

- I. This fifth and final “sola” of the reformation, is intending to communicate that all things are (heaven and earth, all of creation, mankind himself) but more narrowly the work of redemption is for the ultimate and sole purpose of glory being ascribed to God.
  - A. It is this broader intent that I want to focus on this morning while weaving God’s redemptive work in Christ throughout.
  - B. As the Westminster Catechism states “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”
- II. “The single colossal purpose that shapes all reality and stands as the ultimate end of everything in the Divine heart: the Glory of God.” - Stephen Venable
  - A. I want to take a moment to provide a working definition for the term “glory.” I will provide two definitions and focus mostly on the second. The word’s literary usage can become much more nuanced than this, but this will suffice our focus right now. Glory (Gk: Doxa):
    1. Glory=Splendor or brightness. This is the very brightness of God’s being. It is intrinsically who He is. This is what is spoken of in **Rev 21:22** where we read that there is no need of the sun in the heavenly temple for the very glory of God illuminates it. The light of God’s glory also shines in the spiritual realm, unseen to the natural eye but of profound effect upon the human spirit (**2 Cor 3:7**). The word “chabod” used in the Hebrew Scriptures also conveys the weight or presence of God.
    2. Glory=Majesty, honor, fame, renown. This is also intrinsic to God Himself, He will never increase or diminish in glory, He is immutable, He cannot change. However this also deals with glory being ascribed to God by His creation and by His people. (**1 Chron 16:28-29** **Ascribe** to the LORD, O families of the peoples, **ascribe** to the LORD glory and strength! **Ascribe** to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come

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**before him! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;  
Job 36:3; Ps 29:1-2; Ps 68:34; Ps 96:7-8)**

- B. The Glory of God is undoubtedly the central theme of Scripture.
- C. "All of the beautiful streams of His power and benevolence toward His creation ultimately flow into this ocean of His own renown (**Ps 145:10**). This truth fills the pages of Scripture:" - Stephen Venable
1. <sup>9</sup>**"For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, and for My praise I restrain it for you, in order not to cut you off.**  
<sup>10</sup>**Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. <sup>11</sup>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.** Is 48:9-11
  2. <sup>36</sup> **For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.** Amen. Romans 11:36 (see Colossians 1:15-16, I Corinthians 8:6 & Hebrews 2:10)
  3. **Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory... John 17:24**
  4. **And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. <sup>18</sup> And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.** Colossians 1:17-18
- D. There is no more sweeping vision than that Christ would be preeminent in everything! That whatever we eat or drink would be for His glory (**1 Cor 10:31**) that what we speak and how we serve would be to glorify Him in everything (**1 Peter 4:11**). That He would be before all things! Before all of our personal hopes and dreams, before the way we dreamed of our lives working out, before our personal comfort and success, before everything!
1. I hope we can see how this is almost non-existent in the western church. I look at Paul's life and he just seems like he's from another planet. The life he embraced looks so

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dramatically different than most of what I've seen presented as Christianity.

III. The Present condition and its effect on worship

- A. "While the language of it being "all about Him" is still common in Christian rhetoric we must be aware that we exist in a religious environment in the West in which the ultimate goal of all things is often seen as the *personal fulfillment* of man and God exists to procure that 'great' end. *In our hearts we believe that God exists for us rather than us existing for Him.*" - Stephen Venable
- B. "In our day, Jesus is almost always presented as the means to get what humanity needs or wants. Everything from salvation to eschatology and all that lies in between can be construed in this way." - Stephen Venable
  - 1. We see this in how the gospel is presented, "come to Christ and He will prosper your relationships, your finances, give you peace and heal your body" (If there are any unbelievers in the room and you're wondering why you should submit your life to the Lordship of Jesus, it is enough that He gave you the breath in your lungs, He is upholding it right now, and in a moment He's going to withdraw it and you'll stand before Him.
  - 2. We see this in how the end times are most popularly presented as being about something that God is going to do for us rather than being about a day in which He alone is exalted.
  - 3. We see this in how worship has come to be defined as an activity that we get something out of rather than extolling Him and and making much of Him!

IV. The Heavenly Temple, The Seraphim, and Worship

A. The importance of heaven

- 1. Heaven is a real place in which the glory of God is the most attractive thing there. The glory of God and the worth of christ

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is the anthem that angels, saints, and elders proclaim day and night without ceasing.

2. Heaven is a real place. It is important that we understand this because if we think that heaven is a hologram we won't give our lives to emulating a metaphor on the earth.
3. There is this crazy concept of the "better place." Yet all that is right or beautiful about this place is wrapped up in God being there. If you took an unregenerate man and plopped Him down on that sea of glass it would be deplorable to him.
  - a) The old puritan preachers that said the things we don't want to say would say that if we don't enjoy the presence of God now what makes us think that we will enjoy heaven!

B. The witness of the seraphim

1. The Seraphim who spend their days gazing at the beauty of the one who sits on the throne and proclaim His holiness day and night without ceasing. They don't do this because they are trying to "change the atmosphere" or hoping that revival would "break out" in the heavenly city. The seraphim have never had a sin forgiven or an ailment healed; simply that he is worthy is reason enough for their unceasing song.

(1) Whether it is in day and night prayer and we don't see the fullness of the promise in our lifetime, whether it is in global missions and one spends their whole life only to see one family saved in a village, or whether it is in the work of the local church to proclaim the gospel, make disciples and strengthen families only to be met with one opposition after another, simply that He is worthy is reason enough to hold the line for decades to come.

C. Worship as an end in itself

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1. Because God's own glory is the ultimate end of all things, worship is an end in itself. Worship and prayer in this age is also a means to something, however ultimately it is an end in itself. In eternity the task of the great commission will be finished and no injustice will remain for us to weep over, yet we will worship and we will pray.
  2. "Missions exist because worship doesn't. Worship is primary not missions because God is primary not man" - John Piper
    - a) Worship unto missions unto more worship.
    - b) The ultimate driving reason for missions is that "the lamb is worthy to receive the reward of His suffering" - Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Revelation 4&5