

Today, we will finish our series called The Five Solas.

And for about the last 10 weeks, we've been making our way through quite a bit of just Reformed theology and history.

We spent time after our discipleship series working through the doctrines of grace.

We had our Easter services, and then we jumped into these Five Solas.

And if you remember from four weeks ago, these Five Solas were protest statements.

They were five slogans or battle cries of the Reformation.

They were five points of contention and debate that the Protestants had with the Roman Catholic Church during the 1500s.

And so far, we've covered Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone.

Pastor Kevin covered Christ alone last week, and today we will finish with the glory of God alone.

And just as Pastor Kevin said last week, the Reformation was not a new movement.

That is, it wasn't trying to introduce something new into the life and ministry of the church, but rather it was trying to rediscover the old ways of the Scripture.

It was seeking to move the Gospel back to the center in the life and ministry of God's people.

There were too many things that had become part of tradition and just frankly bad teaching in the Catholic Church at this point in history that did not align with Scripture.

And so the Reformers wanted to move Scripture back to the place of sole authority and then its teachings back to the center of the life and ministry of the Church.

The five solas deal primarily with the foundation and salvation of God's people.

So the foundation is Scripture alone as our authority.

And then the last three weeks, we've dealt with how do we understand the way in which God redeems or saves people.

That is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

As we come to the final sola, I think this one describes the purpose of all things.

That all things exist for the glory of God.

And depending on which Reformed theologians you will read, many will say that this sola is the reason the Reformation happened.

Because the idea that God deserves and is worthy of all of the glory directly speaks to the worship of God.

And one of the motivating factors for the reformers is that they saw the way the corrupt

teachings of the Catholic Church had begun to displace and affect the worship of God's people, as God no longer became the sole object of their worship, but other people and even things did.

Here's what I mean.

In Roman Catholicism, there's something called the veneration of saints, or the veneration of icons and images.

This remains an important part of the faith and practice.

Members of the Roman Catholic Church honor portraits, so paintings or portraits, pictures, of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and many saints and angels, whom they believe are worthy of high honor and even reverential respect.

They will pray to these figures through their images, requesting their intercession before God, and they will bow before the images, light candles to them, and offer them incense.

Anywhere in Scripture that prayer through the veneration of images is mentioned, it is always condemned as idolatry.

In the Roman Catholic catechism, in their glossary, here's what they describe, or here's what they mean when they say the veneration of saints.

It involves showing devotion and respect to Mary, the apostles and the martyrs, who were viewed as faithful witnesses to faith in Jesus Christ.

Later, veneration was given to those who led a life of prayer and self-denial in giving witness to Christ, whose virtues were recognized and publicly proclaimed in their canonization as saints.

Such veneration is often extended to the relics or remains of those recognized as saints.

Indeed, to many sacred objects and images, veneration must be clearly distinguished from adoration and worship, which are due to God alone.

So that final sentence is the one thing that gets the Catholic Church out of idolatry, or at least so they think.

But let me ask you this.

If it walks like a duck, and it talks like a duck, and it quacks like a duck, it's a duck.

That's right, it's a duck.

If objects and images are lifted up, are prayed to, are asked to intercede on your behalf, you've directly violated the principle of the first and second commandment.

Here's what the Protestants said when they cried, Soli Deo Gloria, that is glory to God alone.

Here's what they meant.

Protestants emphasize that all the glory and honor belong to God alone.

Rejecting the Catholic emphasis on the veneration of saints, relics and images as detracting

from God's glory.

If there are images or saints or relics that got the affection and the allegiance of God's people, those things detracted from God's glory, and the Reformers would not have it.

And so they cried Soli Deo Gloria, that is to God alone be all glory.

If you have your Bibles, 1 Corinthians chapter 10, I'm gonna invite you to stand with me for the reading of the Word.

This is something we do each week, again, because we believe that God, as he has revealed himself through the Word, gets all the glory.

And so we stand up when we read God's Word, we sit down for my words, because it's God who gets the glory in this place.

With a clear mind, with a willing spirit, and a ready heart, would you hear the Word of the Lord beginning in 1 Corinthians chapter 10.

We'll just read one verse today, verse 31.

