, and does – then, at best, we only have the beginning of an answer. And why do we only have the beginning of an answer? Because no one ever seen God. No one knows the mind of God. And His ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.
 - 2. Listen to Isaiah's words about the difficulty we humans have in fully knowing – and then comprehending – what God is like: "Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him and His recompense before Him. [11] Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

[12] Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance and the hills in a pair of scales? [13] Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as His counselor has informed Him? [14] With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge and informed Him of the way of understanding? [15] Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. [16] Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. [17] All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless. [18] To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?" (Isaiah 40:10-18)

3. And yet, even though God, in many ways, is a mystery to us, when Moses asked God to show him His glory, God said:
 - a. "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name (*essential nature*) of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion. But you cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (Exodus 33:19-20)
 - (1) Why would Moses ask to see God's glory when he already had a face-to-face relationship with God in the Tent of Meeting? Because Moses could only see a form of God, not the total essence or complete nature of God.
 - (2) Therefore, what Moses was asking for was to see God's complete nature, or to see God himself.
 - (3) To this God said He would show Moses all his goodness, and describe His essential nature. In other words, God said His glory is made up of His goodness and His nature – which includes His actions, or what He does.
 - b. The [next morning, the] LORD descended in the cloud and stood with [Moses] as Moses called upon the name of the LORD. Then the LORD passed by in front of [Moses] and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations"(Exodus 34:5-7).

- (1) Notice: God's description of His glory includes – in an inference kind of way – His supremacy, sovereignty, holiness, love, loving-kindness (*mercy and forgiveness*), goodness, wisdom, and justice.
 - (2) And think about this: Is it not true that these qualities and traits are active in our day through His son, Jesus Christ?
 - (3) And finally, are these not the qualities and traits that contribute to His being a precious treasure?
- c. Now notice Moses' response to God's self-revelation – he made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship, that is, he humbled himself and worshiped (Exodus 34:8).
4. So what is God like? The best we can do in answering that question is to say He is like what He has revealed about Himself, as understood by our current ability to comprehend His self-revelation.
- a. Of course, the humble, honest, reverent human intellect can understand more about God than the proud, selfish, and rebellious human intellect can.
 - b. And beyond that, those who understand and comprehend the most are those who are willingly submissive, who sincerely pursue a life of obedience, who examine and judge themselves honestly, and who hunger and thirst after righteousness and a pure heart. Or in other words, those who understand the most about God are those who are purposefully pursuing holiness in all their behavior just as God is holy in all His.
 - c. And finally, the more clearly and deeply we see and understand and comprehend who God is, the more clearly and deeply we see and understand and are moved by His glory.
- B. As we have said from the beginning of this series, when we speak of the glory of God, we are speaking about the qualities, traits, and activities that set God apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe.
1. Therefore, God's glory is made up of His position, who He is in Himself (*His essential nature*), what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do – for it is all these things that set Him apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe.
 2. As an example of what God has done, the angels declaring Christ's entrance into our world said: "*Glory to God in the highest.*" Imagine, God – who is apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe – lowering Himself to become one of us to save us from

our pride and rebellion against Him. And in becoming one of us, God not only took our human form, He lived among us with all the human limitations, trials, tribulations, and temptations that we face.

3. As an example of God's essential nature and shown through His loving-kindness, when it was discovered that Achan had sinned and brought trouble to the Israelites, Joshua said: "*Give glory to God.*" Achan was about to pay with his life and the lives of his family for his sin, but if anything better than death was to come from the horrible mess he himself had made, his only hope was God – for it is the glory of God to show mercy and forgiveness even as His justice is bringing forth punishment and death.
4. As an example of what God will do, when encouraging his followers to live a godly life, Jesus said: "*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.*" What a partnership – the glorious Creator God and the un-glorious created human who is nothing by comparison. Yet God – who is set apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe – is willing to give us the opportunity to use the way we live to show His glory to the world.
 - a. Paul said the same thing in two different ways when he said: "*Do all to the glory of God.*" And: "*Glorify God in your body.*"
 - b. And many years before, the Psalmist humbly and wisely said: "*Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory*" (Psalm 115:1).

C. Now you may be wondering why we spent these past eleven Sunday's studying God's glory?

1. The answer to this question is both simple and profound. Why? Because one of the most powerful influences over how you think, speak, and live is the place you give God in your life.
 - a. And when I speak of the place you give God in your life, I am not speaking about what you know about God, or the theology you prescribe to, or your enthusiasm expressed during times of worship, or even the place you might like to give Him if all of life would work out as you wished it would.
 - b. Rather, when I speak of the place you give God in your life, I am speaking about how you treat Him, day in and day out, when times are good and when times are hard or even bad, when you have what you want and when you long for something yet cannot seem to get. I am speaking about to whom you give the absolute

power to decide how you should think, speak, and live in every area of life, and in all your behavior. I am speaking about who you measure yourself against, and about whose standard you have committed yourself to rise to in such areas as your thoughts, longings, fears, hopes, emotions, attitudes, choices, words, and deeds.

