

# Glorifying God

## *A Study of Psalm 19*

The dictionary uses words like **honor**, **fame**, and **splendor** to define the word “glory.” But these synonyms fail to convey the full meaning because “glory” also includes the aspect of worship. Those who excel in sports, or in business, or in politics are given honor. But they are not worshipped (at least they ought not to be), because they are undeserving of worship. Their “glory” is a very temporary thing.

Most believers who have confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord have probably prayed that God would be glorified in their lives. But how is God glorified in the life of a Christian? Where is God glorified today?

For example, suppose I were to ask, “Who was the ‘Most Valuable Player’ of Baseball’s **World Series** five years ago?” Nobody except the most enthusiastic sports person could give an answer like that. So theirs is a very temporary type of glory.

But the glory of God is unfading. The glory of God is eternal. The glory of God is all that God is. It’s the total of all that God says, and all that He does. The glory of God is the manifestation of His marvelous character.

Glory is a word that belongs to God. Everything about God is glorious. And one day we will see God’s glory. One day, we will even share in God’s glory, because the destiny of the Believer is glory (see Romans 8:18).

In order to gain further understanding on this topic of “Glorifying God,” turn in your Bible to Psalm 19. This chapter gives a 3-point outline which will give enlightenment on this important subject.

### **1. God Is Glorified in His Creation (Verses 1-6)**

The Psalmist begins this chapter by saying, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.” The existence of the visible world leads us to the thought that Someone must have made it. And the Bible is very clear that this Creator is called “God.” The Bible begins with the tremendous statement, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

A businessman once gave reasons why he believed there was a God. He had been thinking about the wonders of the stars, and the planets, and their system, and their order. And then he stated, “It takes a worker in our factory about two days to learn to put together the 17 parts of a meat chopper.” And he observed that, “Maybe all these planets, each with its own separate orbit, all balanced so wonderfully in space—just happened. It may be that with billions of years of tumbling about, they finally arranged themselves. I don’t know, I am merely a manufacturer of meat choppers.” The businessman then added, “But this I do know. You can shake the 17 parts of a meat chopper around in a wash tub for the next 17 billion years and you’ll never make a meat chopper.” I like his reasoning. It seems strange to me that some people still insist on saying that the great wonders of creation “just happened.”

When I look at God's glory on a beautiful starry night, or the beautiful sunsets of the autumn season, I have much the same reaction as the Psalmist in Psalm 8:3-4; "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

The laws of nature point to a Lawgiver; they lead us back to God. When someone substitutes the evolutionary theory for creation by God, he marks himself as a rebel against God. Evolution is completely incompatible to the clearly revealed facts of Scripture that state that God is the Creator.

God is glorified in creation. And the Psalmist says that God's message through creation knows no language barriers. Verse 4 (of Psalm 19) says, "Their line (that is, their message) is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." The Apostle Paul says, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). Creation reveals the existence and the power of God.

Scripture makes it clear that when man denies the existence of God, it's not a matter of ignorance. Rather, it's willful rebellion in the presence of a clear witness. And I want to state kindly, but firmly, that those who die as rebels against God, will be confined to a lake of fire for eternity.

The sun gives special attention to God's power in creation (see verses 4-6). The sun is ninety-three million miles from the earth, and about 109 times larger than the earth. The sun represents the center of our solar system. It resembles a huge atomic furnace with a temperature on its surface of about 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. And scientists tell us that although the sun is burning off a great deal of weight every year, at the present rate of consumption it can continue burning for at least another 35 billion years.

The sun and its characteristics are really astounding. And yet this huge heavenly body shines only by reason of the light given to it by its Creator. Near the end of the Bible, we find these words: "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" (Revelation 21:23).

The sun should remind us of God's Son—the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are called a "Bridegroom" in Scripture. And just as no one is hidden from the heat of the sun, just so all people everywhere can know the warmth of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **2. God Is Glorified in the Scriptures (Verses 7-11)**

The Scriptures glorify God because they enlighten us about the character of God. If you want to see the character of God revealed, look into the Word of God. And in Psalm 19, we learn at least four things about the Scriptures.

### **a. The Qualities of the Scriptures.**

Psalm 19 names a number of attributes of God's holy Word. The Scriptures are perfect, sure, right, pure, true, and all together righteousness.

One of these qualities is that the Scriptures are sure. In the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C., there is a clock which is set every day at high noon by the concurrence of the stars in God's firmament. That clock is the one standard of measurement of time in the United States. All clocks are set by that clock. So it is with God's Word. God's Word is the standard. It is sure. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89).

### **b. The Value of the Scriptures.**

The second thing we learn about the Scriptures is their value. The Psalmist illustrated the value of God's Word by comparing it to the most wholesome, sweetest substance he could think of, which was honey. And then he used gold, which had the greatest material value. Honey is full of sweetness. Gold has been valuable through the ages. And the Psalmist said that God's revelation is sweeter than honey, and more valuable than gold.

Without the Scriptures, we would have no way of knowing God. We would not know Jesus Christ without God's Word. We would have no assurance of salvation or of Heaven without the Bible. Our eternal hope lies in the promises, the assurance, and the revelation of the Lord God in the Scriptures. That is valuable.

On one occasion, Charles Spurgeon was speaking to a group of young people. And he said, "Young people, if you never read a single book of romance, you will lose nothing. But if you do not read your Bible, you will lose everything." The Scriptures are just that valuable.

