

I. The Glory of God

A. Who is like our God?

1. Exodus 15:11 . . . Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?
2. Deuteronomy 3:24 . . . O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as Yours?
3. Psalm 71:19 . . . For Your righteousness, O God, reaches to the heavens, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?
4. Psalm 89:6-7 . . . For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, [7] a God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around Him?
5. Jeremiah 10:6-7 . . . There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might. [7] Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is none like You.

B. REVIEW: These scriptures proclaim a truth we all know. The question I want to put to you today is: "Do you believe these truths?" We sing the chorus: "There is none like You. No one else can touch my heart like you do. I can search for all eternity long, and find, there is none like You." Do you think of God this way and as a result, live your life accordingly?

1. As I pointed out last week, when we speak of the glory of God, we are speaking of all those things about God that set Him apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe.
2. And because God is holy, His glory is not a part of who He is, or what He does, His glory is the sum of all that He is, and all that He does, as well as His position as Supreme Being over all.

C. Prayer

II. The Glory of God and why it matters to us

A. In his book "KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY," A.W. Tozer wrote that: "The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion." In other words, no group of people or community or tribe

or nation has become morally and spiritually better than their religion – or we might say, than their religious beliefs.

1. Tozer went on to say that man's spiritual history will demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of what God is like.
2. In other words, when it comes to truth, a life of faith, submission and obedience to God, and the pursuit of godliness in all our behavior, we will be no better, rise no higher, be more godly, than what our religion teaches about what God is like, what He does, and the position He holds in our lives.

B. Now because we have the tendency to choose what is easier over what is right, I believe it is necessary to clarify the difference between what we know about God (on the one hand) and what we believe God to be like – or what we think of God (on the other hand).

1. What we know about God is the sum of the information we have about Him. And we gain this information from a variety of sources, such as teachers and preachers, the Holy Scriptures, observing nature, books, hymns and songs, theology, the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, and statements of faith. In other words, what we know about God is the sum of what our religion teaches us about God. It is what educators often call "book knowledge" or "head knowledge."
2. In contrast to that, what we believe God to be like, or what we think of God, is the result of personal judgments concerning the varied parts of God's character, His ways, and His position. And this is what is often known as "experiential knowledge" or "heart knowledge." For example –
 - a. You may know what your religion teaches about the faithfulness of God, but because of certain hurtful or difficult experiences in life, and the way you have interpreted those experiences, you may believe or think of God as not always being faithful. In other words, you know what God's word says about His faithfulness, yet what you believe is that God is mostly faithful, because you also believe that He cannot be trusted in certain areas or in certain ways. And this is an example of the difference between what we know about God and what we believe God is like, or what we think of God.
 - b. Again, you may know, intellectually, that God is good, and that He works all things out for good. Yet because of certain situations and your view of those situations, you do not believe He is

perfectly good or that He works everything out for good. What you do believe is that God is mostly good, while also believing He is occasionally untrustworthy, especially when it comes to certain bad things happening to you – such as getting cancer, losing your job, or getting into a physically debilitating accident.

3. The point I am trying to make is that what you know about God isn't always the same as what you believe God to be like. And this is an important distinction, because it is not what you know about God that has the most profound effect on how you live – day in and day out – but what you believe God to be like.
 4. Now I am not at all saying that gaining a good knowledge of God is unimportant. We ought to gain what knowledge we can about God, and about His ways, His works, and His will – because this information is important to forming a proper response to God in every area of life.
 5. However, we do not automatically live according to what we know about God, but we do live according to what we think of God, or believe – from the heart – what God is like.
 6. In other words, the one thing that has the greatest and most pervasive influence over what we think, desire, fear, say, and do is what we believe God to be like.
- C. When we bring this fact into the practical reality of daily living, we find that the quality, the purity, the whole-heartedness, and the humbleness of our Christian life is a direct reflection of what we believe God is like. For example:
1. The quality of our faith in God, be it enthusiastic, brave, and whole-hearted, or unsure, cautious, and mixed with distrust is a direct reflection of how trustworthy we believe God is – regardless of how trustworthy we say He is.
 2. In a similar way, the quality of our thoughts and desires, be they well guarded and kept within the boundaries of God's standards for thoughts and desires, or be they allowed to wander and dwell on things outside God's boundaries, directly reflects our beliefs about how well God is meeting our needs, satisfying our wants, protecting us from harm, and shielding us from difficult or hurtful relationships.
 3. The quality of our choices regarding such things as income, savings, borrowing, repaying debts, and charitable giving are a direct reflection of what we believe about the quality of God's provision in the daily realities of life. In other words, the quality of our financial choices

are not based on what we know God is supposed to be like, but what we believe we can count on Him to actually do in this area of life.