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

This is the Word of the Lord, church, amen?

Man, let me pray for you.

God, thank you for this time together.

God, I just admittedly confess this morning being a little scattered.

And so, I humbly ask by your grace that you would just give clarity that I would not be a distraction to you or your glory or your word today, but that by your Holy Spirit, you would glorify yourself through the preaching of your word, that you would get our attention, you would grab our imagination, you would be all worthy of our affection today.

We humbly ask now these things in Christ, amen.

You may be seated.

Are you familiar with the phrase Glory Hound?

Glory Hound, maybe if you were on an athletic team, particularly maybe basketball, this was the, we used to affectionately call a ball hog on the middle school playground.

A Glory Hound is a person who actively seeks popularity, fame and recognition.

We don't have any problem with that at all in 2024, do we?

Individuals who are Glory Hounds often strive to be in the spotlight.

They are eager to take credit for the things that they do, and they even will make simple things seem extraordinary for the purpose of propping up their own accomplishments.

I got dressed today.

Isn't that fabulous?

Essentially, a Glory Hound is someone who craves acclaim and honor.

And if we were all honest and we all thought biblically, we might really come to the confession to say that this is the original temptation that Satan laid before Adam and Eve in the Garden.

When he deceived and lied to them and said, you won't surely die if you violate God's command.

In fact, if you violate God's command, you will be like God.

Laying before her the idea that she could stand equal or even above God himself.

In fact, when we commit sinful acts, that is when we violate God's words or commands or perhaps we fail to do the right thing, sometimes it is because our heart is seeking its own glory.

Over and over again in the story of Scripture, human pride strives and contrives to obscure the glory of God.

But ultimately, it can never truly work.

But perhaps we think we're more sophisticated than the Old Testament saints, or perhaps we've grown more technologically advanced here in 2024 than those living in the early church and through church history.

Perhaps we think that because we're Christians sitting in the sanctuary on a Sunday morning, we've moved beyond the temptation to be glory hounds.

I mean, obviously, we're in church on a Sunday, but this is where I think we would be wrong.

One of the great temptations is the inversion of glory, particularly in the American church.

Two years ago, an American evangelical preacher and author sat down for an interview, and here's what he said.

Your number one purpose in life is to let God love you.

Not for you to love God, but to let God love you.

He continues, now let me explain this.

From cover to cover in this book, from Genesis to Revelation, referring to the Bible, the Bible says the whole reason the universe exists is that God wanted a family.

Who's at the center of that sentence?

It surely is not God and His glory.

It's humanity.

Here's my main idea today.

The glory of God is the purpose of all things.

The glory of God is the purpose of all things.

Our key verse is our only verse today.

1 Corinthians 10, 31, so whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

We've had lots of different kinds of sermons in this room.

I've told you that some sermons are like water hoses.

They take a lot of water, and they spray it over a large area.

Sometimes we'll do that in here, a large passage, and we'll go through it, or we'll take several passages as we look at a particular subject.

And then other sermons are like well buckets.

Well buckets go deep, and they draw water out of a single place.

That's my hope for today, is that we would drop the well bucket deep into 1 Corinthians 10-31 and draw up refreshing truth for our souls.

We're gonna look at this last phrase of the verse, do everything for the glory of God.

Now in context, the Apostle Paul is addressing idolatry and the eating of food sacrificed to idols in the Corinthian church.

But within that context, he gives the church this command, to do everything for the glory of God, and that's the command we're gonna look at.

And so let's start with the phrase at the end of the sentence, the glory of God.

Let's start with that.

The Hebrew word for glory, kabah, derives from a root word that means weight.

So for example, the value of a gold coin in the Old Testament was determined by its weight, be set upon a scale and have a value attributed to it.

To have weight, therefore, in the Old Testament, was to have value or worth.

So when we think of the glory of God, we can think of God's worth and value, the weightiness of the God of the universe, the capital G being who has existed beyond all time and space.

In the New Testament, where we're at today, the Greek word here used by Paul is the word doxa, and it's rooted in this idea of having an opinion.

So this word refers to the worth or value in which we would ascribe, based on our opinion, to someone or something.

So we have these two ideas when we think about the glory of God from the Old Testament and New Testament.

