

“Soli Deo Gloria: for the Glory of God Alone”

Ephesians 3:14-21

Focal point of the Reformation was to bring glory back to God and God alone.

- Easy to shift glory away from God to elsewhere
- Our world – glory can be shifted to self, groups/churches, to others for accomplishments, successes, looks, \$\$...
- Just like in the reformation 500 years ago, we need to bring it back to God and give Him the glory HE deserves!

Giving Glory to God alone means:

“Having the Lordship/Sovereignty of God over every aspect of the believer’s life”

Two examples of giving Glory to God are

1. **John Glenn** – WW2 fighter pilot awarded 6 distinguished flying crosses, 18 Air Medals, 1st supersonic transcontinental flight across USA, 1 of 7 pilots selected by Nasa to be USA’s first astronauts, 1st American to orbit the earth on Friendship 7, inducted into USA Astronaut Hall of Fame, served on US senate for 24 years, oldest person to fly in space on discovery and only one to fly both Mercury and discovery mission. From the Discovery in 1998, while observing the earth from space he said, **“To look out the window . . .as I did that first day . . .** to look out at this kind of creation and not believe in God is to me impossible.”
2. **Johann Sebastian Bach** – late 1600’s, great composer in the Baroque period, “Brandenburg Concertos, Goldberg Variations, St Matthew vocal Passion, Mass in B Minor, gifted musician/composer, very accomplished, said of music in general, **“All**

music should have no other end and aim than the glory of God and the soul's refreshment; where this is not remembered there is no real music but only a devilish hub-bub."

Both men, very accomplished, recognized the need to give God glory in their lives.

Apostle Paul – wrote letter to Church in Ephesus, large, solid church, no theological issues, an encouragement letter.

Ephesians 3 - A Prayer for the Ephesians

Two fold prayer for the Ephesians

1. **Strength** in the inner person (16-17a)
 - God inspired Paul to write knowing that when things are going well, easy to lose focus and recognition of God
 - Human tendency to exalt other things – showing our human weakness
 - Power to resist, overcome weakness = from Holy Spirit
 - Power is dynamic life giving
 - Vs. 20 – according to His power in us
- Results in the Christ **dwelling** in us
 - When we recognize our own weakness, asking for God to strengthen us, Christ will dwell in us
 - Christ becomes the dominant leader, focus of our lives & we give Him glory!

Illustration - Bach acknowledge his need for God in his compositions. He headed all of his compositions: "J. J.," the

initials for, "Jesus Juva" which means "Jesus help me." Before he wrote a note, asked for God's help. He ended them "S.D.G.," the initials for, "Soli Dei Gratia" which means "To God alone be the glory." Bach knew that his gift was a gift from God and he gave God credit on each of his works!

- According to God speaking through Paul, we all need to do the same. We need to believe and acknowledge that we are sinful people, who need strength from God in or inner being, that all our accomplishments mean nothing if we don't give Glory to God, our purpose is in giving God glory
- God is glorious in His ability to strengthen and use us

2. **Power to Comprehend God's love (17b-19)**

- Not physical power, emotional...but
- Rooted & established in love (vs. 17)
- Grasp and know (vs.18-19) – depth, height, breadth, length of God's love shown in Jesus
 - know this love that surpasses knowledge = experienced, lived love

Illustration: Mildred Little's funeral – full, passionate testimony by adopted son, Littles gave him second chances, forgiving, loving!

- Results in God filling our lives with Himself
- God is glorious in His nature and His love for us

What does Glorifying God look like in our lives?

- Submission to God (vs.14) – posture of kneeling
- God as our Father (vs.15) – family Jew/Gentile
- God as our strength (vs.16-17) – dependence

- Experiencing His love (vs. 18-19) – love what He loves
- God as our Praise (vs.20-21) - Doxology

See Verses on back of insert

Verses on the Glory of God

1 Cor. 10:31 – “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

1Peter 4:11 – “If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

Rev. 1:5,6 – “To him (Jesus) who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.”

2 Peter 3:18 – “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.”

Rom.11:36 – “For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”