

The 5 Solas- To the Glory of God Alone (Soli Deo Gratia)

Psalm 115:1...Not to us, O Lord, not to us,
But to Your name give glory
Because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.

Isaiah 48...⁹“For the sake of My name I delay My wrath,
And *for My praise* I restrain *it* for you,
In order not to cut you off.
¹⁰“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.
¹¹“For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act;
For how can *My name* be profaned?
And My glory I will not give to another.

Romans 8...³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For who has
known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? ³⁵ Or who has first given to
Him that it might be paid back to him again? ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to
Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.

Our only hope is to return to the God of the Scriptures and the truth that the center of all meaning in life is not ourselves but God. God is the center of the universe and the essence of all wisdom and all truth. The purpose of life derives from God's desire to see His own glory and behold His own beauty. Thus it is time for Christians to be called back to the truth that the meaning of life is to be found in “the glory of God alone.” ...John Hannah

[The Bible speaks of God's glory in three ways.] First, glory is the inward majesty of God; second, it is the brightness God sometimes shines out into the world; third, it is the worship we offer to God. When we see God's glory, the proper way for us to respond is to give Him the glory-to offer Him all the honor and praise He deserves. As Jonathan Edwards concluded, “The end of the creation is that the creation might glorify [God]. Now what is glorifying but a rejoicing at that glory He has displayed?” ...Philip Ryken

Man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty...John Calvin

The spiritual beauty of the Father and the Savior seemed to engross my whole mind; and it was the instinctive feeling of my heart, “Thou art; and there is none beside Thee.” I never felt such an entire emptiness of self-love or any regard to any private, selfish interest of my own. It seemed to me that I had entirely done with myself. I felt that the opinions of the world concerning me were nothing, and that I had no more to do with any outward interest of my own than with that of a person whom I never saw. The glory of God seemed to be all, and in all, and to swallow up every wish and desire of my heart...Sarah Edwards

It is, perhaps, one of the hardest struggles of the Christian life to learn this sentence – “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name be glory.”...Charles Spurgeon

Since man was made for the glory of God, he can never be what he was intended to be until his life is properly focused on the glory of God... So God’s glory does not detract from man’s life. Instead, His glory is the sun around which the whole of life must revolve if there is to be the light and life of God in our experience. Since we were made for His glory, we will always malfunction whenever we fail to live for that purpose according to the Maker’s instructions...Sinclair Ferguson

The bedrock of missions is not the value of man. It is the spread of God’s glory. The biblical commitment to evangelism and missions is rooted in God’s passionate concern to make His name known...Steve Fernandez

Introduction to Soli Deo Gloria...

That all glory belongs to God is a given, and we should expect that God will save only in a way that brings glory to himself. That is what is at stake in the solas. Christ alone saves us, and he does so by grace alone received through faith alone so that God alone receives the glory for it.

Because he is the first principle, therefore he must be the last end. He is first and the last, the Alpha, and therefore the Omega. God is the fountain of our being; and therefore seeing we are of him, we should be to him (Rom. 11). Man is a mere relative being; God is our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. Our being is but a borrowed being from him, as rays or beams of the sun are borrowed from the sun: therefore I AM is God’s name. Whatever perfection we have is from him; hence he is called “the only wise, none good but one, that is God:” He gives us continuance of all these things, and it is on his cost that we live...Wherefore to make ourselves our chief end, is to make ourselves a god to ourselves; for a creature to be a centre to itself, and that God should be a means to that end, is to blaspheme (John 8:50). Thomas Boston, Of Man’s Chief End and Happiness)

The Cambridge Declaration on Soli Deo Gloria-The Erosion of God-Centered Worship...

Wherever in the church biblical authority has been lost, Christ has been displaced, the gospel has been distorted, or faith has been perverted, it has always been for one reason: our interests have displaced God's and we are doing his work in our way.

The loss of God's centrality in the life of today's church is common and lamentable. It is this loss that allows us to transform worship into entertainment, gospel preaching into marketing, believing into technique, being good into feeling good about ourselves, and faithfulness into being successful. As a result, God, Christ and the Bible have come to mean too little to us and rest too inconsequentially upon us.

God does not exist to satisfy human ambitions, cravings, the appetite for consumption, or our own private spiritual interests. ***We must focus on God in our worship, rather than the satisfaction of our personal needs. God is sovereign in worship; we are not.*** Our concern must be for God's kingdom, not our own empires, popularity or success.

We reaffirm that because salvation is of God and has been accomplished by God, it is for God's glory and that we must glorify him always. We must live our entire lives before the face of God, under the authority of God and for his glory alone.

We deny that we can properly glorify God if our worship is confused with entertainment, if we neglect either Law or Gospel in our preaching, or if self-improvement, self-esteem or self-fulfillment are allowed to become alternatives to the gospel.

David VanDrunen on Soli Deo Gloria (Excerpts)

Soli Deo Gloria is, of course, a Latin term, and it means glory to God alone...***the idea is that God alone possesses glory in and of himself. He alone is majestic and worthy of all honor and adoration and praise in and of himself...I would say, with respect to God's glory alone, perhaps what's most important there with respect to the Reformers, is that they had a very strong sense of the sovereignty and the majesty of God.*** That whether we are talking about Luther or Calvin or, actually, many, many others, they were convinced that God is sovereign over this world. He has made everything. He oversees and sustains all things. He works out all things according to the counsel of his will. And all creation, everything that happens in this world, needs to be understood with reference to God. And any good thing in this creation ultimately comes from God, from the father of light from whom comes every good gift. ***The emphasis of all glory belonging to God alone is, in fact, a really helpful way to think about primary concerns of the Reformers.***

Soli Deo Gloria (Excerpts)

by Rev. Chuck De Groat

GLORY TO GOD ALONE. The battle cry of the Reformation. ***In many ways, every other doctrine and every other slogan falls under this majestic truth...***

Yes, it was dark. The church had become infested with man-centered theology, economic corruption, abuse and scandal. Want forgiveness? Donate some money. Want answers? Don't ask God, ask your local priest. Want peace in your life? You'll never have it - life is a constant chess match with a wrathful and judgmental God. Many were frustrated.

