

## Reformation 500 Week 5

It is my sincere desire, that THE preaching of the Five Solas of the Reformation would establish your heart and strengthen your faith. That you would possess the same assurance and spiritual passion for the truth of God's Word that motivated Luther, Hus and Zwingli to stand firm in the face of worldly opposition and like these great men, be used of God to reveal His glory to this present generation.

These Five Latin phrases: Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus, and Soli Deo Gloria—remind us that Scripture Alone is the foundation for all faith and practice. They provide a clear and concise theological statement, declaring that salvation is by grace alone, they remind us that deliverance from Sin and Death is not something to be obtained by the works of man. On the contrary, Salvation comes by faith alone in the life, death and resurrection of Christ alone, and the work of God in salvation is the highest display the greatest manifestation of His glory.

- Even today, these Biblical truths serve as the ultimate enduring pillars of divine revelation for church of God.

This morning, we come to the final installment in our study of the Five Solas – “Soli Deo Gloria” All that we ARE, all that we will EVER BE, our Salvation, our Sanctification and our eventual glorification are all for the Glory of God Alone!

If we were to view the Protestant Church as a building then Sola Scriptura would certainly be the foundation on which that structure was firmly established. Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone; these strong pillars of the building are anchored deeply in the Biblical foundation. And Soli Deo Gloria – the Glory of God Alone, is the crowning edifice that ties the entire structure together.

- This morning we will contemplate the glory of God, more specifically the glory of God in salvation.
- Ephesians 1:17, (Calls God the Father) “**The Father of Glory**”
- When the Apostle John Speaks of Jesus Christ he says, “**we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**”
- 1 Timothy 1:11, (Paul identifies the Gospel) **the gospel of the glory of the blessed God**
- The Father is glorious, the Son is glorious and the Gospel is glorious.

IN writing the final book of the Bible John looks back at the work of God in Salvation and writes: Revelation 1:5b, **To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

ALL of the Credit, all of the praise, all of the glory, all of the honor for Our Salvation belongs to God alone, Because:

- Our Salvation comes to us by the Grace of God ALONE and NOT by works or human effort.
- All glory belongs to God alone because Our Salvation is received by Faith ALONE and even that faith is a gift from the gracious hand of God
- All glory belongs to God because our Salvation is through Christ ALONE, it was acquired for us through the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross
- It is to the Praise of His Mercy and Grace that we who believe have been raised from death to life.

Ephesians 2:4 **But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved —**

- So we boldly sing “*All glory be to Christ our King, All Glory be to Christ.*”

This morning I would like to dig in to the Scriptures to discover:

1. What is the glory of God?
2. How is God’s glory revealed?
  - Creation
  - Christ
3. How then do we respond to God’s Glory?

1. What is the glory of God?

Very often, when we read about the glory of God in the Bible, what is described for us is some sort of dazzling, incredibly brilliant light.

Scripture frequently describes the glory of God in terms of a light that shines brighter than any luminary that we could observe in this physical creation. (Brighter than the sun)

- I’m reminded of that Cloud of Glory by which the children of Israel were led through the wilderness in Exodus 13:21. That brilliant and shiny cloud, the Shekinah glory of God came to rest on the Tabernacle and the Temple.

Remember in the Gospel of Luke when the Shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night and suddenly Luke 2:9 **An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.**

- Here again, the glory of God is portrayed as a shockingly brilliant light that produced fear in the hearts of men.

Scripture tells us that the new heavens and earth will have no need for the sun by day or the moon by night because the glory of the Lord will illumine all of God’s good creation. (Rev. 21:22-25)

SO, let me ask: IS the glory of God some kind of supernatural floodlight?

Well, I believe from the Scripture that this brilliant light is merely an outward expression, a visible manifestation of an even greater reality that cannot be seen with the human eye. When the Bible says:

- 1 John 1:5, **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.** John is not necessarily describing the physical appearance of God but rather the holy nature and wondrous perfections of God.

Albert Barnes: When we say that God is light we mean: “God is perfectly pure, without any admixture of sin. He has all knowledge, with no admixture of ignorance on any subject. He is infinitely happy, with nothing to make him miserable. He is infinitely true, never stating or countenancing error; he is blessed in all his ways, never knowing the darkness of disappointment and adversity.”

- The light of the glory of God draws our attention to the beauty of His holiness and wonder of his abundant perfections.

In a crude comparison the glory of God might be likened to the rarest and most perfect of Diamonds. Every one of God’s glorious attributes, every unique perfection within his person is likened to a cut in the diamond that reflects and refracts the brilliance of his character in a beautiful and majestic way.

SO when we speak of the glory of God we are not speaking of something that God possesses as if it was separated from his own person. No, God’s glory is the radiance of the worth and beauty and greatness of his essential being.

- Now let’s move on to our second question:

How has God chosen to display his glory? We only have time to consider two ways:

- Through Creation – God has chosen to display his glory, his radiance through the things he has made.
- Through Christ – The Glory of God is most clearly revealed to man through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Creation.

The Scripture clearly tells us that God, has graciously and purposefully left His finger prints, His distinguishing mark on all of His creation. He uniquely created this material universe in such a way as to display his divine attributes and so display His glory.

Psalm 19:1 **The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. 4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun,**

- When we gaze into the heavens, when we observe the vastness of the universe, the whole creation bears witness to the unique perfections of our creator.

John Piper asks: “Why is there such a vastness of uninhabited galaxies and only one tiny dot of human existence? (*think about that*) This universe is not intended to portray the importance of man or even creation itself. God intended all of creation to give us an inkling of his own grandeur and majesty. AND it is an understatement!”

