

Glorifying God in the Grind of Life

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by David Schrock

Q. What is the chief end of man?
A. To glorify God and know him forever.
— Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 1 —

There is nothing more important than knowing why you exist. And nothing provides a better answer than this: You were created to glorify God.

Speaking to the people he was redeeming from the nations, God says in Isaiah 43:6–7,

"I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Speaking of the purpose of redemption, Paul says a millenia later that God predestined, called, and justified his people, so that he could glorify them (Rom 8:29–30). While God does not give his glory to another (Isa 42:8; 48:11); he does all things for his glory, including making mankind in his image to reflect his glory to the world.

Indeed, Habakkuk 2:14, echoing Numbers 14:21 and Isaiah 6:3, says, *"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."* Indeed creation exists as a canvas for God's glory and mankind exists to know, enjoy, and magnify God's glory.

It is impossible to read the Bible for any length of time without running into this theme. And it is equally impossible to find our purpose or God's purpose for us, without attending to this lofty ideal. Yet, because it is lofty, the idea of God's glory may seem unreachable or mysterious. What does it mean to live for God's glory, or Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 10:31—to eat, and drink, and do all things for the glory of God?

That's the question I tried to answer in our college and career ministry's first meeting. In the coming weeks, our church will host a college and career gathering at 7:00pm on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. The goal is to equip Christians, explore topics of faith for Christians and non-Christians, and to provide a place of mid-week fellowship for those in this season of life.

Because the glory of God is so central to life—and also so enigmatic—we will spend our summer thinking about how the glory of God presses into all areas of life. Indeed, we will not fully comprehend God's glory in our earthly life, nor in eternity—where we will always be experiencing more of his glory—always satisfied and seeking more.

That said, here's a part of the lesson, plus a list of future topics we'll consider.

What Jesus Says About Glorifying God

Identifying himself as the true vine, Jesus goes on to say in John 15:7-8: *"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."*

There is nothing that glorifies God like being a disciple—a follower of Jesus, who learns from Christ how to live a life of faith which works itself out in love. Indeed, God is not looking for crazy living to glorify him; he's simply seeking disciples who abide in faith. In this passage, three things stand out for the disciple.

1. The word of God is necessary to glorify God.

Without the word of God, a disciple cannot know God, believe in God, or abide in relationship with him. So the first way we glorify God is to submit our lives to his teaching and to abide in his Word. This means reading, memorizing, studying, sharing, singing, and savoring Scripture. Without this first Word-centered step, all others will fail. But with the commitment to know God in his Word, all other God-glorifying endeavors will follow.

2. When God's Word abides in us, it leads us to prayer.

God's disciples pray, and they pray in accordance with God's revealed truth. Earlier in John's Gospel, Jesus says, *"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"* (14:13). In concert with John 15, Jesus teaches us he does not do for us whatever we want; he answers the prayers that come from the renewal of our mind. As disciples, we glorify God by praying for what God's Word tells us. And amazingly, this Word-directed (which is to say, Spirit-led) prayer results in the glory of God.

How? That's what comes next.

3. The result of abiding in the Word and praying according to that Word is fruit that glorifies God.

Jesus says this explicitly, and it is a theme that continues throughout the New Testament. The fruit of the Spirit glorifies God as the disciples of Christ reflect the character of the Son. Likewise, good works of the saints glorify God as they bless, serve, and build up others. When faith-driven good works permeate our lives, God is glorified.

Indeed, Jesus goes on to say such good fruit proves that one is a disciple, which in turn glorifies the Father. As wise sons delight their earthly fathers (Prov 15:20; 23:24; 29:3), so God's children glorify him as they walk in the good works prepared for them (Eph 2:10). As we abide in faith—which means, abiding in the word, enduring in prayer, and walking in righteousness—the character of Christ is seen in us, and thus the Father is glorified in his "sons."

The Cornerstone of Glorifying God: Be a Disciple

To be a disciple is the cornerstone of a life that glorifies God. From this anchor point, everything else proceeds. Making disciples, gathering for worship, going to work, and denying the flesh are all ways disciples glorify God. In all of these ways, disciples of Christ reflect the beauty and glory that is found in Christ. And disciples glorify God in this way, because in dying

to self and living with the life they've received in Christ, they are reflecting the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the central prism through which we see God's glory.

Truly, Christ and his death and resurrection is the way God has glorified himself. So for us to glorify him, we are not adding to his glory, but living in light of it. And changed by the gospel, we follow Christ as disciples whose entire existence is meant to bring glory to God. This is what Jesus is getting at in John 15, and it comes because he is the true vine who was cut down, so that we could be raised up with him.

At our first meeting, we began by considering what the glory of God is and how it impacts every area of life. And in the weeks to come, we will unpack ways the glory of God is displayed in the grind of life (see below).

Date	Topic
June 26	The Glory of God in the Grit and Grind of Life What is the glory of God? How does the glory of God motivate us to live in all areas of life?
July 10	The Glory of God in Discipleship What does it mean to follow Jesus (i.e., be a disciple?) How does one make disciples?
July 24	The Glory of God in Evangelism What is the gospel? How does one share the gospel?
Aug 14	The Glory of God in the Church Why does the church exist? How does my participation in church glorify God?
Aug 28	The Glory of God in the Grind of Work What does it look like for me to apply my faith to my vocation? Is evangelism the only way I can glorify God in the workplace?
Sept 11	The Glory of God in the Face of Evil How should we understand the problem of evil?

The Glory of God in Singleness & Marriage

Sept 25

How should I view singleness vs marriage? Should I stay single to serve the Lord? How can I be content?

If you are interested (and live near Woodbridge, Virginia), come [join us](#). If you'd like to hear more about these topics, stay tuned. We'll post the audio in the weeks to come.

Until then, let's continue to live for the glory of God, learning all the time how to walk as disciples who abide in the Word, pray in the Spirit, and bear fruit for God's glory.

Soli Deo Gloria, ds