And then there was light. His name was Martin Luther, a monk, a priest, and a

university professor disenchanted with the corruption within the church. His response was ninety-five theses, or “statements of concern,” about the unbiblical practices within the Roman Catholic Church. For instance, thesis number 7: “The pope himself cannot remit guilt, but only declare and confirm that it has been remitted by God.” Luther was concerned with the increasing power of the pope and the priesthood....Luther was concerned about the increasing corruption of greed. Thesis 37 declares: “Any true Christian whatsoever, living or dead, participates in all the benefits of Christ and the Church; and this participation is granted to him by God without letters of indulgence.” Luther’s point. ***It is God that saves, and not man. Salvation cannot be sold, nor can it be earned by purchasing indulgences (letters declaring a person forgiven for contributing money). It is a gift of God alone, by faith alone (sola fide), all to the glory of God (soli Deo gloria).***

But Luther was, by no means, the only light of the Reformation. He embodied the feeling of many that the Roman Catholic Church had strayed far from the original message of Scripture. Luther and the other Reformers called for change within the Church. Their point and purpose was not to split, to break away, or to start a new movement. It was always to reform what already existed in the Roman Catholic Church.

But it soon became clear that the Church would not cooperate. Not all within the hierarchy of the Church opposed reformation, but the ones that really counted did. Putting God’s word back in to the hands of the laymen, committing to justification by grace alone (sola gratia), and affirming the centrality of God’s glory would take away from the very thing they were attempting to achieve, the Church’s glory: big buildings, beautiful cathedrals, the kinds of places we like to visit on tours of Europe today. The Church had fallen victim to the age-old sins of pride, greed, empire building, and human glory - all things that would rob God of the Glory he deserved and desired, and rob man of the opportunity to trust fully in God’s goodness and grace.

The Reformation was a reclamation and a re-affirmation of soli Deo gloria. But there are other lessons to learn...If we believe the church needs to be semper reformanda - always reforming - then we need to look inside to see how God would have us reform. John Calvin, the father of Reformed theology, was right on when he began his Institutes of the Christian Religion by talking about the relationship between knowing God and knowing ourselves. He said you can’t have one without the other. To glorify God fully and to enjoy him fully, you have to look deeply at yourself and at what keeps you from deeper intimacy with him.

Calvin called the heart an “idol factory,” a place where addictions and idols place walls between us and God. Calvin called people, and the church, to a continual process of dying to these idols.

Glory to God Alone: Another Look at a Reformation Sola (Excerpts)...

David VanDrunen

If anything in our theology seems to be thoroughly theocentric, the doctrine of soli Deo gloria is it. Yet many Protestants today speak about this Reformation slogan in ways that seem surprisingly focused upon themselves...But when Soli Deo Gloria is presented as if its heart and essence concerns how we live, how we carry out our vocations, and how we formulate and execute political agendas we might ponder whether what was supposed to magnify God alone has taken a puzzling (albeit unintentional) anthropocentric turn. To say that Soli Deo Gloria has something to do with Christians' conduct is true, but to make our conduct its main focus is at least a distortion of this Reformation doctrine.

Consider three primary ways by which Scripture calls us to glorify God: by faith, by worship, and by humble service.

First, we glorify God by our faith. Since our salvation in Christ comes by faith alone, and since faith is the root from which all of our good works flow (Rom 14:23; Heb 11:6; James 2:14-26), it is no surprise to find faith and glorifying God indelibly connected. In a wonderful discussion in 2 Corinthians 1, Paul rebuts suspicion that his message vacillates, for it is never “yes” and “no,” but is always “yes,” “for no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ” (2 Cor 1:18-20)...When we hear of God’s promises and their fulfillment in Christ, our basic and fundamental response is to say “Amen”...so let it be. And we utter this Amen “to the glory of God.” ***We glorify God by faith in his promises.*** A similar dynamic is at work in Romans 4, in which Paul discusses faith at length and presents Abraham as the father of all believers (4:16). According to Paul, Abraham had every earthly reason to doubt God’s promise that he and his wife would have a son in their very old age, but “without weakening in his faith...he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God” (4:19-20). Instead, he “was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God” (4:20). Paul’s reasoning suggests that Abraham gave glory to God precisely through this act of faith.

A second way by which Christians glorify God is worship. If faith in God’s Christ-centered promises brings glory to God, then we would expect Scripture to describe our good works!the fruit of faith!in the same way. ***Among the fruits of faith, none is more fundamental than worship, by which I refer to a distinct activity in which we set aside other tasks and set our minds and hearts upon the Lord, in order to receive his word and to respond back to him in prayer and song. Again, therefore, it is no surprise to find abundant biblical exhortation for God’s saints to glorify him in worship. I cannot begin to do justice here to all that Scripture says on this matter. What Psalm 86:12 declares!“I will praise you, Lord my God, with***

all my heart; I will glorify your name forever”! Scripture repeats time and again. In glorifying God in worship we echo the worship of the angels in heaven (e.g., Rev 5:9-12; 7:12; 15:3-4; 19:1-8), and at times God’s saints even call the angels to worship (e.g., Ps 29:1-2; 103:20-21). This anticipates the coming day when believers will join the angelic host in person in a great heavenly throng that proclaims: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” (Rev 5:12-13).

Finally, God nevertheless glorifies himself in all that we do. This is not a major theme in Scripture, contrary to what we might expect, but it is still important to recognize this great truth and be thankful that we enjoy such a privilege. The most famous text to this end is 1 Corinthians 10:31: “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” Paul’s point is not that eating and drinking are mundane activities that illustrate how glorifying God should permeate even the little things in life...