4. And my final example has to do with the quality of our worship. Whether our worship is in spirit and truth, or a bit dishonest and self-pleasing, it is a direct reflection of how worthy we believe God is to receive genuinely humble, exuberant, and heartfelt worship. In other words, the more we trust and love God, and the more we count Him worthy of praise and thanks, the more our worship is for Him and the less it is for ourselves.
- D. Based on what I have already said, I want to ask you three questions:
1. When there is a difference between what we know about God and what we think of God, what does that difference look like to God?
 2. Why should that difference be important to you?
 3. Whether there is or isn't a difference, what does this have to do with the glory of God?
- E. Now I don't know if you have ever asked yourself these three questions, but God answers all three in His word –
1. When there is a difference between the truths we know about God and how we live, day in and day out, God sees us as those who honor Him with their lips, but their heart is far from Him (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:8-9).
 - a. For example, like most Christians, you probably honor God with your lips by quoting certain portions of scripture, repeating good theology, giving personal testimonies, talking with other believers, doing evangelism, and participating in worship.
 - b. Yet God, though He hears your lip service, also looks at how you live day in and day out. And it is in how you live, day to day, that you expose what you think of God or believe Him to be like.
 - c. And when God puts the two together – your lip service with your daily living – and finds a contradiction, He sees you as one who honors Him with your lips but your heart is far from Him.
 - d. Now if you are wondering what some of the contradictory things might include, let me give you a short list – distrust of God in certain areas, self-rule and self-protection in some areas, an unholy pursuit of self-pleasure and self-exaltation, love for things God's people ought not to love, fear of things we ought not to fear, discontent and ungratefulness, ongoing discouragement and

despair, and presumption on His grace – as if His grace makes it possible to sin and not reap what we have sown.

2. This brings us to the second question: “Why should a difference, if there is one, between what we know about God and what we think of God, be important to us?”
 - a. The answer comes from Jesus, himself, who makes it clear that our heart is set on what we treasure, and what we treasure determines how we live day by day.
 - b. This profound truth begins with two parables from Matthew 13:44-46 . . . The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. [45] Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, [46] and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
 - (1) The obvious point of these two parables is that the kingdom of heaven and the ruler of that kingdom are to be our most precious treasures – so precious in fact, that we will sell all, and die to self, and deny self, in order to gain the treasure.
 - (2) Now when we couple that message with Jesus’ statement that “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21), it becomes clear that if He is not our most precious treasure, someone or something else is.
 - c. So again, the point is simple: in spite of what we know to be true, we will live, day by day, according to what we treasure.
 - d. Now, to discover what you treasure, you too must look beyond your words about God and examine what your behavior says about what you believe God to be like.
3. Which brings us to our third question: “Whether there is a difference between what we know about God and what we think of God – as revealed by how we live – what does it have to do with the glory of God?”
 - a. Jesus answered this question in His Sermon on the Mount. He said: “You are the light of the world.”
 - (1) Now notice, He did not say you ought to be, or that it is your privilege to be the light of the world. He said you ARE the light of the world.
 - (2) In other words, if you are a born again Christian, then by the fact of becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus, you are, in a very practical and real way, the light of God’s glory in the

world. And Jesus goes on to say that because we ARE the light of the world, we are to live accordingly so that others will see the glory of God.

- b. Returning to what Jesus said, we read: “You are the light of the world.” A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; [15] nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket (*such an act would be nonsense*), but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. [16] Let (*allow, or do not do anything that prevents it from doing what it is naturally intended to do*) your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works (*godly behavior in all areas of life*), and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16).
- c. I am confident you grasp what Jesus is saying here, but I want to repeat just the same. We Christians are the most practical and real light of Christ in the world. But we must live in such a way as to give to the world around us both a valid reason and the motivation to look on God as the supreme being who is set apart from and above everyone and everything else in the universe!
- d. Paul spoke to this same issue, but from a slightly different direction. In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul said: “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”
(1) By adding the two words DO ALL, the point Paul makes is that we are to have the perpetual intention – that is, we are to get up in the morning and go through our day with the perpetual intention of thinking, desiring, speaking, and living in such a way as to make God look glorious to those around us.
- e. So why is it so important that how we live agrees with what we know and say about God? Because it is in how we live that God is either glorified or dishonored.

III. Conclusion

- A. I suspect we all know that there is no God like our God. But I am not certain we all whole-heartedly believe it. And so I am urging you to examine yourself to see if what you believe God to be like agrees with what you know the scripture says God is like.
- B. And why am I urging you to do this? Because we are either the down to earth and practical affirmation of God’s glory in our world, or we are contributors to the dishonor and disrespect God receives from our world. May we be among those who glorify God in all we say and do.