We have the weightiness of God, or the worth and value, and then we have the opinion, or the ascribed worth and value.

In both testaments of the Bible, the word glory is about displaying the excellence and praise worthiness of God.

Think of the glory shown by God in His creation, in His plan of salvation, as well as a response of giving honor and adoration to God based on this display.

Think of glory given to God.

So we have glory demonstrated by God, the weightiness, the worthiness of Himself in and of who He is, and then we have the glory of God that is given to Him by His creation and particularly by His creatures.

The glory of God is how we designate the infinite beauty and the infinite grace of the God who was before anything else.

This beauty and greatness exist without origin.

There's no starting point to God.

Without comparison, there's no one on His level.

Without analogy, even the best human beings to describe who God is will break down.

Without being judged by any external standard, there's no standard by which we can judge God as His creatures.

He stands above all of them.

God's glory is the all-defining, absolutely original standard of all greatness and all beauty that we can have as human beings.

In fact, all created greatness and beauty flows out of God.

It points back to God, and even at their best, they can't comprehensively or adequately reproduce it.

If all things exist for the purpose of glorifying God, we can think of this at least in two ways.

The first way is we can think of creation itself.

Any campers out there excited for the summer and spring season?

We got to, last week, and have our first camping trip.

It's gorgeous, beautiful.

Some of my favorite things to do as a family.

And one of the things I always appreciate about camping is getting out of the man-made structures and getting out into creation.

In fact, I even stopped saying the word nature, and I started using the word creation just to remind myself and our family that there's someone behind all this beauty.

She's not a mom.

It's not mother nature, but it's creation.

Creation exists as a setting for the glory of God.

I mean, consider, in God's creative ability, He demonstrates such a majesty and beauty for what purpose?

Why do the mountains look as they do?

Why does the sky look as it does?

Why does the night full of stars and the celestial object that God has appointed, why do they exist if not for a testimony to the beauty and majesty of the glory of God?

Psalms 19 will tell us this, that the work of His hands are displayed in nature and in creation for the purpose of bringing glory to who He is.

Creation exists as a setting place for God's glory.

Second way we can understand this is history as a means of demonstrating God's activity and work throughout time as the story of God's glory.

That is, as God providentially moves and acts in history, that it's His story that He's telling, and it exists, our story exists to glorify His name.

To understand we might be characters in God's story.

To understand the Bible as a redemptive history, having a beginning, looking forward to the end, and in the middle, God accomplishing His purposes and means as a way of demonstrating His glory.

The glory of God ultimately is a way for us to understand that there is an objective, absolute reality to which all of our wonder, all of our awe, all of our praise, all of our honor, and all of our worship is pointing to.

It's meant to point back to God at the center of all things.

How central is the glory of God?

Three ways at least.

One, it is the great mission of the church to declare God's glory among the earth.

In Psalm 96.3, the psalmist writes this, declare his glory among the nations, his wondrous work among all peoples.

Do you know what the chief wondrous work of God is?

It's his plan of redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We flash forward to the New Testament, and the great commission were to make disciples of who?

All nations, that's right.

We go forward to Acts 1-8, when Jesus commissions his apostles.

He says they're going to spread the Gospel from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and to where?

To the ends of the earth.

Psalms 96-3 is pointing forward to the work of the church in the Gospel of Christ.

When we witness to our unsaved neighbors and friends, when we live as lighthouses in dark places as Christians, we are fulfilling the work of Psalm 96-3 in declaring God's glory among the nations.

Number two, how central is the glory of God?

It is our ultimate hope to see God's glory.

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Romans chapter 5, verse 2, the Apostle Paul tells the church in Rome, we have also obtained access through Him by faith into this grace in which we stand.

That is, we have access into the presence of God through Christ by faith into the grace in which we stand.

And listen to this, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Our boast, the place that we can stand, the place that we can take any pride is simply in the glory of God that we stand as believers, as Christians, as objects of His grace and mercy.

And that we exist to glorify Him.

How central is the glory of God?

Number three, Jesus is the ultimate revelation of the glory of God.

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This is Hebrews chapter one, verse three.

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of His nature, sustaining all things by His powerful word.

