

“Soli Deo Gloria”
Romans 11:36
(Preached at Trinity, August 29, 2010)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. This morning I want to close out **Chapter 11** by looking at the last phrase of **Verse 36 Romans 11:36** – “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”
2. During the Reformation the Protestant Reformers expressed certain absolutes in what became known as the Five Solas of the Reformation. They all hinged on the Latin word sola which means alone.
 1. Sola Scriptura – Scripture alone is our final, ultimate, and infallible source of authority.
 2. Sola Gratia – It is only by God's grace alone that we are able to stand before Him. He graciously imputed to us the righteousness of Christ and imputed to His son our sins.
 3. Sola Fide – Justification (being made right with God) is received by faith alone in Christ alone without any mixture of good works. We have nothing upon which to rest except upon the accomplishments of Christ and to none other.
 4. Solus Christus – We are saved through Christ alone. There is no other Mediator nor Redeemer other than the one provided by the Father Himself to fulfill the righteous requirements of His law.
3. The fifth Sola of the Reformation encapsulates all others. It is all accomplished to the glory of God alone – Soli Deo Gloria
God does all of His works for Himself – for His own glory.
I have often expressed the difficulty of this chapter but in this last passage all of the difficulties melt into glorious bliss. This doxology is wonderful.
Charles Spurgeon preached over 120 messages from the Book of Romans but only one from **Chapter 11** and it was from this verse.
4. This morning I want to close **Chapter 11** with this glorious subject: *Soli Deo Gloria*. We'll look at it under two simple headings:
 - I. We'll look at it in a general sense – “All things are for God's glory”
Romans 11:36 – “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”
 - II. As I pointed out before, Paul's primary attention is focused upon God's wondrous work of grace in saving lost sinners – both Jews and Gentiles.
We'll look at the subject in the particular sense of God's glory in Redemption

- I. The General Sense: “All things are for God’s glory”
- A. As we saw last time, God is the author of all things. God is the source of all things. The ultimate cause of all things is God. The ultimate reason for all things is God.
1. All of God’s purposes were decreed from eternity in His eternal counsel.
 2. God’s ultimate end and purpose in all things is found in **Verse 36** – He does all things for His own glory
Isaiah 48:10-11 – “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. 11 For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.”
 3. All of creation exists to display the glory of God.
 4. All of history is unfolding to display the glory of God
- B. God works all things to His own glory
1. Every detail of your life is established by God for His own glory
 2. You were born when and where you were for God’s glory
 3. Every detail of your physical body is for God’s own glory
Exodus 4:11 – “Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?”
 - a. Multitudes seek beauty as a means of establishing their own glory
 - b. In 2009 there were 10 million cosmetic procedures done in the US totaling 10.5 billion dollars.
 - c. God made us precisely they way He wanted and He did it for Himself
 - d. You exist to make God look glorious. Your only boast should be to boast in Him.
- C. Do you see your purpose as bringing God glory?
1. It is true that God *will* receive glory from every creature. All men will glorify Him. God will even be glorified in the judgment of the wicked. This was made clear with Pharaoh in Egypt
ESV Exodus 14:17 – “And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen.”
Romans 9:17 – “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”
 2. The Bible tells us that at the Day of Judgment every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord.
 3. But how much more glorious it is for us to declare His glory now
Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians**
1 Corinthians 10:31 – “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
 4. God’s glory should be our goal in everything we do
 - a. Everything we do is a reflection of our view of God. As Christians our desire must always be to demonstrate to all men the greatness of God in our lives.
 - b. Calvin – “There is no part of our life or conduct, however insignificant, which should not be related to the glory of God.”

5. God is concerned about the details of our life – everything has a moral aspect - Even what we think is important
Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.”