Living for God’s Glory

Joel Beeke

What a lofty goal this is! What could be higher? Yet this is the chief end of everyone who has ever lived. God deserves all glory due to His name (Ps. 29:2). He says it Himself: “This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise” (Isa. 43:21). The happiest beings are the angels and glorified saints in heaven, who glorify God eternally. Paul put it this way: “Ye are redeemed with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit” (1 Cor. 6:20).

First, we must be redeemed by Christ. By nature, we come short of the glory of God; in fact, we are enemies of it (Rom. 1:21–23; 3:23). We deserve everlasting shame because we have not glorified God rightly. We must be redeemed. Our service to sin must end, and Christ’s blood and righteousness must be applied to set us free from the penalty and power of sin (Gal. 3:13–14; 5:24). He lived a perfect life that glorified God without fail; He paid the full ransom price on Calvary. Are you redeemed by His precious blood? Without this great Redeemer, you are lost and will never attain the purpose for which you were made.

Second, we must glorify God in our bodies. Many in the Corinthian church were returning to their former fleshly sins. The body is not for fornication (1 Cor. 6:13), but for the Lord. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?” (1 Cor. 6:19). There is a great dignity to our bodies. They are not a garbage dump. They are temples of the Holy Ghost. Therefore glorify God in your body.

Let us use our eyes rightly, as Jesus did, who was filled with compassion as He looked on the multitude. Let our ears turn away from the voices of the world and use them to listen to God's Word and the advice of the godly, even if it is reproof. Let us use our lips not for gossip, but to pray, to speak of the Lord Jesus, and to speak comfort to the downcast. Let us use our hands not to steal, but to work diligently, and to give for the good of others (Eph. 4:28). Let us use our feet to go to the house of God, to walk in His ways, and to follow the Lord Jesus in His footsteps (1 Peter 2:21).

Third, we must glorify God in our spirit. Let us think high thoughts of God, read His Word, and submit to His will. Let us trust in Him, as was said of Abram: "he was strong in faith . . . giving glory to God" (Rom. 4:20). Let us give glory to God by confessing our sins, as David acknowledging his sin and justifying God (Ps. 51). Let us give glory to God by a life of holiness, being made conformable to His Son, denying ourselves, and taking up our cross. **Let us give glory to God by being thankful, as the leper who returned to Jesus to render thanks to Him (Luke 17:18). This is our reasonable service, isn't it (Rom. 12:1)?**

He has bought you with His precious blood, so glorify Him in your body and in your soul. **How sad when common activities like eating and drinking remain only common activities.** That is how they lived in Noah's days, swallowing it all down without honoring the Giver of these gifts. But **Paul says that the children of God should be marked by doing everything to His glory (1 Cor. 10:31).**

The secret? The favorable presence of God. That was the secret to Joseph's life of glorifying God in trying times. He was far from his parents, far from the Promised Land, but the Lord was not far from him. God was with him (Gen. 39:2). He experienced the communion and nearness of the Lord. Can we do with less?

Let us look to the Savior from God who could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). He gives His Spirit in answer to your prayer: "Help me thy will to do."

Prayer and Worship in an Age of Distraction...

Prayer is an essential component of the Reformation tradition. We worship and honor God by calling on him. Prayer reminds us of our complete dependency on God. The Bible shows us that worship in heaven, in the old covenant, and in the church is a corporate activity, but not exclusively so. We are to worship corporately, but we are also called to privately meditate on Scripture and pray. **Prayer must be from our hearts and minds—we must concentrate and engage deeply with God. It is dishonoring to God for us to have wandering and inattentive thoughts.**

One of the great challenges in our contemporary society is that we are surrounded with technology that makes concentrating more and more

difficult. Worshiping God requires attention and contemplation, but the internet and a host of electronic devices are eroding our ability to focus. Many are cultivating a habit of being distracted.

The internet encourages skim reading and moving quickly from one thing to the next. Our electronic technologies are even affecting how our brains process and store information. ***Every generation has found concentration in prayer and worship difficult, but it is more difficult now than ever before. To counter these problems we need to cultivate the virtues of self-control, patience, perseverance, and intimacy in relationships(as opposed to superficiality). God is our sanctifier so we need to ask him to form these virtues in us, but we need to recognize that he will do so as we strive and fight and practice doing what we ought to do. Observing the Sabbath day (not just one hour at a worship service) can give us a break from our multitasking and provide us with time for worship and prayer. The Lord's Prayer provides a framework for our prayers. It begins with addressing God as our Father, and its focus is on bringing God glory.***

The Fear of the Lord in an Age of Narcissism...

Even many secular writers recognize that we live in an age of narcissism. People are far too preoccupied with themselves and their own images. Narcissistic traits are commonplace. In Christian theology our narcissistic tendencies have often been referred to as vainglory. Instead of worrying about ourselves, the Bible calls us to a high and reverent fear of the Lord. Christians have confidence and do not operate with a slavish fear, but they need to be characterized by a filial fear that takes the holiness of God seriously and that longs to please him. Knowing God allows us to see his awesome power and righteousness—it allows us to stand in awe of him. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, it keeps us from sin, it brings God glory, and it also abases our pride and engenders humility.

The fear of the Lord and narcissism are not compatible. Vanity has always been recognized by Christians as a great sin. A vainglorious person seeks glory for themselves rather than for God. Pride may fuel us to excel others, but vainglory seeks recognition and applause. On the other side of the coin, vainglory cannot handle flaws and shortcomings, so it engages in hypocrisy and cover-ups....***Studies show that narcissistic traits are pervasive in our society. With the advent of social media, more and more people are being wired to obsess about their images. Financially, many people live on credit to give the impression that they have wealth rather than actually building wealth. People feel the need for more and more praise for less and less work. The antidote to pride and narcissism is the fear of the Lord. We must learn the truth about ourselves and the truth about God. Such knowledge makes us humble.***

The gospel itself teaches us how righteous God is, how sinful we are, and how amazing Christ's substitutionary death is. Narcissism and pride cannot flourish at the base of the cross.