- c. Therefore, to give God His rightful place in your life, to give Him the place that will have the greatest influence over all you think, say, and do, is to willingly, intentionally, and consistently treat Him as the Supreme Being over all your behavior, so that His standards are your standards, His values your values, His ways your ways, His will your will, His word your directions, His law your law, His love your love, and the life of His son, Jesus Christ, the only life to which you long to be – and are being – conformed.
2. Now I am not at all saying that gaining a good knowledge of God is unimportant. We ought to study and learn all we can about God, and about His ways, His works, and His will – because this information is important to forming a proper response to God in every area of life.
3. However, we do not automatically live according to what we know about God, but we do live according to the place we give God in our lives.
 - a. For example, when God holds the place as supreme provider and protector in your life, then you will feel so safe in God's hands that such earthly troubles as disapproval, unwarranted criticism, rejection, and other forms of relationship disappointments or mistreatment will not compel you to selfish, arrogant, sinful responses.
 - b. When you make God's will the ruling will in your life, then you will resist and fight against felt-needs, no matter how powerfully they pull in a self-pleasing or selfishly-protective direction. In fact, when God's will holds sway, you will make it your aim to put felt-needs to death so that doing God's will becomes your natural choice rather than the choice you know you ought to make.
 - c. When you put God in the place of being your most precious treasure, than pleasing Him is your most compelling desire and mistreating Him becomes something you both fear and detest.
4. My point in all this is that the one thing that has the greatest and most pervasive influence over what you think, desire, fear, say, and

do is the place God holds in your life. And that is why we did this study on the glory of God.

III. Conclusion –

- A. Jesus said, “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” (Matthew 5:16). I want to conclude today’s teaching by giving some examples of how you can live so as to bring glory to God and show forth God’s glory to the world around you. And I hope to do this by using the qualities and traits set God apart from and above all else in the universe.
1. God is the Supreme Being. When we humble ourselves and treat God as His position requires – that is, as our Supreme Being, as our Master and as our Lord, we not only acknowledge that He is set apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe, but we show those around us that His position is glorious and that He is worthy of their full trust and whole-hearted obedience.
 2. God is perfectly good. When we trust in God as the only one who is perfectly good and the only one who unfailingly seeks our good, we not only acknowledge the glory of His goodness, our lives will show those around us that He is perfectly good.
 3. God is the most valuable treasure. There is nothing in this world, be it people, possessions, positions, power, or pleasures that comes close to being as valuable as God. Therefore, when the way we live demonstrates that God is our most valued treasure, we are showing forth God’s glory by declaring that there is nothing and no one more precious to us and everyone else, than God.
 4. God desires intimate, meaningful, mutually satisfying relationship with us – individually and as a community. Though God’s desire for fellowship with us never puts us on the same level with Him, or justifies treating Him as if we have a casual familiarity with Him – it does open the door for us to enter into fellowship with Him that becomes increasingly intimate and satisfying to us as we grow in holiness and spiritual maturity. Therefore, the greater our holiness, the deeper and more intimate our communion and companionship with God, and the clearer we see His glory, and the more our lives show forth His glory to the world.
 5. God is wholly holy, He is absolute love, His wisdom is unrivaled, and His faithfulness unending. These qualities and traits, when trusted, give us reason to live according to God’s will and word, which in turn magnifies His glory to the world around us.

6. As our sovereign God, He is the righteous and impartial judge of the universe. There is no glory in a God who lacks the power to rule over all in righteousness, for such a god could not reward the righteous and punish the unrighteous. Yet God has all the qualities necessary to do just this. Therefore, when we mingle a healthy fear of God's justice with a healthy confidence in His sovereignty and righteousness, we will see His glory as never before and we will show forth His glory to the unbelieving world by how we live.
7. And finally, God has revealed His glory in the most practical and understandable ways through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the more we study and submit to the teachings, example, values, principles, and practices of Jesus Christ, the more we see God's glory in the practical, everyday experiences of life. And of course, the more we are like Christ, the more our lives point to the glory of God.

B. To God be the glory, great things He hath done, So loved He the world that He gave us His Son, Who yielded His life our redemption to win, And opened the life-gate that all may go in. Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, To every believer the promise of God; The vilest offender who truly believes, That moment from Jesus a pardon receives. Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done, And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son; But purer, and higher, and greater will be Our wonder, our transport when Jesus we see.

1. Why? Because Jesus is the glory of God in human form and He showed forth God's glory in how He lived His life.
2. May we purify our hearts so that our eyes may be opened wide enough to see as much of God's glory as is humanly possible.