II. The particular sense of God’s glory in Redemption

- A. Salvation is designed to put the glory of God’s grace on display?
Ephesians 1:5-6 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
Ephesians 1:11-12 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: ¹² That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.
1. Everything about our salvation has its focus upon God
 2. Salvation is all about God
- B. God sent forth His own Son to purchase our pardon
1. God alone is exalted. Who could accomplish the work of Christ? Who but Christ could drink the cup of God’s wrath in the place of sinners?
Nothing can be added to the cross
 2. Salvation demands trusting in Christ alone. The focus is upon Him and He receives all the glory.
- C. Consider our salvation. We were born spiritually dead
1. This means we are completely dead to spiritual things
1 Corinthians 2:14 – “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.”
 2. Our hearts are wicked. We are born with a sin nature. We are unable to fulfill the demands of the law.
 3. The Bible describes us enveloped in darkness and in love with the darkness.
- D. Salvation demands a powerful work of God
1. It is a monergistic work. By monergistic we mean that God works alone in our salvation. We contribute nothing. Dead men cannot lift a finger. It is completely a work of God’s grace
 2. In salvation God performs a miraculous transformation upon the sinner. It is describes as a whole new creative work of God.
2 Corinthians 4:6 – “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

- E. It begins with the new birth, the powerful work of the Holy Spirit – regeneration.
1. This is a powerful work of the Holy Spirit upon the lost man dead in sin. **Ephesians 2:4-5** – “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ”
 2. Again, what can a dead person do to help himself? Can he bring himself back to life?
 3. See **John 3** (Begins with **John 2:23**)
John 3:3 – “born” from Greek verb – aorist passive
 Three voices in Greek – active, middle, passive
 Active – I drove to the store.
 Middle – I drove myself to the store.
 Passive – I was driven to the store.
 God causes us to be born again.
 4. From this new birth comes faith and repentance
 - a. Faith is our trust in the merits of Christ and it is given to us by God
Ephesians 2:8 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:”
 - b. Repentance is a complete forsaking of our sin and it also is given to us by God
 - c. Through this wondrous work of God in our hearts we are enabled to see God as most glorious and worth of all of our praise and worship. No one is brought into heaven against their wills. Our wills are marvelously transformed to desire the glory of Christ above all things.
- F. God alone receives all glory in this supernatural work of salvation
 Consider again the 5 solas
1. Sola Scriptura – God alone has sent forth His own revelation and uses it powerfully in our salvation – God alone receives all the glory.
 2. Sola Gratia – It is only by God’s grace alone that we are able to stand before Him – so God alone receives all the glory.
 3. Sola Fide – Justification is received by faith alone in Christ alone without any mixture of good works – God alone receives all the glory.
 4. Solus Christus – Christ alone was sent by the Father to fulfill the righteous requirements of His law and save His people from their sins – God alone receives all the glory.
 5. Charles Hodge writes concerning the end of **Chapter 11** which ends the doctrinal portion of the Book of Romans.
 “Such is the appropriate conclusion of the doctrinal portion of this wonderful epistle, in which more fully and clearly than in any other portion of the Word of God, the plan of salvation is presented and defended. Here are the doctrines of grace, doctrines on which the pious in all ages and nations have rested their hopes of heaven. The leading principle of all is that God is the source of all good, that in fallen man there is neither merit nor ability, that salvation, consequently, is all of grace, as well satisfaction as pardon, as well election as eternal glory.”
 6. Truly, “From Him and through Him and to Him are all things.”

Conclusion:

1. Too often we start with man and man's needs
 - a. The Gospel is often presented only as it applies to what we receive from it.
"God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life."
 - b. The Gospel must never be void of the glory of God – *His* goodness, *His* authority and dominion, *His* grace through Jesus Christ.
 - c. It is good to ask the question, "Why is man saved?" It is all for God's glory.
2. And if God does all things for His glory alone should we not be infinitely motivated to live in such a way as to reflect His glory. One of the great marks and evidence of our salvation is our attitude towards God. If He has become all glorious in our sight we should want to display that glory to others.
3. Spurgeon:
"To whom be glory for ever." This should be the single desire of the Christian. I take it that he should not have twenty wishes, but only one. He may desire to see his family well brought up, but only that "To God may be glory for ever." He may wish for prosperity in his business, but only so far as it may help him to promote this- "To whom be glory for ever." He may desire to attain more gifts and more graces, but it should only be that "To him may be glory for ever." This one thing I know, Christian, you are not acting as you ought to do when you are moved by any other motive than the one motive of your Lord's glory."
4. Soli Deo Gloria was carved into the organ at Bach's church in Leipzig and the composer signed his works with its initials - SDG.
5. May God grant us to one heart and one mind – "To God be the glory forever."
May our church reflect it,
May our worship reflect it,
May our lives reflect it,
May our families reflect it.