Thomas Watson on What it Means to Glorify God (From The Body of Divinity)

Q1: What is the chief end of man?

A: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. (1 Cor. 10:31; Ps 73:25,26)

Here are two ends of life specified. 1. The glorifying of God. 2. The enjoying of God.

I. *The glorifying of God.* 'That God in all things may be glorified' (1 Pet 4:2). The glory of God is a silver thread which must run through all our actions. 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor 10:31). Everything works to some end in things natural and artificial; now, man being a rational creature, must propose some end to himself, and that should be, that he may lift up God in the world. He had better lose his life than the end of his living. The great truth is asserted, that the end of every man's living should be to glorify God. Glorifying God has respect to all the persons in the Trinity; it respects God the Father who gave us life; God the Son, who lost his life for us; and God the Holy Ghost, who produces a new life in us; we must bring glory to the whole Trinity.

When we speak of God's glory, the question will be moved, What are we to understand by God's glory?

There is a twofold glory: [1] The glory that God has in himself, his intrinsic glory. Glory is essential to the Godhead, as light is to the sun: he is called the 'God of Glory' (Acts 7:2). Glory is the sparkling of the Deity; it is so co-natural to the Godhead, that God cannot be God without it. The creature's honour is not essential to his being. A king is a man without his regal ornaments, when his crown and royal robes are taken away; but God's glory is such an essential part of his being, that he cannot be God without it. God's very life is in his glory. This glory can receive no addition, because it is infinite; it is that which God is most tender of, and which he will not part with; 'My glory I will not give to another' (Isa. 48:11). God will give temporal blessings to his children, such as wisdom, riches, honour; he will give them spiritual blessings, he will give them grace, he will give them his love, he will give them heaven; but his essential glory he will not give to another. King Pharaoh parted with a ring off his finger to Joseph, and a gold chain, but he would not part with his throne. 'Only in the throne will I be greater than thou' (Gen. 41:40). So God will do much for his people; he will give them the inheritance; he will put some of Christ's glory, as mediator, upon them; but his essential glory he will not part with; 'in the throne he will be greater.'

[2] The glory which is ascribed to God, or which his creatures labour to bring to him. 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name' (1 Chron. 16:29). And, 'Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit' (1 Cor. 6:20). The glory we give God is nothing else but our lifting up his name in the world, and magnifying him in the eyes of others. 'Christ shall be magnified in my body' (Phil. 1:20).

What is it to glorify God?

Glorifying God consists in four things: 1. Appreciation, 2. Adoration, 3. Affection, 4. Subjection. This is the yearly rent we pay to the crown of heaven.

[1] Appreciation. To glorify God is to set God highest in our thoughts, and to have a venerable esteem of him. 'Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.' (Psa. 92:8). 'Thou art exalted far above all gods.' (Psa. 97:9). There is in God all that may draw forth both wonder and delight; there is a constellation of all beauties; he is *prima causa*, the original and springhead of being, who sheds a glory upon the creature. We glorify God, when we are God-admirers; admire his attributes, which are the glistening beams by which the divine nature shines forth; his promises which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where the pearl of price is hid; the noble effects of his power and wisdom in making the world, which is called 'the work of his fingers' (Psa. 8:3). To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.

[2] Glorifying God consists in adoration, or worship. 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' (Psa. 29:2). There is a twofold worship: (1) A civil reverence which we give to persons of honour. 'Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the children of Heth' (Gen. 23:7). Piety is no enemy to courtesy. (2) A divine worship which we give to God as his royal prerogative. 'They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces towards the ground' (Neh. 8:6). This divine worship God is very jealous of; it is the apple of his eye, the pearl of his crown; which he guards, as he did the tree of life, with cherubims and a flaming sword, that no man may come near it to violate it. Divine worship must be such as God himself has appointed, else it is offering strange fire (Lev. 10:1). The Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle, 'according to the pattern in the mount' (Ex. 25:40). He must not leave out anything in the pattern, nor add to it. If God was so exact and curious about the place of worship, how exact will he be about the matter of his worship! Surely here everything must be according to the pattern prescribed in his word.

[3] Affection. This is part of the glory we give to God, who counts himself glorified when he is loved (Deut. 6:5). 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' **There is a twofold love:** (1) *Amor concupiscentiae*, a love of concupiscence, which is **self-love; as when we love another, because he does us a good turn. A wicked man may be said to love God, because he has given him a good harvest, or filled his cup with wine. This is rather to love God's blessing than to love God.**

(2) *Amor amicitiae, a love of delight, as a man takes delight in a friend. This is to love God indeed; the heart is set upon God, as a man's heart is set upon his treasure. This love is exuberant, not a few drops, but a stream. It is superlative; we give God the best of our love, the cream of it.* 'I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate' (Song of Solomon 8:2). If the spouse had a cup more juicy and spiced, Christ must drink of it. It is intense and ardent. True saints are seraphims, burning in holy love to God. The spouse was *amore percussa*, in fainting fits, 'sick of love' (Song of Solomon 2:5). ***Thus to love God is to glorify him. He who is the chief of our happiness has the chief of our affections.***

[4] Subjection. This is when we dedicate ourselves to God, and stand ready dressed for his service. Thus the angels in heaven glorify him; they wait on his throne, and are ready to take a commission from him; therefore, they are represented by the cherubims with wings displayed, to show how swift they are in their obedience. We glorify God when we are devoted to his service; our head studies for him, our tongue pleads for him, and our hands relieve his members. The wise men that came to Christ did not only bow the knee to him, but presented him with gold and myrrh (Matt. 2:11). So we must not only bow the knee, give God worship, but bring presents of golden obedience. ***We glorify God when we stick at no service, when we fight under the banner of his gospel against an enemy, and say to him as David to King Saul, 'Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine' (1 Sam. 17:32).***

A good Christian is like the sun, which not only sends forth heat, but goes its circuit round the world. Thus, he who glorifies God, has not only his affections heated with love to God, but he goes his circuit too; he moves vigorously in the sphere of obedience.