After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

If we want to see God's glory, we need only look to Jesus, the Son, who is the exact



impression of His nature.

We can look into our scriptures, into our Bibles, into the Gospels, and see Christ's life and death and resurrection, and see the glory of God.

For it is in Christ and through this glory that He sustains all things through His powerful Word.

That is, the creation itself, history itself, is sustained and moved forward through the Word of Christ.

And this is where Christ sits now, at the right hand of the Father on high, in glory, awaiting the day in which the Father says, It's time to make my glory known to every eye, so that every tongue will confess, and so that every knee will bow in subjugation to my glory.

How central is the glory of God?

It is the center.

It is the purpose.

Again, if we go back to the five solas, Scripture alone, that's our foundation.

It tells us how we're to understand the truth and the authority within the church through the Scriptures, founded upon the teaching of the Scriptures.

How are we redeemed and saved?

By grace alone, God's unmerited favor toward rebellious sinners through faith alone, over and opposed to a works-based understanding of salvation.

Who's the only one in which we can be saved in Christ alone?

The exclusive mediator, not the Pope, not the Church, but Christ alone reconciles us before God.

Why do all of this exist?

For the purpose of glorifying God.

Foundation, salvation, and purpose in the five solas.

This is why they're important and vital to the Church today.

It's not just something that we can say was a part of one period of history.

It was a Latin phrase that, in addition to the solas, was *semper reformanda*, that is always reforming and reforming according to the Word of God.

And that the Church would continue to need to come back to these things according to the Scriptures to be reformed.

I read a quote that's less than two years old by that American evangelist author and pastor.

We still need the doctrine of the glory of God alone.

Because there's a temptation to move ourselves back to the center.

In our evangelistic zeal, in our desire to see people saved, we began to make salvation the object of God's glory, rather than God's glory the object of salvation.

What I mean is, the salvation of sinners is not God's ultimate end.

It's a means that God uses to glorify himself.

That is, the plan of redemption in which Jesus came and lived the righteous life that you and I could not live, died the atoning death that we couldn't have bared, and resurrected to a glory that we can only imagine did not exist exclusively for the purpose of saving you.

That is a purpose, but that purpose is secondary.

The primary purpose in the plan of God's redemption is to glorify himself so that we might look to Christ and worship the Father.

And in our evangelistic zeal, sometimes we get that twisted up, and we make salvation the end.

And somehow that God's glory and God's salvation of sinners exists to serve us rather than our salvation existing to serve him.

We still need the solas.

We still need to cry out all things for the glory of God alone.

We keep none of it for ourselves because we are not worthy of it.

It belongs to him primarily, exclusively.

If you go back to 1 Corinthians 10, 31, do everything for the glory of God.

So the glory of God, we just talked about that phrase, its centralness to our life, what it means, what it means for God to exist in and of himself, worthy, and then for us to ascribe worth to him in response.

Now let's look at the rest of the phrase, do everything for, those three words, do everything for.

The word do means to commit to an action without delay.

When are we to glorify God?

Right now, no delay, no waiting.

Don't pass go, don't collect \$200, go straight to glorifying God.

To commit to an action without any delay.

Do everything.

Now, this word in Greek is a technical word.

When we look at the word everything in Greek, it means everything.

It means everything.

It means the totality of any object.

It means the whole thing.

It means any and all parts of it.

It means everything.

Everything.

What's in everything?

Easy, everything.

When Paul says, do everything, what does he mean?

He means our whole life exists for the purpose of glorifying God.

Now, this 90 minutes we spend together on a Sunday morning, that's easy.

When we stand to sing praise to God, when we're ascribing worth and affection and allegiance to Him, easy.

These 90 minutes, you guys knock it out of the park every single week.

Here's the hard stuff.

How about Monday through Saturday?

Or the other 22 and a half hours on Sunday?

How many of you guys remember the old game Trivial Pursuit?

You can tell I'm getting into my 40s because most of my references are late 80s and early 90s.

Here we go.

Trivial Pursuit, right?

So you get together, you play trivia.

No real prize except bragging rights, which is why it's Trivial.

But everyone, at least in the set that we had, everyone would get a little blue pie, and that pie would be sectioned off, right?

