

The Glory of God Alone

“God is glorified not only by his glory’s being seen, but by its being rejoiced in. . . . [W]hen those that see it delight in it: God is more glorified than if they only see it; his glory is then received by the whole soul, both by the understanding and by the heart.”

– Jonathan Edwards

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”

– Westminster Catechism

The Reformers believed Soli Deo Gloria to be of central importance. This was demonstrated in their commitment to living for the glory of God in everything. Even if it meant dying for the glory of God, that would be a sacrifice well worth making.

Among the great themes of the Protestant Reformation, there was no greater emphasis than the glory of God. The Reformers sought to elevate the eternal God of glory in everything they wrote and taught.

The glory of God is not taken lightly in Scripture. In fact, the very word carries with it heavy connotations. Theology that does not exalt the glory of God as the ultimate reality in the universe is not theology but heresy.

Soli Deo Gloria was the overarching theme of the Reformation as it means “To God alone is the glory.” The English word “glory” comes from the Latin word gloria, the Greek word doxa, and the Hebrew word kabod, meaning “**weightiness**” or “**heaviness**”. The glory of God refers to His importance, dignity, and significance.

Iconography plays a strong role in historic Roman Catholic worship. Calvin said the fundamental sin of humanity is idol worship and that by nature we are idol factories (Rom. 1:18-23). The essence of idolatry is worshipping a substitute in the place of God.

The point of our salvation must be the glory of God.

1. What is the glory of God?

- a. The glory of God is the visible expression of his **holiness** (Isaiah 6:3)
- b. The glory of God is his uniquely infinite **value**
- c. The glory of God is manifest in glorious **attributes** (Exodus 33:17ff; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Ephesians 1:6)
- d. The glory of God is an essential part of his being, **reflected** in creation

2. Why is the glory of God the goal of everything?

- a. He is glorified in his choice to be glorified (Romans 11:36)
- b. He is glorified in creation (1 Corinthians 15:39-41; Psalm 19:1)
- c. He is glorified in man (Isaiah 43:6-7; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
- d. He is glorified in salvation (Ephesians 1:6-14, Romans 9:23, 15:7-9)
- e. He is glorified in everything and forever (Romans 11:36)
- f. He is glorified in himself (Isaiah 42:8)

3. How is God glorified?

- a. The fullness of our **joy** (Psalm 16:11)
- b. The fellowship of our **glory** (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- c. The focus of our **attention** (1 John 3:2)
- d. The future of our **salvation** (Romans 8:30)
- e. The fullness of his **joy** (John 15:11; 17:13)