Why must we glorify God?

[1] Because he gives us our being. 'It is he that made us' (Ps. 100:3). We think it a great kindness in a man to spare our life, but what kindness is it in God to give us our life! We draw our breath from him; and as life, so all the comforts of life are from him. He gives us health, which is the sauce to sweeten our life; and food, which is the oil that nourishes the lamp of life. If all we receive is from his bounty, is it not reasonable we should glorify him? Should we not live to him, seeing we live by him? 'For of him, and through him, are all things' (Rom. 11:36). ***All we have is of his fulness, all we have is through his free grace; and therefore to him should be all. It follows, therefore, 'To him be glory for ever.' God is not our benefactor only, but our founder, as rivers that come from the sea empty their silver streams into the sea again.***

[2] Because God has made all things for his own glory. 'The Lord hath made all things for himself' (Prov. 16:4); that is, 'for his glory.' As a king has excise out of commodities, so God will have glory out of everything. He will have glory out of the wicked. If they will not give him glory, he will get glory upon them.

'I will get me honour upon Pharaoh' (Ex. 14:17). But especially has he made the godly for his glory; they are the lively organs of his praise. 'This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise' (Is. 43:21). It is true, they cannot add to his glory, but they may exalt it; they cannot raise him in heaven, but they may raise him in the esteem of others here. God has adopted the saints into his family, and made them a royal priesthood, that they should show forth the praise of him who hath called them (1 Pet. 2:9).

[3] Because the glory of God has intrinsic value and excellence; it transcends the thoughts of men, and the tongues of angels. His glory is his treasure, all his riches lie here; as Micah said, 'What have I more' (Judges 18:24)? So, what has God more? God's glory is more worth than heaven, and more worth than the salvation of all men's souls. Better kingdoms be thrown down, better men and angels be annihilated, than God should lose one jewel of his crown, one beam of his glory.

[4] Creatures below us, and above us, bring glory to God; and do we think to sit rent free? Shall everything glorify God but man? It is a pity then that man was ever made. (1) Creatures below us glorify God, the inanimate creatures and the heavens glorify God. 'The heavens declare the glory of God' (Ps. 19:1). The curious workmanship of heaven sets forth the glory of its Maker; the firmament is beautified and pencilled out in blue and azure colours, where the power and wisdom of God may be clearly seen. 'The heavens declare his glory:' we may see the glory of God blazing in the sun, and twinkling in the stars. Look into the air, the birds, with their chirping music, sing hymns of praise to God. Every beast in its kind glorifies God. 'The beast of the field shall honour me' (Is. 43:20). (2) Creatures above us glorify God: 'the angels are ministering spirits' (Heb. 1:14). They are still waiting on God's throne, and bring some revenues of glory into the exchequer of heaven. Surely man should be much more studious of God's glory than the angels; for God has honoured him more than the angels, in that Christ took man's nature upon him, and not the angels.' Though, in regard of creation, God made man 'a little lower than the angels' (Heb. 2:7), yet in regard of redemption, God has set him higher than the angels. He has married mankind to himself; the angels are Christ's friends, not his spouse. **He has covered us with the purple robe of righteousness, which is a better righteousness than the angels have (2 Cor. 5:21). If then the angels bring glory to God, much more should we, being dignified with honor above angelic spirits.**

[5] We must bring glory to God, because all our hopes hang upon him. 'My hope is in thee' (Ps. 39:7); and 'My expectation is from him' (Ps. 62:5). I expect a kingdom from him. A child that is good-natured will honour his parent, by expecting all he needs from him 'All my springs are in thee' (Ps. 87:7). The silver springs of grace, and the golden springs of glory are in him.

In how many ways may we glorify God?

[1] It is glorifying God when we aim purely at his glory. It is one thing to advance God's glory, another thing to aim at it. God must be the *Terminus ad*

quem, the ultimate end of all actions. Thus Christ, 'I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that sent me' (John 8:50). A hypocrite has a squint eye, for he looks more to his own glory than God's. Our Saviour deciphers such, and gives a caveat against them in Matthew 6:2, 'When thou givest alms, do not sound a trumpet.' A stranger would ask, 'What means the noise of this trumpet?' It was answered, 'They are going to give to the poor.' And so they did not give alms, but sell them for honour and applause, that they might have glory of men; the breath of men was the wind that blew the sails of their charity; 'verily they have their reward.' The hypocrite may make his acquittance and write, 'received in full payment.' Chrysostom calls vain-glory one of the devil's great nets to catch men. And Cyprian says, 'Whom Satan cannot prevail against by intemperance, those he prevails against by pride and vainglory.' ***Oh let us take heed of self-worshipping! Aim purely at God's glory. We do this..***

(a) When we prefer God's glory above all other things; above credit, estate, relations; when the glory of God coming in competition with them, we prefer his glory before them. If relations be in our way to heaven, we must either leap over them, or tread upon them. A child must unchild himself, and forget he is a child; he must know neither father nor mother in God's cause. 'Who said unto his father and mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren' (Deut. 33:9). This is to aim at God's glory.

(b) We aim at God's glory, when we are content that God's will should take place, though it may cross ours. Lord, I am content to be a loser, if thou be a gainer; to have less health, if I have more grace, and thou more glory. Let it be food or bitter physic if thou givest it me. Lord, I desire that which may be most for thy glory. Our blessed Saviour said, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt' (Mat. 26:39). If God might have more glory by his sufferings, he was content to suffer. 'Father, glorify thy name' (John 12:28).

