

THE REFORMATION
Soli Deo Gloria...The Glory of God
Ephesians 1:3-14

The first great Reformers like **Martin Luther**, **John Calvin**, and **Ulrich Zwingli** never summed up their teaching with an orderly set of *five phrases* that we know today as the **five solas**. The solas *developed over time* as a way of capturing the essence of what the **Reformation** was mainly about in its dispute with the **Roman Catholic Church** and its *indulgences*.

Sola is **Latin** for “*alone*” or “*only*.” The **five solas** are:

- **Sola Scriptura** (*as taught with the final and decisive authority of Scripture alone*). The inspired...inerrant...infallible...sufficient...authoritative...and complete Word of God.
- **Sola Gratia** (*by grace alone*)
- **Sola Fide** (*through the means of faith alone*)
- **Solo Christo** (*on the basis of Christ alone*) (Acts 4:12).
- **Soli Deo Gloria** (*to the ultimate glory of God alone*)

That is why evangelical Protestants see the **Reformation** as simply *a call back* to the **Bible**...to *biblical Christianity*.

Everything exists for the glory of God! All *creatures* and all of *creation* will *bow* and *pay homage* to their King.

Although man *exalts* himself...although he is *a god in his own esteem*...the *pride of man* will ultimately shatter like a glass vase dropped from the top of a mountain cliff. **God alone deserves the glory**. And there will be a day, when **He alone** will be *worshiped*. All *false gods* will be *thrown into the fire*, and all *worshipers of these delusions* will join them.

Words and *speech* exist...*minds* exist...*salvation* exists...*to bring glory to the King of glory*.

*“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. **To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**”*

~Romans 11:33–36

The *most important theme in the universe* is the **glory of God**. It’s the very purpose for which God created us.

I. GOD’S GLORY IN CREATION: One of the ways God’s glory is revealed is in the creation of the world.

David wrote, *“The heavens are telling of **the glory of God**; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”*

~Psalm 19:1

Isaiah 6:3 declares...“...*The whole earth is **full of His glory**”.*

“For since 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.”

~Romans 1:20

II. GOD’S GLORY IN REDEMPTION: God’s glory is also seen in the redemption of fallen sinners.

He saved sinners “...*to make known the riches of His **glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory.**”* (**Romans 9:23**)

In **II Corinthians 4:4** Paul called the *message of salvation* “...*the gospel of **the glory of Christ**...*” and then noted that saving “...*grace which is spreading to more and more*

people will cause the giving of thanks to abound *to the glory of God*" (II Corinthians 4:15).

To the **Ephesians** Paul wrote...

*"God predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of **the glory of His grace**, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."*

~Ephesians 1:5-6

*"To the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be **to the praise of His glory**...Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, **to the praise of His glory**...I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are **the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**."*

~Ephesians 1:12, 14, 18

Salvation transforms *believers*, filling them...

*"...With the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, **to the glory and praise of God**."*

~Philippians 1:11

*"My Father is **glorified** by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."*

~John 15:8

III. GOD'S GLORY IN HIS NATURE: God's glory is intrinsic to His very nature...to His very being. It displays who He is and His attributes!

Because of this, the Bible refers to God as:

- **The God of Glory:**

*"The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; **the God of glory** thunders, the LORD is over many waters."*

~Psalm 29:3

*"...Hear me, brethren and fathers! **The God of glory** appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran..."*

~Acts 7:2

- **The Glory of Israel:**

*"Also **the Glory of Israel** will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind."*

~I Samuel 15:29

- **The King of Glory:**

*"Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that **the King of glory** may come in! Who is **the King of glory**? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift them up, O ancient doors, that **the King of glory** may come in! Who is this **King of glory**? The LORD of hosts, He is **the King of glory**. Selah."*

~Psalm 24:7-10

- **The High and Exalted One:**

*"For thus says **the high and exalted One** who lives forever, whose name is Holy, I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."*

~Isaiah 57:15

*"**The LORD is exalted**, for He dwells on **high**; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness."*

~Isaiah 33:5

And because God's glory displays His nature...displays who He is...God's intrinsic glory is uniquely His...and He will not share it with anyone else:

“I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.”

~Isaiah 42:8

“For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.”

~Isaiah 48:11

“I do not receive glory from men...”

~John 5:41

IV. GOD’S GLORY IN THE TRINITY: Ever member of the Trinity is referred to as glory!

- God the Father is called the Father of glory:

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.”

~Ephesians 1:17

“For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’.”

~II Peter 1:17

- Jesus Christ is referred to as the Lord of glory:

“The wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

~I Corinthians 2:8

“My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.”

~James 2:1

- Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of glory:

“If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”

~I Peter 4:14

V. GOD’S GLORY MANIFESTED: ...In several ways...

Revealed through the Word of God. *The Word consistently extols the greatness of His glory:*

In **Psalm 57:11**...David exclaimed, *“Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth.”*

And again, in **Psalm 108:5**...

“Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Your glory above all the earth.”

~Psalm 108:5

Echoing his father’s thought, Solomon wrote...

“And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.”

~Psalm 72:19

Psalm 113:4 further describes God’s glory as being *“Above the heavens.”*

Psalm 138:5 proclaims, *“Great is the glory of the Lord.”*

And **Psalm 148:13** adds, *“His glory is above earth and heaven.”*

Through redemptive history. There are several times where God has chosen to visibly manifest His glory:

- **To Israel in the wilderness**...Throughout their wilderness wanderings, the **glory of God** appeared to the people of Israel, primarily in the form of either a *cloud* or a *fiery pillar* (**Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 16:7, 10; Exodus 24:16-17; Leviticus 9:23-24; Numbers 14:10; Numbers 16:19, 42**)

- **To Moses on Mount Sinai**...After he was overwhelmed with the responsibility of leading **Israel**, **Moses** cried out to God (**Exodus 33:18-23**).
- **In the Tabernacle**...At the dedication of the Tabernacle (**Exodus 40:34-35**)...His **Shekinah** glory.
- **In the Temple**...At the dedication of **Solomon's** Temple (**I Kings 8:10-11**).
- **To Isaiah** (**Isaiah 6:1-5**)...To prepare him for his prophetic ministry, God also gave **Isaiah** an overwhelming vision of His majestic, glorious *holiness*.

Even in judgment...His glory displays His *holiness*.

“Thus, I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD. And they did so...As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots and his horsemen.”

~Exodus 14:4, 17-18

VI. GOD'S GLORY IN THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: The most glorious and complete manifestation of God's glory came in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

~John 1:14

John explained the significance of the Lord's first miracle when he wrote, *“This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.”* (**John 2:11**)

- At the birth of Jesus (**Luke 2:9**)
- On the Mount of Transfiguration (**Matthew 17: 1-2; Luke 9:32; II Peter 1:16-18**)
- At the return of Jesus (**Luke 9:26; Luke 21:27**)

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband...And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God...I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

~Revelation 21:1-2, 10-11a, 22-27

So how should we live today? ...

“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

~I Corinthians 10:31

“Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

~I Peter 4:11