

THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 1 – “Into Which Angels Long to Look”

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What is “the glory of God”?

- God’s revealed presence.
- The beauty that emanates from all Who He is: all His attributes, His character, His reputation.
- God’s displayed excellence.

The glory of God is mentioned over 600 times in Scripture! The English noun, “glory” is found 606 times in our English Bibles: 376 in the OT and 230 in the NT.

Consider writing in a journal, as we study the glory of God, how you’re observing the glory of God each day: in Scripture, in your life (God’s intervention), and as you interact with others. Enter into your journal how you expressed your thanksgiving for God’s glory. Include how you were led to worship God. This journal is between you and God!

What did God continue to tell the children of Israel?

REMEMBER...what I’ve done for you

WORSHIP ME NOW

ANTICIPATE WHAT I WILL DO – as “IN THE FUTURE”...which I’m telling you throughout My word. Prophecy/the prophetic books in Scripture amount to between 27% to 30%.

GOD desires us to REMEMBER HIM. We do so through reading His word, talking with Him, and glorifying God in praising and honoring Him.

CONSIDER: The glory of God is addressed in every major biblical section, related to every major biblical doctrine, and interwoven throughout the biblical story. It is so central to Scripture that the story of the Bible is in some sense the drama of God's glory.

In Scripture we read of the glory of God. We read of God REVEALING Himself and how different people RESPOND! How are we responding to God and His revealing Himself to us?

Consider this explanation of the glory of God: The glory of God is the magnificence, worth, loveliness, and grandeur of His many perfections, which he DISPLAYS in his creative and redemptive acts in order to make His glory known. How does that speak to you?

And yet, the glory of God, Who God is, is so often not understood...not acknowledged (confessed, affirmed, accepted) by many...including believers (many times through lack of knowledge!)

CONSIDER: Psa. 19:1- The heavens tell of the glory of God; and their expanse declares the work of His hands. The God who created all this is glorious, which is evidence of His glory.

2

- He is glorious in His magnitude (immensity; vastness), having created such a vast universe.
- He is glorious in His engineering, having created a universe that works together perfectly.
- He is glorious in His artistry, having created a magnificently beautiful universe – again, beyond our comprehension!!!
- He is glorious in His goodness and kindness, having created a universe for all humanity to see.

What is our response?

God has certainly revealed Who He is through the expanse/the enormity of His creation. Do all believe? No! God has revealed Himself to man. Many have rejected God. What is God's response?

Gen. 6:6 - *the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent (purpose) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the Lord was sorry (moved to pity and compassion) that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved (it caused God great pain) in His heart.*

Deut. 5:29 – God in hearing the children of Israel commit to keep His commandments, and knowing full-well that all would not, grieved!!! *Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!*

Isa. 53:3 – before we read of Jesus' crucifixion, His paying the penalty for our sin, we read in Isa. 53:3 that Jesus was *despised and rejected (forsaken) by men, a Man of sorrows*

(pains) *and acquainted with grief* (sickness). We often remark that salvation is free...but it cost God EVERYTHING! Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice – for us!

John 11:35 – *Jesus wept*. WHY did Jesus weep? He knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead! Many at Lazarus grave did not believe. Jesus wept over the spiritual condition of man – without HIM!

Am I grieving with God? When was the last time you and I grieved with God? Am I recognizing that God's heart grieves when so many have offended His holiness? He grieves in knowing that those “many” will be separated from Him eternally after they die.

Knowing that God grieves, takes my eyes off myself and causes me to focus on God and His heart...and leads me in worshipful praise of Him.

How many times do we say “for the glory of God”? Are we understanding what “for the glory of God” means? Biblically it means focusing on God! It means drawing all attention to GOD and NOT us! How? God tells us to glorify Him. How? By magnifying (enlarging; maximizing) His attributes...praising His works...trusting His name...obeying His word. How? By knowing His word!! In your study time, read I Chronicles 16:8, 23-26. The Holy Spirit inspired King David to record a “model” for giving glory to God...because He alone is worthy. Isa. 48:11 - *...I will not give My glory to another...* Isa. 42:8 - *I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another,*

This study is focused on God! Application: our marveling at God, bowing before God and surrendering ourselves to Him, dying to self. Desiring that others NOT see us; desiring that others see JESUS!

God's desire is for us – as individuals – to know Him. Have you ever observed how many times God revealed Himself to Israel and to the nations? God proclaimed the reason He revealed

3

Himself...so that the nations and Israel may know that He is God! Within the book of Ezekiel alone, God expressed that the nations may know and that Israel may know that He is the LORD – 63 times!

How significant is the glory of God?

I Peter 1:3-12 - Peter, in writing to his Jewish readership who were undergoing trials...Peter who was the Apostle to the Jews, shared, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us (brought us forth) again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance (possession) incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept (watched over, guarded, preserved for the attainment of something – in this context – the promised inheritance – eternal life!!) by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Peter reminded these Jewish believers that their suffering and trials were temporary and served to strengthen and refine their faith (1 Peter 1:6–7). Peter spoke to his Jewish brethren – who believed in Jesus – he spoke to them about salvation through JESUS, the Jewish Messiah. Salvation is the focus in this passage in I Peter.

Peter then wrote something powerfully impactful. Peter’s Jewish readers needed to know that salvation in Jesus...things preached to them by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven...were *things into which angels desire to look!!!*

What does this tell us? Angels are curious about the gospel and how and why it was received!? WHY? The angels live in the presence of God, so why would they be interested in human salvation (Matthew 18:10; 22:30)?

Angels do not know the sweetness of redemption. They have no experiential knowledge of grace and salvation. Angels in heaven have not been separated from God. Yet, they do not know the depth of intimacy that we who are believers know – we who understand what it is like to be dead in sin and alienated from God (Eph. 2:1-3). We know the overwhelming grace and mercy in Jesus dying the death we deserve (Eph. 2:13)

The Son of God became a man to redeem humanity; He did not become an angel to redeem the heavenly host. Angels cannot fully understand salvation, as it is not for them.

The Greek word for “to look into” means “to physically stoop down, peer intently, and inspect curiously.” But angels have had a front row seat in watching God’s redemptive work with humanity (1 Timothy 3:16)! And, the book of Hebrews describes them as “ministering spirits” sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14, ESV). They are amazed by salvation and lean in attentively, longing to understand that which they do not possess!

In the book of Exodus, we see further evidence of angelic interest in God’s mercy. God commands that the cherubim on the lid of the ark of the covenant were “to have their wings spread upward, overshadowing the ark of the covenant. The cherubim are to face each other, looking toward the cover” (Exodus 25:20; cf. Numbers 7:89; 1 Kings 8:7–8; Hebrews 9:5). The mercy seat represents God the Father’s throne; it is where His presence dwelt and the blood of the atonement was offered for sin. The gold cherubim on the ark were placed as if gazing upon

God’s redemptive purposes. In 1 Peter, angels long to understand the immeasurable joy found in Christ’s atonement for sin.

The fact that angels long to look into things pertaining to our salvation is a piercing reminder of what a precious gift salvation is. May we during this study, long for a fresh look at WHO GOD IS based on Scripture and ALWAYS, now and forever, cherish the WONDER OF REDEMPTION – and MARVEL at God!

QUESTIONS:

What was new to you?

Who is God to you?

What are your questions?

Can you explain a bit about the glory of God as we attempt to comprehend the glory of God?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 1's handout with the Bible references.

Pray about sharing what you've learned with someone.

Begin writing your observations along with noting your questions in a journal.