(c) We aim at God's glory when we are content to be outshined by others in gifts and esteem, so that His glory may be increased. A man that has God in his heart, and God's glory in his eye, desires that God should be exalted; and if this be effected, let who will be the instrument, he rejoices. 'Some preach Christ of envy: notwithstanding, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice' (Phil. 1:5); they preached Christ of envy, they envied Paul that concourse of people, and they preached that they might outshine him in gifts, and get away some of his hearers: well, says Paul, Christ is preached, and God is like to have the glory, therefore I rejoice; let my candle go out, if the Sun of Righteousness may but shine.

[2] We glorify God by an ingenuous confession of sin. The thief on the cross had dishonoured God in his life, but at his death he brought glory to God by confession of sin. 'We indeed suffer justly' (Luke 23:41). He acknowledged he deserved not only crucifixion, but damnation. 'My son, give, I pray thee, glory to God, and make confession unto him' (Joshua 7:19). A humble confession exalts God. How is God's free grace magnified in crowning those who deserve to be condemned! The excusing and mincing

of sin casts a reproach upon God. Adam denied not that he tasted the forbidden fruit, but, instead of a full confession, he taxed God. 'The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat' (Gen. 3:12); if thou hadst not given me the woman to be a tempter, I had not sinned. Confession glorifies God, because it clears him; it acknowledges that he is holy and righteous, whatever he does. Nehemiah vindicates God's righteousness; 'Thou art just in all that is brought upon us' (chapter 9:33). A confession is ingenuous when it is free, not forced. 'I have sinned against heaven and before thee' (Luke 15:18). The prodigal charged himself with sin before his father charged him with it.

[3] We glorify God by believing. 'Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God' (Rom. 4:20). Unbelief affronts God, it gives him the lie; 'he that believeth not, maketh God a liar' (1 John 5:10). But faith brings glory to God; it sets to its seal that God is true (John 3:33). He that believes flies to God's mercy and truth, as to an altar of refuge; he engarrisons himself in the promises, and trusts all he has with God. 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit' (Ps. 31:5). This is a great way of bringing glory to God, and God honours faith, because faith honours him. It is a great honour we do to a man when we trust him with all we have, when we put our lives and estates into his hand; it is a sign we have a good opinion of him. The three children glorified God by believing. 'The God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and will deliver us' (Dan. 3:17). Faith knows there are no impossibilities with God, and will trust him where it cannot trace him.

[4] We glorify God, by being tender of his glory. God's glory is dear to him as the apple of his eye. An ingenuous child weeps to see a disgrace done to his father. 'The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me' (Ps. 69:9). When we hear God reproached, it is as if we were reproached; when God's glory suffers, it is as if we suffered. This is to be tender of God's glory.

[5] We glorify God by fruitfulness. 'Hereby is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit' (John 15:8). As it is dishonouring God to be barren, so fruitfulness honours him. 'Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are to the praise of his glory' (Phil. 1:11). We must not be like the fig tree in the gospel, which had nothing but leaves, but like the pomecitron, that is continually either mellowing or blossoming, and is never without fruit. It is not profession, but fruit that glorifies God. God expects to have his glory from us in this way. 'Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit of it' (1 Cor. 9:7)? Trees in the forest may be barren, but trees in the garden are fruitful. We must bring forth the fruits of love and good works. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' (Matt. 5:16).

Faith sanctifies our works, and works testify our faith; to be doing good to others, to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, much glorifies God. Thus Christ glorified his Father; 'he went about doing good' (Acts 10:38). By being fruitful, we are fair in God's eyes. 'The Lord called thy name a green olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit.' (Jer. 11:16). And we must bear much fruit; it is muchness of fruit that glorifies God: 'if ye bear much fruit.'

The spouse's breasts are compared to clusters of grapes, to show how fertile she was (Song of Solomon 7:7). Though the lowest degree of grace may bring salvation to you, yet it will not bring much glory to God. It was not a spark of love Christ commended in Mary, but much love; 'she loved much' (Luke 7:47).

[6] We glorify God, by being contented in that state in which Providence has placed us. We give God the glory of his wisdom, when we rest satisfied with what he carves out to us. Thus Paul glorified God. The Lord cast him into as great variety of conditions as any man, 'in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft' (2 Cor. 11:23) yet he had learned to be content. Paul could sail either in a storm or a calm; he could be anything that God would have him; he could either want or abound (Phil 4:13). A good Christian argues thus: It is God that has put me in this condition; he could have raised me higher, if he pleased, but that might have been a snare to me: he has done it in wisdom and love; therefore I will sit down satisfied with my condition. Surely this glorifies God much; God counts himself much honoured by such a Christian. Here, says God, is one after mine own heart; let me do what I will with him, I hear no murmuring, he is content. This shows abundance of grace. When grace is crowning, it is not so much to be content; but when grace is conflicting with inconveniences, then to be content is a glorious thing indeed. For one to be content when he is in heaven is no wonder; but to be content under the cross is like a Christian. This man must needs bring glory to God; for he shows to all the world, that though he has little meal in his barrel, yet he has enough in God to make him content: he says, as David, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places' (Ps. 16:5).

[7] We glorify God by working out our own salvation. God has twisted together his glory and our good. We glorify him by promoting our own salvation. It is a glory to God to have multitudes of converts; now, his design of free grace takes, and God has the glory of his mercy; so that, while we are endeavouring our salvation, we are honouring God. What an encouragement is this to the service of God, to think, while I am hearing and praying, I am glorifying God; while I am furthering my own glory in heaven, I am increasing God's glory. Would it not be an encouragement to a subject, to hear his prince say to him, You will honour and please me very much, if you will go to yonder mine of gold, and dig as much gold for yourself as you can carry away? So, for God to say, Go to the ordinances, get as much grace as you can, dig out as much salvation as you can; and the more happiness you have, the more I shall count myself glorified.

