

The Doctrine of Glorification

Part 1: The Glory of the Lord

To understand the doctrine of glorification one must begin with the glory of God, which is one of His attributes. If you were asked, how would you describe the “glory” of God? The glory of God is more than the radiance identified with theophanies in the Old Testament such as Mount Sinai, Ex 19:18, or the call vision of Isaiah, Is 6:1ff, and of Ezekiel, 1:1-28, or the departure of God’s glory from the temple and city of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 10:1 – 11:25. Here are three aspects of the glory of God in Scripture:

1. **Linguistically**. The Hebrew word *kabod* is translated “glory” and it means is "to be heavy,” or “to be weighty." It is a prominent Old Testament word occurring 376 times, see e.g. Ex 24:16; 40:34-35; Ps 8:1; 19:1; 29:1-2; Ezek 1:28; 10:4, 18, 19; Hab 2:14. In the New Testament, “glory” is the Greek word *doxa*, the word from which we get “doxology.” It celebrates the divine power and majesty attributable to God alone (Acts 7:2; Eph 1:17; 2 Pet 1:17). God’s glory also extends to Christ and as such is a further affirmation of His deity (Lk 9:32; Jn 1:14; 1 Cor 2:8; 2 Thess 2:14. Human beings are not to seek glory for themselves but are to give glory and praise to God (Mt 6:2; Jn 5:44; 1 Thess 2:6).
2. **Descriptively**. The glory of God describes His majesty, awesomeness and shining countenance that accompanies His presence. Also, it means to give honor, weight and significance to God as Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Lord of all things, see Ps 29:1-3, 9; 96:3, 7, 8; Isa 40:5; 60:1, 2, 7, 19; Lk 2:9, 14.
3. **Doxologically**. To give God glory and praise is to acknowledge the person and nature of God who alone is worthy of praise. The Psalms are replete with statements of glory to God, see e.g. Ps 22:23; 86:12. It is possible to offer false praise if we merely pronounce the words but do not respond by worshipping Him as God, 1 Sam 2:30. Giving glory to God is to say that He is deserving of respect, attention and obedience. A life claims to glorify Him but does live for Him is hypocritical. A person who fails to give God honor and glory is guilty of depreciating His status and reputation. Israel was repeatedly guilty of honoring God with their lips, while their actions were unworthy of His glory, Isa 29:13.

Lamar E. Cooper, Sr.