

“What is Glory?”

Psalms 19:1

INTRO:

The first question in the Westminster shorter catechism is: *“What is the chief end of man?”* The answer is: *“The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”* The Westminster divines did not put these statements in the first place in their catechism because they thought it sounded neat. They put them there because they sum up what the Bible teaches about the reason that God created men and women. We were created to glorify God and it is through doing what God created us to do that we find joy.

Because this is true, it would be helpful for us to spend some time studying what glorifying God is. We need to ask and answer two important questions.

I. What is Glory?

II. Why should We Glorify God?

I. What is Glory?

A. The concept of glory is not easy to define. Yet, it is a central truth in the Bible. In the Old Testament, the concept of glory is expressed in a Hebrew word **KABOWD**. This word speaks of weight or heaviness and implies value. In the ancient world, they weighed out money. How much a bar of gold, or of silver, or of copper weighed measured how valuable they were. So, the concept of weight described the position, power and influence of a person. For example, in **Genesis 45:13** Joseph told his brothers,

“So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.”

1. With God, **kabowd** denotes the manifestation of God's greatness. When we speak of the revelation of the majesty and wonder of all God is we speak of His glory.

2. In the New Testament, the word **doxa** is used. This Greek word means the value someone puts on someone else. When the translators of the Septuagint (LXX) sought for an equivalent for **kabowd** they took **doxa** and made it speak of the wonder of the Person and work of God Himself. This continues into the Greek New Testament.

B. So then, glory is the manifestation of the wonder, majesty and perfections of all that God is and what He has done. It speaks of His intrinsic greatness and holiness.

C. There appears to be several “kinds” of glory that the true and living God possesses.

1. First, there is a glory that has a visible, physical manifestation. When the temple was dedicated in **2 Chronicles 7:1-2**?

“Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house.”

This same glory appeared in the Tabernacle in the wilderness. The Jews called this the *Shekinah* glory. This is also the glory that will light the New Jerusalem as described in **Revelation 21:23**.

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

2. Second, God has a glory that is inherent in His being. This glory is God's simply because God is God. We cannot separate this glory from God Himself. John wrote in, **John 1:14**.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

3. The third kind of glory is glory God can lay aside for a while. We learn of this glory in **John 17:5**.

“Now, O Father, glorify thou me with Your own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

When we read of our Lord's emptying Himself in **Philippians 2**. He set aside this glory.

4. Finally, someday, we who belong to the Lord Jesus will share glory with him. **Romans 8:17** tells us,

“If [we are] children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

C. When we glorify God, we in essence put the wonders of God's being and works on display for all to see. We acknowledge who God is and what He has done. We seek to exalt Him and to show the wonder of His person to others.

II. Why should We Glorify God?

A. The next question naturally follows. “Why should we glorify God?” There are several reasons given to us in Scripture. First, we should glorify God because He created us to glorify Him. The text we began with shows this well. **Psalms 19:1** says:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.”

All of Creation naturally brings glory to God.

B. Second, we should glorify God because He deserves all the glory we can give Him. It is very hard to put these reasons in order of importance. This is the supreme reason why we should glorify God.

C. Third, we must glorify God because it is the mark that marks us out as believers. In Romans 1:21-23 it says,

“Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”

D. Finally, we need to glorify God because we will someday be giving glory to Him whether we like it or not. Philippians 2:9–11, tells us:

“Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

The question is will you glorify God now, for you will surely glorify God in that day. Help us, Lord, to glorify you for you are worthy of glory and honor and praise.