[8] We glorify God by living to God. 'That they which live should not live to themselves, but unto him who died for them' (2 Cor. 5:15). 'Whether we live, we live unto the Lord' (Rom. 14:8). The Mammonist lives to his money, the Epicure lives to his belly; the design of a sinner's life is to gratify lust, but we glorify God when we live to God. We live to God when we live to his service, and lay ourselves out wholly for God. The Lord has sent us into the world, as a merchant sends his factor beyond the seas to trade for him. We live to God when we trade for his interest, and propagate his gospel. God has given every man a talent; and when a man does not hide it in a napkin, but improves it for God, he lives to God. When a master in a family, by counsel and good

example, labours to bring his servants to Christ; when a minister spends himself, and is spent, that he may win souls to Christ, and make the crown flourish upon Christ's head; when the magistrate does not wear the sword in vain, but labours to cut down sin, and to suppress vice; this is to live to God, and this is glorifying God. 'That Christ might be magnified, whether by life or by death' (Phil. 1:20). Three wishes Paul had, and they were all about Christ; that he might be found in Christ, be with Christ, and magnify Christ.

[9] We glorify God by walking cheerfully. It brings glory to God, when the world sees a Christian has that within him that can make him cheerful in the worst times; that can enable him, with the nightingale, to sing with a thorn at his breast. The people of God have ground for cheerfulness. They are justified and adopted, and this creates inward peace; it makes music within, whatever storms are without (2 Cor. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:6). If we consider what Christ has wrought for us by his blood, and wrought in us by his Spirit, it is a ground of great cheerfulness, and this cheerfulness glorifies God. It reflects upon a master when the servant is always drooping and sad; sure he is kept to hard commons, his master does not give him what is fitting; so, when God's people hang their heads, it looks as if they did not serve a good master, or repented of their choice, which reflects dishonour on God. As the gross sins of the wicked bring a scandal on the gospel, so do the uncheerful lives of the godly. 'Serve the Lord with gladness' (Ps. 100:2). Your serving him does not glorify him, unless it be with gladness. A Christian's cheerful looks glorify God; religion does not take away our joy, but refines it; it does not break our viol, but tunes it, and makes the music sweeter.

[10] We glorify God, by standing up for his truths. Much of God's glory lies in his truth. God has intrusted us with his truth, as a master intrusts his servant with his purse to keep. We have not a richer jewel to trust God with than our souls, nor has God a richer jewel to trust us with than his truth. Truth is a beam that shines from God. Much of his glory lies in his truth. When we are advocates for truth we glorify God. 'That ye should contend earnestly for the truth' (Jude 3). The Greek word to contend signifies great contending, as one would contend for his land, and not suffer his right to be taken from him; so we should contend for the truth. Were there more of this holy contention God would have more glory. Some contend earnestly for trifles and ceremonies, but not for the truth. We should count him indiscreet that would contend more for a picture than for his inheritance; for a box of counters than for his box of title deeds.

[11] We glorify God, by praising him. Doxology, or praise, is a God exalting work. 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me' (Ps. 50:23). The Hebrew word *Bara*, to create, and *Barak*, to praise, are little different, because the end of creation is to praise God. David was called the sweet singer of Israel, and his praising God was called glorifying God. 'I will praise thee, O Lord my God, and I will glorify thy name' (Ps. 86:12). Though nothing can add to God's essential glory, yet praise exalts him in the eyes of others. When we praise God, we spread his fame and renown, we display the trophies of his excellency. In this manner the angels glorify him; they are the choristers of heaven, and do trumpet forth his praise. Praising God is one of the highest and purest acts of religion. In prayer we act like men; in praise we act like angels.

Believers are called temples of God' (1 Cor. 3:16). When our tongues praise, then the organs in God's spiritual temple are sounding. How sad is it that God has no more glory from us in this way! Many are full of murmuring and discontent, but seldom bring glory to God, by giving him the praise due to his name. We read of the saints having harps in their hands, the emblems of praise. Many have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouth, but few have harps in their hand, blessing and glorifying God. Let us honour God this way. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to God: while God renews our lease, we must renew our rent.

[12] We glorify God, by being zealous for his name. 'Phinehas hath turned my wrath away, while he was zealous for my sake' (Nu. 25:11). Zeal is a mixed affection, a compound of love and anger; it carries forth our love to God, and our anger against sin in an intense degree. Zeal is impatient of God's dishonour; a Christian fired with zeal, takes a dishonour done to God worse than an injury done to himself. 'Thou canst not bear them that are evil' (Rev. 2:2). Our Saviour Christ thus glorified his Father; he, being baptized with a spirit of zeal, drove the money-changers out of the temple. 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up (John 2:14-17).

[13] We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in our natural and in our civil actions. In our natural actions; in eating and drinking. 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor. 10:31). A gracious person holds the golden bridle of temperance; he takes his meat as a medicine to heal the decays of nature, that he may be the fitter, by the strength he receives, for the service of God; he makes his food, not fuel for lust, but help to duty. In buying and selling, we do all to the glory of God. The wicked live upon unjust gain, by falsifying the balances, as in Hosea 12:7: 'The balances of deceit are in his hands;' and thus while men make their weights lighter, they make their sins heavier, when by exacting more than the commodity is worth, they do not for fourscore write down fifty, but for fifty, four-score; when they exact double the price that a thing is worth. We buy and sell to the glory of God, when we observe that golden maxim, 'To do to others as we would have them do to us;' so that when we sell our commodities, we do not sell our consciences also. 'Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men' (Acts 24:16). We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in all our civil and natural actions, and do nothing that may reflect any blemish on religion.

[14] We glorify God by labouring to draw others to God; by seeking to convert others, and so make them instruments of glorifying God. We should be both diamonds and loadstones; diamonds for the lustre of grace, and loadstones for attractive virtue in drawing others to Christ. 'My little children, of whom I travail, &c.' (Gal. 4:19). It is a great way of glorifying God, when we break open the devil's prison, and turn men from the power of Satan to God.

