

BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT MAN, SIN, AND SALVATION

Lesson 3: Man's Purpose

This is the third of seven lessons on the Doctrine of Anthropology (Man). In this lesson we will look at the biblical teaching about God's purpose for mankind.

Lesson 3 – Central Truth Q and A

Question: Why did God make man?

Answer: God made man to rule the earth and glorify Him.

Lesson 3 – Memory Verses

Genesis 1:28 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Psalm 8:6 *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*

Lesson 3 – Outline

God created human beings to be unique and distinct from the rest of creation. Man is made in God's image, but he does not exist just so he can do whatever he wants. God gave man a very specific and special purpose: to glorify Him in work and worship. The Bible teaches that God made man and all things for His own glory. God does not lack glory. He has infinite glory which cannot be increased or diminished. This is called his inherent or intrinsic glory. Nevertheless, man has the privilege and responsibility to live, work, and worship to magnify God's glory. This is called ascribed glory or that which man offers or gives to God by his attitude, words, and actions. Man must not withhold from God the glory which He rightly deserves. In short, God is altogether glorious and He must be glorified.

1. Man is to glorify God in his work

Scripture notes several ways that man glorifies God, but the primary ways are through his work and worship. Genesis 1-2 and other biblical texts explain why God created all things. The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps. 19:1) and all creation was designed to bring Him glory and praise (Rom. 1:20). As part of God's created order, man has a special role in glorifying God. He was created to rule or exercise dominion over other created things on earth and recognize God as Creator and Sustainer. While plants and animals bring glory to God simply by existing as He made them, God gave man unique work and responsibilities. "Dominion" means rulership or oversight. Man is God's vice-regent or representative ruler, overseer, and steward on the earth. The work of ruling over creation was part of God's plan from the very beginning. God put Adam in the garden of Eden "to dress it and to keep it," that is, to work it and guard it. Even in the pre-fall world Adam had work to do. Work is not part of the curse of sin, but a noble part of human life on earth.

2. Man is to glorify God in his worship

Because he was created in God's image, man has the ability and privilege to talk with God, listen to God, and worship God. When Adam and Eve sinned, they ruined that relationship for themselves and all other people that would be born, and only God could restore that relationship. Man's relationship with God can be restored and enjoyed through salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. God is glorified whenever a person becomes a Christian. God's grace, mercy, righteousness, love, and power are revealed in the salvation of sinners. In Ephesians 1, Paul describes the purpose of salvation is the praise of God's glory (sum total of His attributes). God is also glorified when Christians obey His Word and do good works (Eph. 2:10). God deserves all glory, honor, and worship.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The following notes are from Pastor Stan's book (work in progress), *The Holy One: A Handbook of Biblical Truth about God*.

The ascribed glory of God is that which His creatures desire to bring to Him. All created beings have the privilege and duty of giving praise and glory to their Creator. MacArthur comments: "The glory of the Lord is more than just His majestic splendor. It includes all of the reasons for admiring and praising Him, such as His acts of creation (cf. Ps. 19:2) and redemption (Ps. 96:2)."¹ "Glorifying God," writes Thomas Watson, "has respect to all the persons in the Trinity; it respects God the Father who gave us life; God the Son, who lost his life for us, and God the Holy Ghost, who produces a new life in us; we must bring glory to the whole Trinity."²

Psalms 96:3 *Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.*

Psalms 29:1-2 *Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

Thomas Boston states, "The glory of God was his chief purpose and design in making men and angels."³ Charles Spurgeon offers this comment:

A third time the admonition is given, for men are backward in glorifying God, and especially great men, who are often too much swollen with their own glory to spare time to give God his rightful praise, although nothing more is asked of them than is most just and right.⁴

These are some biblical reasons for ascribing glory to God:

1. God is glorified as sinners confess their guilt and accept God's righteous punishment.

Joshua 7:19 *And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.*

1 Samuel 6:5 *Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from your gods, and from off your land.*

¹ John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, note on Psalm 96:3.

² Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity*, 6.

³ Cited in *The ESV Church History Study Bible*, note on Psalm 29:1.

⁴ Cited in *The ESV Church History Study Bible*, note on Psalm 29:1-2.

2. God is glorified in worship.

1 Chronicles 16:28-29 ²⁸ Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. ²⁹ Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Psalms 29:1-2 ¹ Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. ² Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Psalms 69:30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

Psalms 86:8-9 ⁸ Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. ⁹ All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

Psalms 96:3-4 ³ Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. ⁴ For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

Psalms 96:7-8 ⁷ Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. ⁸ Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Psalms 115:1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

Psalms 118:28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

John Chrysostom comments:

Here the psalmist shows that even aside from his favors it is necessary to thank God and glorify him for his majesty and his ineffable glory. Even aside from these favors he grants, I shall give thanks and shall confess that I have such a Lord, so lofty, so ineffable, so incomprehensible.⁵

3. God is glorified in the obedient and faithful lives of His redeemed people.

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.

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Peter 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

4. God has ordained that all creatures will ultimately glorify Him.

Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹ Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹¹ And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

⁵ Cited in *The ESV Church History Study Bible*, note on Psalm 118:28.

Revelation 4:11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

Revelation 15:4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

Revelation 5:11-12 ¹¹ *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;* ¹² *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*

Revelation 7:11-12 ¹¹ *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,* ¹² *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

Steven Lawson draws this conclusion:

Living for the glory of God is the beginning and end of all things. This divine glory is the blazing sun around which our lives must revolve. When we come to the end of our lives, all that will matter is an affirmative answer to this crucial question: Did we live for the glory of God? If we fail to live for God, we have wasted our lives upon the earth. But if we seek God's glory, our lives will have been well spent and lived to the fullest. Only in the pursuit of the glory of God will our lives count for time and eternity.⁶

It appears that all that is ever spoken of in the scripture as the ultimate end of God's works is included in that one phrase, "the glory of God."

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⁶ Steven Lawson, *Show Me Your Glory*, 5.