And then everyone would collect colored pieces, and those colored pieces were correlated to the category of trivia you could answer.

So it might be like sports, entertainment, history, art.

You pick your subject, science, something, and you'd play the game, and over the course of the game, you'd try to answer a question, each one of those categories, so you could fill all of your compartments.

For some of us, we live our life compartmentalized like a trivial pursuit piece.

What I mean is we think about glorifying God when we're doing something we might call explicitly connected to church or to our Christian faith.

So I'm glorifying God when I get up early on Sunday and I sacrifice sleep and time to be in worship.

Or I'm glorifying God when on Wednesday night I come to the church and I attend youth group, or when I go to women's Bible study, or I get up early and go to men's Bible study.

I'm glorifying God in those things.

But when I get up and I punch my clock and I sit at my desk and I check my email, I'm not glorifying God.

That's foreign to the understanding of both scripture and Paul's command here and what the reformers understood.

That all of life, everything glorifies God.

The way you live, the way you work, the way you love, the way you serve, the way you drive, glorifies God, or not.

I will say, I did take off the Valley Life sticker off the back of my car.

I don't know if you should do that.

I don't know if you should do that.

But you may want to pray.

You may say, you know what, where's a safe place for that sticker?

On my Bible.

That's a great place for it.

Everything, everything is for the glory of God.

The totality of our whole life.

Nothing that we do, nothing that we are, exists in this little compartmentalized space.

But the glory of God and the pursuit of the glory of God is to permeate every single thing we do.

And if you live this way, let me just just tear apart the compartments.

Your marriages or your singleness, your parenting and your grandparenting, your work and your retirement, all of it exists.

Everything for the glory of God.

Do, commit to this without any delay.

Everything, the totality of all things, for, this is a preposition word.

We can read it this way.

Do everything in favor of the glory of God.

Do everything in regard to the glory of God.

Do everything on behalf of the glory of God.

Do everything to the benefit of the glory of God.

Do everything as having a destination of the glory of God.

Do everything having a cause or a reason for the glory of God.

Do everything having a purpose for glorifying God.

Do everything with the function of glorifying God.

Do everything for the glory of God.

But when we as Christians cling to the sola, to the sole deo gloria as part of our spiritual life, we are confessing that everything that God does is good.

We may not understand the timing.

We may not understand the purpose.

But we trust that God is going to glorify himself in everything.

This is the heartbeat of Romans 8.28.

For all things work together for good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

What is God's purpose?

You guessed it, to glorify himself.

Which means all things will ultimately point to the glory of God, even the difficult things and times and moments we suffer.

Even when our life does not go according to our plan.

Even in the moment where we thought we knew the direction of our life and it seems to now be

careening out of control.

God doesn't waste anything when it comes to his glory.

And while that might be confusing or hard to think about, here's what I find it to be.

I find it to be incredibly comforting that God would not waste my suffering.

That God remains in control of it.

That his character, I know, is good.

And I know that ultimately, he has my good as its end.

And so in the midst of suffering and difficulty, we can do everything for the glory of God.

Two final points, first, humanity's chief end, that is our ultimate purpose, is to glorify God.

In all that we say, in all that we do, in our words, we must seek to bring glory to God.

This is about our part, responding to who God is.

Again, if one part of the glory of God is us recognizing and attributing worth and value to God, then when we understand our chief end is to glorify Him, we recognize the worth and value of God, and we attribute our affection to Him and our allegiance to Him.

That is, we love Him first, best, and most, and serving Him is our primary calling, our allegiance to Him beyond anything else and anyone else.

Consider the great commandments, that we love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

That's attributing glory to God so that He gets my best.

Then consider the work He gives us to do, to love my neighbor as myself, to be an emissary of the love I have received from God toward others.

That's demonstrating my allegiance to Him.

When I will work to love and serve others, I'm attributing my allegiance to God by doing the work that He's called me to do.

Secondly, so humanity's chief end is to glorify God or chief purpose.

Secondly, humanity's chief delight is to praise God.

That is, we will receive the most joy, most happiness, most contentment when we live a life that is glorifying God and not glorifying ourselves.

We will find supreme joy in praising God.