- The unfathomable vastness of the universe speaks clearly of the unsearchable greatness of God. Certainly, Solomon must have contemplated the magnitude and the grandeur of God when he labored to build the Temple in Jerusalem.
  - How vast, how ornate, how beautiful must this house be since it will be the dwelling place for ? Solomon said:

2Ch 6:18 "But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built!

- Majesty and Splendor are but a small fraction of the divine attributes that God has revealed to man through creation. The Apostle Paul writes:

Romans 1:20 (God's) invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

- Friends, I am here to tell you that God holds you accountable for the revelation of his glory that he has given to all men through the media of creation.
- The fact that you were taught the theory of Evolution in School is no excuse. If you have eyes, YOU can see His eternal power when you gaze up into the sky;
- Think about it, today we are receiving the benefits of God's grace through the falling rain; WE receive food every day from the abundance of His harvest.
- The fact that you are alive today is evidence of his kindness, his patience and his amazing grace, because He said, "the soul that sins shall surely die." *Your alive!*
- In your heart YOU know there is a God. But, your sinful nature, your love for darkness constantly pushes away the revelation that God has provided through His creation. And Paul says, "You are without excuse!"

If you are with us this morning, and you have never repented of your sin and trusted in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to remove the guilt and penalty of your sin; it is my prayer that the God of all grace would take away the veil from your eyes, and enable you to see the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

- For the Apostle Paul wrote:

2 Corinthians 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- Has God opened your eyes to see the glory of His love, his mercy, his kindness in Jesus Christ?

As I said before, the Glory of God is the infinite beauty and greatness of His manifold perfections.

As we have seen from God's Word, there is a reflection of God's glory revealed to us through His Creation, BUT Friends, that is merely a reflection.

- I can stand on the top of Mount Haleachela on the Island of Maui AS the sun rises and I can watch as the clouds all turn gold.

- Tens of thousands of people witness this image of God's grandeur every year and they walk away saying, "Wow, that was pretty."
- But for me, The sight moves my heart to worship and I cry out, "Oh God I see your beauty in the works of your hands, the heavens truly declare your glory."
- BUT my friends, God has given us a greater, even more glorious revelation of Himself.
- HE actually left his heavenly abode and came to earth, He put on human flesh, He dwelt among us so that we might know him, walk with him and worship him in spirit and in truth.
- God has revealed himself in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews declares:

Hebrews 1: 3 He (*Jesus*) is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- Jesus Christ is the "Shining Forth" or the "Brightness" of the glory of God. And Like the casting of metal, Jesus is the exact IMPRINT of the Divine nature revealed in human flesh.
- IN Christ all of the divine perfections are embodied in human form dwelling with us in clear view. John saw it and he wrote:

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- Remember what I shared earlier with the children?

When the glory of God was revealed to Moses there on Mt Sinai, and God passed in front of Moses declaring the beauty and wonder of his perfections, what did he say?

Exodus 34: 6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children,

- Because God is the Same, Because He never changes, the glory that was revealed to Moses there on Sinai is the same glory that we see manifest in Jesus Christ.

"The Lord" (Yah-Weh, Jehovah) – the self-existent one) Revelation 1:8 (Jesus says) "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (He is the Eternal, Self-Existent God!)

"Merciful" When The Lord Jesus was yet in his mother's womb Zacharias prophesied saying that the appearing of Christ was: "72 to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, 73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, "

- In the Gospel of Luke, the Ten Lepers came to Jesus crying:

Luke 17:13, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

- A blind man sitting by the road leading into Jericho heard that Jesus was passing by cried out saying:

Luke 18:38-39, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

- The Widow of Nain, Woman with the issue of Blood, Woman caught in adultery, The man stricken with a "Legion of demons." All these & more received mercy.

He is "Gracious"

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

- You see the same divine perfections that were declared by God in the presence of Moses are now clearly seen in Jesus Christ.

When God, by His Spirit gives sight to your spiritual eyes and you read through the Gospels you cannot help but see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- Before the watching eyes of Peter, James and John the eternal glory of Christ was revealed there on the mount of transfiguration.
- On the road to Damascus the Apostle Paul was blinded by the glory of God as it shined forth through the resurrected Lord.

Again John tells of the night that Jesus was betrayed, knowing that he was about to experience the horrific wrath of Almighty God for the sins of those who believe, Jesus said:

John 12: 23 "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

It may seem strange to equate the glory of God with the horrible images that surround the cross of Christ.

- When we think of glory, we think of a brilliant shining light and yet the cross was shrouded in darkness, because the sun refused to shine.
- When we contemplate the glory of God, we think of those scenes, the images of God's throne-room where the living creatures never stop saying "holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty." BUT there at the cross the Son of God is surrounded by a venomous crowd. Instead of lifting songs of praise they are hurling insults. Instead of blessing there is cursing.
- AND still the one who holds all things together by the word of his power doesn't retaliate; he never speaks an angry or hateful word. This is the glory of God!

The place of the skull, the cross of Calvary, that harsh and ugly hill is the very place where the Mercy of God is most beautifully displayed.

In His infinite wisdom, God determined that His ultimate expression of love for fallen men would be demonstrated through the ugliness of the bloody, bruised and beaten body of one who was forsaken by men but chosen by God.

HOW do we respond to the glory of God? How do we react to the mercy and grace; the kindness and love of God so wonderfully displayed through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

In Moses experience and in Christ we see the Intrinsic Glory of God

In creation we see the ascribed glory of God

We cannot ADD to the intrinsic glory of God BUT we can Along with creation Ascribe Glory to God.

1Ch 16:28 **Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!**

1Ch 16:29 **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;**

Ps 29:2 **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**

Ps 96:7 **Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!**

Ps 96:8 **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!**

Scripture instructs us in 1 Corinthians 10: 31 **So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**

- Everything that we do in this life, every word we speak, every action we take should be motivated by a desire to see God glorified.