

Do I Glorify God?

That is *the* most important question a person can ask. To consciously join God in His ultimate purpose—to glorify Himself—means ever-increasing joy and happiness, forever. To consciously stiff-arm this glory, or to passively find created things like your family, your community, or your man-centered religion more exciting and worth allegiance to, means the opposite: eternal separation from God.

God Glorifies God

God *loves* God, and does everything for His own glory. This may sound foreign to you, or even offensive, but think about it. If God is to ultimately value that which is most valuable, love that which is most lovable, and take pleasure in that which is most pleasurable, to whom should He give His uppermost affections? Himself; of course!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen!” (Romans 11:34-36)

This may come as surprise to you, yet this staggering truth pervades scripture. God is passionate and jealous for His own renown and glory. In Isaiah 48:9-11, where God explains His reason for rescuing His people from exile, this is expressed rather starkly:

“For my name's sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,

that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another."

Or consider the words of Paul in Romans 9:21-13:

"Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honored use and another for dishonorable use? What if God, desiring to show His wrath and to make known His power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of His glory for vessels of mercy, which He has prepared beforehand for glory..."

God, the Potter, has rights over the clay, and *desires* to display His wrath and power. Why does He endure "vessels of wrath"? To display the *riches of His glory* for His vessels of mercy!

"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:1-3).

Jesus came to earth and His final decisive hour that the Father and Son would glorify each other. Eternal life is not simply being happy with self and family; it is *knowing* Jesus Christ for all He is.

"Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth (says the Lord), everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory." (Isaiah 43:6-7)

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

Humans find their ultimate purpose and pleasure in living for the glory of God, the only legitimately self-centered being in the universe. We were created for His own pleasure and fame, and therefore we can find supreme fulfillment in making much of, not human beings, but God.

Why Should I Care?

"[The Lord Jesus will be] revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might, when he comes on that day *to be glorified in His saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...*" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10)

As you can see, whether or not someone has a relationship with God and obeys the gospel is a big deal. It is the difference between,

not just different levels of happiness, but "the punishment of eternal destruction" and an eternity of joy in glorifying and marveling at the source of all holiness and righteousness and might and beauty and joy: Jesus Christ.

From Where Will You Get Your Final Answers?

If all this strikes you as something worth paying attention to, you should ask yourself, "Do I really know Jesus? Do I glorify Him? What about God is glorious? Do I really understand the gospel?" Where you get a final answer to these questions is an issue of authority, faith-commitments, and the condition of your heart. So listen carefully!

"The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." (Matthew 7:14)

Jesus is confident that if God is your Father, you will hear the word of God *as it really is*—the Word of God. He is also confident that the reason anyone rejects the word of God is precisely this: they aren't of God. Many claim to be a child of God, but give far more credence to emotions and lofty opinions than the word of truth.

"If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in Him.

When he lies, he speaks out of His own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God." (John 8:42-47)

"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will *never* cast out." (John 6:37)

"Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives Him who sent me." (Matthew 10:40)

So what's it going to be? Will you imitate the Bereans in nobly receiving "the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so"? (Acts 17:11) *Seek*, examine, and pray! Don't settle for pat answers and superficial platitudes that aren't found in the Word. Put everything under the intense scrutiny of the Bible. Your eternity hangs on it.

Worship God for All He Is; Flee From Mere Resemblances

It is a universal pastime for humans to exchange the truth and glory of God for mere resemblances, shallow lies that don't hold up. Oh, that we would worship Him for all that He is!

"God is spirit, and those who worship Him *must* worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

Repent from making much of boring human beings and puny conceptions of God. Worship Him for "the glory of His eternality that makes the mind want to explode with the thought that He never had a beginning; or the glory of His knowledge that makes the Library of Congress look like a little matchbox and makes quantum physics seem like first-grade reading; or the glory of His wisdom that has never been or ever can be counseled by any man or any group of men; or the glory of His authority over heaven and earth and hell without which no man and no demon moves one inch; or the glory of His providence without which not one bird falls to the ground in any forest in the world or without which any hair on any head turns gray; or the glory of His Word, which upholds the universe and all the atoms and all the galaxies in it; or the glory of His power to walk on water and cleanse lepers and heal the lame and open the eyes of the blind and cause the deaf to hear and storms to be stilled and the dead to rise; or the glory of His purity never to sin or never to have one, two-second bad attitude or one evil thought; or the glory of His trustworthiness never to break His Word or to let one, single promise fall to the ground; or the glory of His justice to render all moral accounts in the universe settled either on the cross or in hell, there will be no outstanding injustices when all is said and done. People will clearly be redeemed or they will burn forever in hell, and there will be no injustice in the universe that has not been settled because of the glorious justice of God; or the glory of His patience to endure decade after decade after decade of [my] slow sanctification or the glory of His sovereign, servant-like, I say, slave-like obedience to embrace the most excruciating

pain that has ever been designed by humankind; or the glory of His grace, which justifies the ungodly like me or the glory of His love that does for us while we are yet sinners." (John Piper)

Have You Glorified God?

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30)

Have you loved God to the degree that He is glorious and all-satisfying? Do you really do all that you can do to honor God, to the degree that God^s worth honor and praise? Of course not! If you think you do, then you have a very high view of yourself and a very low view of God.

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith..." (Romans 3:23-25)

This is the Gospel: Jesus is King and Creator of the universe and will return to judge the earth in righteousness. Of this, God has given assurance by His death, burial, and resurrection from the dead. Those who bank their hope on Christ's free gift of grace and heart-transforming work (done by God Himself) will receive eternal life, which is knowing and enjoying Christ forever. The rest will receive justice.

"Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but

trusts Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin!" (Romans 4:4-8)

Jesus didn't come to save the self-righteous who think they can prove their own worthiness. He came to save broken-hearted, humble, desperate sinners who beat their chest before God in prayer and say, "I am not worthy!" He rescues such people from idolatry and pathetic worship, and promises them an eternity of joy in making much of, not boring human beings, but God!

"In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Psalm 16:11)

"The enjoyment of God is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows; but God is the substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams. But God is the ocean" (Jonathan Edwards)

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