[15] We glorify God in a high degree when we suffer for God, and seal the gospel with our blood. 'When thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not: this spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God' (John 21:18). God's glory shines in the ashes of his martyrs. 'Wherefore glorify the

Lord in the fires' (Is. 24:15). Micaiah was in the prison, Isaiah was sawn asunder, Paul beheaded, Luke hanged on an olive tree; thus did they, by their death, glorify God. The sufferings of the primitive saints did honour to God, and made the gospel famous in the world. What would others say? See what a good master they serve, and how they love him, that they will venture the loss of all in his service. The glory of Christ's kingdom does not stand in worldly pomp and grandeur, as other kings'; but it is seen in the cheerful sufferings of his people. The saints of old 'loved not their lives to the death' (Rev. 12:11). They embraced torments as so many crowns. God grant we may thus glorify him, if he calls us to it. Many pray, 'Let this cup pass away,' but few, 'Thy will be done.'

[16] We glorify God, when we give God the glory of all that we do. When Herod had made an oration, and the people gave a shout, saying, 'It is the voice of a God, and not of a man,' he took the glory to himself; the text says, 'Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms' (Acts 12:23). We glorify God, when we sacrifice the praise and glory of all to God. 'I laboured more abundantly than they all' (1 Cor. 15:10), a speech, one would think, savoured of pride; but the apostle pulls the crown from his own head, and sets it upon the head of free grace: 'yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' As Joab, when he fought against Rabbah, sent for King David, that he might carry away the crown of the victory (2 Sam. 12:28), so a Christian, when he has gotten power over any corruption or temptation, sends for Christ, that he may carry away the crown of the victory. As the silkworm, when she weaves her curious work, hides herself under the silk, and is not seen; so when we have done anything praiseworthy, we must hide ourselves under the veil of humility, and transfer the glory of all we have done to God. As Constantine used to write the name of Christ over his door, so should we write the name of Christ over our duties. Let him wear the garland of praise.

[17] We glorify God by a holy life. A bad life dishonours God. 'Ye are an holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him that hath called you' (1 Pet. 2:9). 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you' (Rom. 2:24). Epiphanius says, 'That the looseness of some Christians in his time made many of the heathens shun their company, and would not be drawn to hear their sermons.' By our exact Bible conversation we glorify God. Though the main work of religion lies in the heart, yet our light must so shine that others may behold it. The safety of a building is the foundation, but the glory of it is in the frontispiece; so the beauty of faith is in the conversation. When the saints, who are called jewels, cast a sparkling lustre of holiness in the eyes of the world, then they 'walk as Christ walked' (1 John 2:6). When they live as if they had seen the Lord with bodily eyes, and been with him upon the mount, they adorn religion, and bring revenues of glory to the crown of heaven.

II. Man's chief end is to enjoy God for ever. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee' (Ps. 73:25)? That is, What is there in heaven I desire to enjoy but thee? ***There is a twofold fruition or enjoying of God; the one is in this life, the other in the life to come.***

[1] ***The enjoyment of God in this life.*** It is a great matter to enjoy God's ordinances, but to enjoy God's presence in the ordinances is that which a gracious heart aspires after. 'To see thy glory so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary' (Ps. 63:2). This sweet enjoyment of God, is, when we feel his Spirit co-operating with the ordinance, and distilling grace upon our hearts, when in the Word the Spirit quickens and raises the affections, 'Did not our hearts burn within us' (Luke 24:32); when the Spirit transforms the heart, leaving an impress of holiness upon it. 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory' (2 Cor. 3:18). When the Spirit revives the heart with comfort, it comes not only with its anointing, but with its seal; it sheds God's love abroad in the heart (Rom. 5:5). 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ' (1 John 1:3). In the Word we hear God's voice, in the sacrament we have his kiss. The heart being warmed and inflamed in a duty is God's answering by fire. The sweet communications of God's Spirit are the first-fruits of glory. Now Christ has pulled off his veil, and showed his smiling face; now he has led a believer into the banqueting-house, and given him of the spiced wine of his love to drink; he has put in his finger at the hole of the door; he has touched the heart, and made it leap for joy. Oh how sweet is it thus to enjoy God! The godly have, in ordinances, had such divine raptures of joy, and soul transfigurations, that they have been carried above the world, and have despised all things here below.

[2] ***The enjoyment of God in the life to come.*** Man's chief end is to enjoy God for ever. Before the plenary fruition of God in heaven, there must be something previous and antecedent; and that is, our being in a state of grace. We must have conformity to him in grace, before we can have communion with him in glory. Grace and glory are linked and chained together. Grace precedes glory, as the morning star ushers in the sun. God will have us qualified and fitted for a state of blessedness. Drunkards and swearers are not fit to enjoy God in glory; the Lord will not lay such vipers in his bosom. Only the 'pure in heart shall see God.' We must first be, as the king's daughter, glorious within, before we are clothed with the robes of glory...As the body cannot have life but by having communion with the soul, so the soul cannot have blessedness but by having immediate communion with God. God is the *summum bonum*, the chief good; therefore the enjoyment of him is the highest felicity.

He is a universal good...'a good, in which are all goods.' The excellencies of the creature are limited. A man may have health, not beauty, learning, not parentage, riches, not wisdom; but in God are contained all excellencies. He is a good, commensurate fully to the soul; a sun, a portion, a horn of salvation; in whom dwells 'all fulness' (Col 1:19). God is an unmixed good. ...God is perfect, the quintessence of good. He is sweetness in the flower. God is a satisfying good. The soul cries out, I have enough. 'I shall be satisfied with thy likeness' (Ps. 17:15). The glorified soul shall be ever solacing itself in God, feasting on his love, and sunning itself in the light of his countenance. We read of the river of pleasure at God's right hand; but will not this in time be dried up? No! There is a fountain at the bottom which feeds it. 'With the Lord is the fountain of life' (Ps. 36:9). Thus God is the chief good, and the enjoyment of God for ever is the highest felicity of which the soul is capable.