“To Know Me Is to Love Me: the Glory of God”

Light and Life Class (April 7, 2019)

The attributes of God we have studied: Trinity, love, holiness, grace, mercy, patience, faithfulness, righteousness, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability (changelessness), independence, eternity, wrath

A. Definition

1. The glory of God is the public display of God’s infinite and perfect goodness and greatness.

2. In theology we call God’s glory a “summary attribute” (like God’s beauty), because it contains all his other attributes.

a. Holiness is part of his glory; love is part of his glory; omnipotence is part of his glory; etc.

3. The Bible often associates God’s display of his glory with light (e.g., Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 21:23; Isaiah 60:1-2; etc.).

4. Biblical terms

a. OT Hebrew is *kabōd* (also means weight; see play on words in 1 Samuel 4:21).

b. NT Greek is *doxa*.

B. How passionate is God for his own glory? (The following is a very partial list.)

1. No fewer than 65 times in the Book of Ezekiel does the Lord say that he will act within history so that people “will know that I am the Lord,” that is, for his own glory.

2. God created the universe as a means to display his glory (Psalm 19:1-2).

3. God creates a people for himself that we might be for his glory (Isaiah 43:7).

4. God “blots out” the sins of his people “for my own sake,” that is, for his own glory (Isaiah 43:25).

5. God called Israel to be his people for his own glory (Jeremiah 13:11).

6. God carried out the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt for his own glory (Psalm 106:7-8).

7. God raised up the pharaoh of the exodus for his own glory (Exodus 14:4; Romans 9:17).

8. God gave battle victories to Israel and spared Israel his judgment for his own glory (Ezekiel 20:14; 1 Samuel 12:20, 22; 2 Samuel 7:23; 2 Kings 19:34).

9. God gave Jesus his Son for his own glory to die on the cross for the sins of sinners (John 12:27-28; 17:1).

10. God bears spiritual fruit in the lives of Christians for his own glory (Philippians 1:9-11).

11. God calls Christians to do good works for his own glory, that is, so that people may see those works, know they are by the grace of God, and give him all the praise (Matthew 5:16).

12. God gives Christians spiritual gifts so they exercise those gifts for his glory (1 Peter 4:10-11).

13. God will carry out the second coming of Jesus for his own glory (2 Thessalonians 1:9-10).

14. God exercises wrath against unbelievers for his own glory (Romans 9:22-23).

15. God one day will fill all the earth with the knowledge of his own glory (Habakkuk 2:14).

16. In eternity Christians will see and delight in forever the glory of God in Jesus (John 17:24).

C. God’s glory and sin (especially idolatry, the preferring of other things to God)

1. The essence of human sin is that we “fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

2. God makes it clear that he will not share his glory with the so-called gods of the peoples (Isaiah 42:8; 48:11).

3. The fundamental human tragedy is that we have “exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.”

D. For the immense good of our souls we should pray the prayer of Moses in Exodus 33:17: “Please show me your glory.”

E. The great people of Scripture prayed—especially in times of crisis—that God would act for his own glory (e.g., Moses in Exodus 32:12; Numbers 14:15-16; David in 1 Samuel 17:46-47; King Hezekiah in 2 Kings 19:19; Daniel in Daniel 9:18-19; Jesus in John 17:1-5).

F. Jesus Christ is the clearest and fullest expression of the glory of God (Hebrews 1:3; 2 Corinthians 4:6).

G. Jesus Christ asked the Father to glorify himself through everything Jesus did (John 12:27-28; 17:1-5).

H. The Holy Spirit works to bring glory to God the Son (John 16:14).

I. God calls Christians to share his passion for his glory by living—by the grace of God—to the glory of God in all things (1 Corinthians 10:31).

1. How do Christians live—by God’s grace—for the glory of God in all things?