And I don't just mean like singing on Sundays.

I mean the totality of your life aimed at glorifying God and not glorifying yourself will produce

supreme joy.

Because if you think about it, isn't misery, grief and discontentment rooted and the result of wrongly ordered worship and praise?

When we worship the wrong things, doesn't it ultimately end in grief and more discontentment?

And ultimately misery?

If we're honest and we examine the scriptures, we might find that all idolatry, that is all false worship, that is all ascribing glory to something that cannot withstand it, ends not in freedom, but in slavery.

Consider the story of the nation of Israel in the Old Testament.

Their idolatry directly led them to what?

To being enslaved by foreign nations as a judgment of God.

Now, this wasn't direct punishment from God.

It was a direct judgment by God.

But what did God simply do?

He simply gave them what they wanted.

They wanted to worship foreign idols.

So God allowed them to worship foreign idols until the leaders of those foreign idols came and captivated them.

To give a more modern example, if you enjoy stand-up comedy, you might know the name John Mullaney.

He's a pretty famous comedian.

He's got quite a large following, a bunch of Netflix specials.

I'm talking about them as an illustration, not recommending them as your pastor, so save the email, okay?

But in his last Netflix special called Baby J, he speaks openly of his addiction, drugs and alcohol, and the intervention in his time in rehab.

It's pretty compelling.

Later, in an interview with his father who was sitting right by his side, they talked about his time in rehab, and he said, when you get there, when they bring you into rehab, they give you a letter, and the letter is from your addiction, and it opens this way.

He said, greetings, I'm your addiction.

I'm here to kill you.

And he said it was a light bulb moment, because for the first time, he recognized that the addiction wasn't bringing him the joy and wholeness to life that he anticipated it would, but he was able to recognize its ultimate purpose.

If only our idols were so honest, if only we could recognize that the purpose of giving ourselves over to the worship of things other than God would ultimately end up in misery and grief, it would save a lot of idolatry in our life.

When we ascribe our affection and our allegiance to things that cannot bear the weight of glory, that only God can, we always end up in grief and misery.

When the church confesses glory to God alone, we're ultimately calling ourselves to live for the glory of God and to die to self.

The great Puritan, Jonathan Edwards, he put it this way.

He says, the greatest moments of my life have not been those that have concerned my own salvation, but those when I have been carried into communion with God and beheld his beauty and desired his glory.

I rejoice and yearn to be emptied and annihilated of self in order that I might be filled with the glory of God and Christ alone.

The happiest moments, the greatest moments of my life, he said, are not when I was full of myself, but when I sought to be emptied of self and to be full of the communion of God, and to be focused on Christ alone.

Sole Deo Gloria is our highest ambition.

No other goal or desire can measure up to living for God's glory.

The true Christian finds our purpose and our joy in glorifying God.

There are two things you must believe and one thing you must do to pursue a life that glorifies God.

First, you must confess that sin has separated you from God and His glory.

That sin, disobedience to God's word, will, and way is ultimately a journey of glorifying self.

And that we can't overcome that journey on our own.

That repentance involves turning from that journey and turning toward a life pursuing God's glory.

The second thing we must confess and believe is that Jesus has come and lived the righteous life that we could not live, died an atoning death that has paid the penalty for our sins, and was raised to glory as a statement of truth and fact that our sins had been atoned for.

We will believe these two things.

The final thing we must do is confess Jesus as Lord, submit our pursuit of our own glory aside,



and confess and commit to pursuing Christ's glory alone.

This is Romans chapter 10, 13.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Let me pray for us, and then we'll move into our time of communion.

Father God, I thank you for this morning.

I thank you for Christ, who comes to personify your beauty and your majesty and your worth.

Would you help us as a church, as a collection of individuals, to focus our eyes upon Christ and to be unwavering in that?

By your Holy Spirit, would you bring up to us the places where we have mistakenly compartmentalized our life?

Where mistakenly we have given our affection and our allegiance to other people or other things?

And would you help us to confess those?

God, would our veneration, that is our respect, our honor, be alone given to you?

We humbly ask now, you might be present among us as we celebrate this sacrament.

To the great glory of your name and the good of your church, I pray.

Amen.