

The Glory of God

It is God Himself who defines what His glory is; it is *all of His goodness*, which is a part of but distinct from His physical person (Ex 33:18-19). This definition encompasses God's divine nature and eternal power with a focus on His absolute moral standard, and these qualities can be visibly seen!

Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make **all My goodness** pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." (Ex 33:18-19)

The glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. And **to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire** on the mountain top. (Ex 24:16-17)

When God's glory comes in contact on earth, it sets apart and sanctifies objects. And when one is in the presence of God's glory for a period of time, there is evidence of its intense luminosity.

I will meet there with the sons of Israel, and **it shall be consecrated by My glory**. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to Me. (Ex 29:43-44)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that **Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone** because of his speaking with Him. (Ex 34:27-29)

When the Bible uses the verb "glorify," it is usually in the context of man's response to God; the Creator's all encompassing goodness should demand and elicit His creation's honor, obedience, and worship. Both the Old and New Testament is consistent on this:

So the Lord said, "I have pardoned them according to your word; but indeed, as I live, **all the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord**. Surely **all the men who have seen My glory** and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice, shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it. (Num 14:20-23)

Despite the physical manifestation of His all encompassing goodness (i.e. Ex 16:7-9) while leading the nation of Israel out of Egypt, the nation of Israel repeatedly failed to glorify God by listening and obeying His word.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the **glory of the incorruptible God** for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Rom 1:20-23)

Instead of honoring and giving thanks to the God for His Creation, mankind chose to worship dead idols of His creation. The fool is one who willfully ignores the living existence of the all encompassing goodness of the incorruptible God.

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But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and **fall short of the glory of God**, (Rom 3:21-23)

With the Original Sin in view, the corruption of the image of God shattered the all encompassing goodness of God. The implication is that the image of God is the all encompassing goodness of God if the image is completely obedient to God.

This idea that the image of God is the glory of God if the image is obedient to God is seen specifically in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ demonstrated that His obedient work, on behalf of His Father, glorified God. And when the Son glorifies His Father, the Father glorifies the Son.

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, **but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.**" (John 11:1-4)

Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that **if you believe, you will see the glory of God?**" So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." (John 11:40-43)

Note carefully here that Jesus indicates that if you believe in the Messiah, you will see the all encompassing goodness of His Father. He mentions this again later in His Upper Room Discourse:

If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on **you know Him, and have seen Him.**" (John 14:7)

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:27-28)

Motivated by the love for His Creation and bound by His promises to Abraham, God's accomplishment through Jesus Christ glorifies Himself twice over:

1. God's love is seen through the provision of His only Son to atone for the sins of mankind.
2. God's lovingkindness is seen through His faithful commitment to fulfill all of His promises to Abraham.