

The Glory of God

January 11, 2009

What Is Glory?

- Glory
 - Latin – *gloria*
 - Greek – δόξα *doxa*
 - Hebrew כבוד *kabod* – “heaviness,” “weightiness”
 - Refers to God’s importance, dignity, significance
 - Is a divine attribute

- “Shekinah” glory שכנה
 - The glorious manifestation of God’s divine presence through fire and light in the Old Testament (e.g., Ex. 24:15-17)
 - “Shekinah” is derived from a Hebrew word meaning “dwelling” or “settling”, and refers to the indwelling or settling presence of God, especially in the tabernacle and temple, but also on Mt. Sinai

- “Refulgent” glory
 - “Refulgent” means “shining brightly; radiant; gleaming”
 - This term refers to the brightness of God’s radiant glory (e.g., 1 Tim. 6:15b-16)

Some Bible Passages Showing God’s Glory

- Ex. 33:18-34: 9, 29-35; 40:34-48
- Is. 6:1-7; Ez. 1:4-28
- Mt. 17:1-8; Mk. 9:1-8; Lk. 9:28-36
- Jn. 1:14-18; Lk. 2:8-14
- Hebr. 1:3; Jude 24-25
- Rev. 4-5

Giving God Glory

- WCF Shorter Catechism
 - Q1. What is the chief end of man?
 - A1. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever

God Alone – *Soli Deo Gloria*

- We are to glorify God
 - Recognize His glory – He alone is glorious
 - Reflect His glory – we are images of His reflected glory
- Reformation emphasis on glorifying God
 - Luther: giving God complete glory in the salvation of man
 - Calvin: giving God complete glory in worship
- Idolatry
 - Ascribing to a creature one or more attributes of God – giving God’s glory to someone or something other than God
 - Not ascribing to God all of His attributes – withholding glory from God
 - Romans 1:18-23, especially v. 21
 - The basic element in humanity’s corruption is a refusal to glorify God properly
 - The last “sola” to be grasped by man is “soli Deo Gloria”

The Cambridge Declaration of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals

- 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.
- Thesis Five: Soli Deo Gloria
 - 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.