

1998 Summer Lecture Series (Carson City, NV)
Soli Deo Gloria: The Supremacy of God in Life and Theology
June 15, 1998

The Reformation recovered the gospel. The gospel of auto-soterism had been king of the hill, but through such leading lights as Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, Zwingli and others, the gospel of pure grace was recovered. But the reformation uncovered something more ultimate than the gospel, it recovered the motivation of God in all that He does, including the gospel.

The reformers attempted to capture the heart of the issues in a number of slogans. These slogans formed the core of reformational theology as the true church split from Rome. They will take up our attention in the coming weeks, Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, and Solus Christus. But there is one sola which conveys that truth which is more ultimate than the gospel, this one sola reveals the motivation of God in all that He does, And my belief is that if a person can lay hold of this sola with heart and mind, then he will see the truth of the reformed faith. That sola is Soli Deo Gloria.

- I. The Self-Existence, Self-Sufficiency and Triunity of God
 - A. Self-existent: Ex. 3:14; Psa. 102:25-27
Sproul
 - B. Self-sufficient: Acts 17:24-25; Rom. 11:33-36
Tozer, 34
 - C. Eternally happy and content in the fellowship of the Trinity
Piper, 38
 - D. The ultimate question: why did God create and redeem? What are His motives behind creation, providence and redemption?
- II. What is God's Chief End?
 - A. God's chief end is to glorify Himself and enjoy himself forever
 1. God is overflowing and abounding in glory (Psa. 35:5-9; Rom. 11:33-36)
Piper, 40
 2. God is absolutely sovereign and does only that which pleases Him
(Psa. 115:3; 135:6; Isa. 46:9-11)
 3. Everything God does, He does for His own glory: **PASSIONATELY!**
(Isa. 48:9-11; cf. Ex. 14:4, 18; 1 Sam. 12:22; Matt. 6:9)
 - B. God's chief end in creation
(Rev. 4:11; Gen. 1:31; cf. Ex. 33:17-22; Isa. 43:7; Psa. 19:1 104:31; 145:3-13)
 - C. God's chief end in redemption
Ezek. 36:22-27; Eph. 1:3-14
 - D. A note on the damnation of the wicked : Rom. 9:22-23

- III. The charge of ego-centricism
peers>idolatry illustration>the righteousness of God

- IV. The Battle Cry of the Reformation: Soli Deo Gloria
 - A. Humbles man: here is the real Copernicum revolution

 - B. Exalts God
 Much of what comes to us today from the four corners of the church, is somehow an attack on this very issue- the exaltation and supremacy of God in all things.
 We belittle God with our self-esteem gospels, our psychological gospels, our felt need gospels.
 What we are concerned with to the uttermost is the exaltation of God because that is what He is most concerned about.
 Piper, 12

 - C. Sets grace in its proper place
 "Grace is the pleasure of God to magnify the worth of God by giving sinners the right and power to delight in God without obscuring the glory of God." Piper
 -free, sovereign, unconditional to the fullest

 - D. Establishes the only true godly motivation for mankind
 1 Cor. 10:31

 - E. Only the reformed can add the "Soli"
 Others can say, "To God be the glory"

This is the summum bonum of the Bible (the chief good), it is the sine qua non. It is the passion of God's heart and must be the passion of ours. If we are to think correctly about God, if we are to worship Him acceptably, if our theology is to be honoring to Him, if our lives are to be molded by true godliness, then Soli Deo Gloria must be at the heart of our lives, individually, corporately as families and churches.

Recommended Reading: John Piper, *The Pleasures of God* (Multnomah, 1991); Jonathan Edwards, "An Essay on the Trinity" in *Treatise on Grace*, ed. Paul Helm (James Clarke, 1971); "Dissertation on the End for Which God Created the World" in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Volume One (Banner of Truth reprint)