### **c. The Purpose of the Scriptures.**

Verse 11 says, "Thy servant is warned." The Hebrew meaning of "warned" is to teach, or to remind. That gives us a clear indication of what the Scriptures do for us. We all need reminders and warnings about life here and life hereafter, because an ocean of evil surrounds us—evil made up of the pride of Satan, and the pride of evil men. This evil surrounding us bursts forth in rebellion against God and against God's people.

We who are believers in Jesus Christ need God's guiding light of Scripture in this swamp of corruption in which we live. The Bible can keep us on target as we allow its message to warn us and remind us and teach us.

### **d. The Reward of the Scriptures.**

What are some of the rewards that come from a right use of Scripture in our lives? One reward is that we grow in the knowledge of God. Another reward is that we have peace that passes understanding. We

might not always have happiness because of our circumstances, but we can have peace in the midst of troubled times. And then also, we become more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

A right use of Scripture encourages holy living in our lives. We then become useful and helpful to others. The ultimate reward will be to hear God say, "Well done. Well done, faithful servant." There can be no greater reward than that!

### **3. God Is Glorified in the Lives of Christians (Verses 12-14)**

The sincere desire of every Christian should be to glorify God. Near the close of His earthly life, Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). Jesus is our example. And so these words should be the heart-throb of every Christian.

This point is emphasized in 1 Corinthians 6 verses 19-20, where the reader is challenged with the question, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Believers are further challenged in 1 Corinthians 10:31 with this mandate: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

How do we as Christians glorify God?

#### **a. Christians glorify God by Godly conduct.**

Godly conduct refers to the way we live, and the way we relate to other people around us, whether or not they are Christians. "Upright living" is the way the Psalmist referred to it here.

The thought of glorifying God by our conduct is further explained in 1 Peter 2, verses 11-12. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

The believers to whom Peter was writing were going through very severe persecution. People were slandering them and calling them evildoers. And in 1 Peter 2:15, Peter told the Christians how to respond. "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

The best weapon against slander is to live such a godly life that nobody will believe the lies that people are spreading about you.

A young preacher was once very upset about the rumors that were being spread concerning him. He went to an older preacher for counsel. He asked, "What shall I do about these rumors?" And the older man wisely answered, "Make sure none of them are true." Godly conduct is the best weapon against slander.

Godly conduct speaks of good works. Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Jesus didn't tell us to let

our lights shine so that people might brag about us. Rather, He said our good works should glorify the Father.

When I need to work at my desk, and I turn on my light, I don't sit and look at the light. I turn on the light so I can see what needs to be done. The light is a tool so that I can see what I'm doing.

Our good works are lights that enable people to see God—not us. It might begin with them noticing us. But it should not end there. If they see us and not God, then our witness has failed. The people of the world are first watchers who see our good works. But then they should become worshippers who glorify the Father. That is the direction toward which our lives must direct people.

We can glorify God by godly conduct.

#### **b. Christians glorify God by witnessing.**

A second way we can glorify God is by witnessing. Words of testimony and witness are acceptable words that glorify God.

Godly conduct refers to our walk, and witnessing refers to our talk. If we witness for the Lord, but don't walk for the Lord, then we are hypocrites. But it is just as bad if we walk with the Lord but don't witness. If we are silent in our witness for the Lord, then nobody will know that Christ directs our lives. No one will be motivated to glorify God by our silence.

Our witness must include praise to God, if we are going to glorify Him. The world's crowd is busy complaining. And we Christians need to be careful, lest we get caught up in the spirit of complaining and become just like the world. Complainers do not glorify God. Philippians 2:14-15 says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

Is your light shining? Is your witness clear? Is God being glorified in your life?

#### **c. Christians glorify God by being sensitive to God's will.**

Thirdly, we glorify God by being sensitive to His will. The Psalmist asks for deliverance from secret faults. And probably he was referring to the faults that were unknown to him. We might call them "sins of omission." It is amazing how unaware we can become of our own faults and our own sins.

For example, some people have a problem with tardiness. Soon the embarrassment of coming late to a meeting fades away, and the fault becomes so commonplace in their lives that they lose their awareness of it. Other people see it and they are bothered by it. Many valuable hours of time are lost by those who are on time, and have to wait for the late-comers to show up. But the tardy people have lost their sensitivity concerning this problem.

Others may fall into the trap of gossip and criticism so badly that they get a reputation for it. And yet they go on their way without realizing the harm that they are doing to themselves and to others.

And then there are some who experience a complete change of personality when they get behind the wheel of a vehicle. Suddenly, they lose their sense of courtesy and respect toward others, treating other drivers roughly instead. They fail to see what has happened to them. But it is obvious to others.

Being sensitive to God is like putting water under a microscope. To our naked eye, the water looks pure. But when a drop of water gets under the microscope, a host of bacteria is detected.

In the same way, we need to put our lives under the searchlight of God's Spirit. We need to be sensitive to the will of God, and be obedient to the Spirit of God in our lives. And then we too can see the defilement that is in our lives, and deal with it. A clear conscience and a clean life glorifies God.

In conclusion, we can see from carefully reading Psalm 19 that (1) God is glorified in His creation, (2) God is glorified in the Scriptures, and (3) God is glorified in the lives of Christians.

Will you glorify God in your life this week, and for the remainder of the days that He gives you breath to live?

-Carl Groff

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**BIBLE HELPS**

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