Section: Doctrine of God

**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, so His glory would be known and praised.

**Q16. How should we glorify God?**

We glorify God by trusting in Jesus, enjoying Him, treasuring Him, growing in our knowledge of Him, believing His words, obeying His commands, and by showing and telling the world how great He is.

**I have the privilege to teach tonight on the next two of our Word of Truth Catechism questions:#15 and 16. They are: “Why did God make us?” and “How should we glorify God?”**

**First, let us pray as we prepare to dig in.**

**Look with me at Question 15.**

**15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, so His glory would be known and praised.

**When it says, “God made us,” it helps to go back to creation and see how God set the table for us to glorify Him.**

**The Creation of Man:**

At the end of Genesis Ch. 1, we see the end of the SIXTH DAY of creation.

This day is very important because it is when God created Man and Woman. After this it says:

**Genesis 1:31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

After all of the other days of creation, God said, ***“It is good.”*** Then God creates mankind, and He says, ***“It is very good.”***

The Bible says in many places that God’s creation will glorify Him.

But there is something extra special about the worship and glory that God receives from mankind.

**Revelation 4:11** “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created

God’s Word reveals that He receives an even more special kind of praise from His elect.

**Isaiah 43:7 says,** "everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

Man was formed to glorify God in a special way that only humans can. This is different than angels, animals or trees. God’s special relationship with man, who is made in His image, began on that sixth day, and as we turn the page to look into the seventh day, we can see how our worship and glorifying of God began.

Just imagine what the **morning of the seventh day was like.**

Everything is in full swing!

🡪No doubt that morning was overwhelming in its presentation!

When Adam and Eve opened their eyes, they saw the brilliant colors on God’s palette of creation: a bright sun pumping warmth and light, a cool breeze on their skin; the chorus of the birds to their ears would have been better than Beethoven on his best day!

The Historic 1689 Confession of Faith says this: In the beginning, it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to create or make the world, and all things in it.

God created for HIS GLORY!

We see all over Scripture that God’s work of and in creation demands praise from mankind. This beautiful creation, even more before the fall, should cause in mankind awe for the Creator! We see this for example in Psalm 19, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”

**When men and women are living for the “why” that God made us, we praise Him—we glorify Him**! We see, for example, His handiwork of creation and glorify Him. And that’s what our catechism answer says:

**15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, so His glory would be known and praised.

God will be worshipped and glorified in His creation, especially in mankind!

But the problem is we, mankind, abandoned our honored place to make our lives about God, and instead we made our lives about ourselves.

**Man’s Problem:**

Since the fall, mankind has always struggled with the thought that the world revolves around us.

WE have indoctrinated our kids from birth to think this way by saying things like:

“You’re number one;”

“Be your own man;”

“The world owes you a better life;”

 “The lord helps him who helps himself;”

“You deserve the best;”

“YOU can accomplish ANYTHING you set your mind to.”

 “Get it while the getting is good;”

 “Only the best will survive;” and

 “He who dies with the most toys, wins.”

**This is what we call a secular worldview!**

 **This is humanism: believing that “man” is generally good and deserving of a good life.**

The problem with this line of thinking is that it places us on the throne of our lives and of the world that surrounds us. We ascribe worth to ourselves—we arrogantly assume our own worthiness and “rights”. We think, “***My life, my time, my money, and my thoughts center around me.”***

The great king of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, defined a “secular worldview” well for us:

When he one day looked over his kingdom he said, “Is this not the great Babylon I have built as my royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?” **Daniel 4:30**

We see this same self-worth, man-centered folly even before that, in Genesis 11. Mankind, thousands of years ago like today, were seeking their own glory when “…they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and **let us make a name for ourselves**…”

In total contrast, the Bible teaches that everything you and I have, everything, is from the hand of God, and is to be used, not for our glory, but for His glory. That’s the highest, ultimate reason He gave it to you; hence a Christian worldview of **Soli Deo Gloria.**

Praise God that He is not thwarted from our profaning His name. (define Profane)

He is vigilant and does not give His glory to anything or anyone else. He says this in:

**Isaiah 48:11 “**For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.”

Praise God for the Cross, for a Savior who saves us from our madness to make our lives all about us. Praise God that He redeems His people to glorify His name, as He is worthy.

**The pinnacle of these important doctrinal clarities of the reformation is Soli Deo Gloria** (To God Alone be the glory).

**Soli Deo Gloria Definition:**

Soli Deo Gloria (To God Alone be the glory) emphasizes that all things were created, live, move and have their being to glorify God. He will be glorified in all of creation. God is glorified in His righteous judgment on man. All that is done will ultimately be for God's glory to the exclusion of man's self-glorification and pride. God’s glory is the central motivation for the saving grace He chooses to give His people. God is not a means to an end; He is the means and the end.

**15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, so His glory would be known and praised.

The Westminster Short Catechism famously answers the question this way:

What is the Chief end of Mankind?

**THE CHIEF END OF MAN IS TO GLORIFY GOD AND ENJOY HIM FOREVER.**

The problem is that many will not enjoy Him forever.

But the Bible still says that all of this creation exists to glorify God.

**Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

The point is, in God’s sovereign plan and purpose ALL THINGS are from Him, through Him and to Him. Ultimately, so that He will be glorified in all things. This means He is glorified by those whom He has chosen to be redeemed and by those whom He has chosen to be condemned.

**Romans 9:22-23** What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 in order to **make known** the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand **for glory.**

Now, listen to the answer again:

**15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, **so His glory would be known and praised.**

**Everything that exists, including our lives, exists ultimately for the Glory of God.**

**HOLD up Bible! What is this book about?**

**It is not Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!**

*I****T IS ABOUT God;*** THAT HE would be glorified in His infinite perfections. It is about His NAME

The 1689 Confession of Faith says this: The whole counsel of God concerning everything essential for his own glory and man’s salvation, faith, and life is…contained in the Holy Scriptures.

Scripture teaches us about God and His glory!

**Remember in Isaiah 48:11, God says, He does what He does for His own namesake, and He gives His glory to no one.**

**This is not a standalone idea in Scripture, The Word of God is packed full of the idea of God doing what He does for His glory... for His name!**

LET ME GIVE YOU A TASTE:

-**Exodus 14:4, 18** says that Pharaoh's heart was hardened for the glory of God.

-**Ezekiel 20:5-9** says that God did not destroy Israel in the desert for the sake of His name.

**-1 Samuel 12:19-23** says the beginning of the Israelites monarchy was about the glory of God.
**-2 Samuel 7:23** says Israel became great and powerful among the nations for the glory of God.

-**1 Kings 8:41-45** says Solomon dedicates the temple for the glory of God.

**-In Malachi 2:2,** He decides to destroy Israel because they would not lay it in their hearts to give glory to His name.

**- John 4:34, 7:18, and 17:4** say that Jesus' life and ministry was about the glory of God.

**-John 12:27-28** says the Cross of Jesus is about the glory of God.

**–1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Peter 4:11,** and **Matthew 5:16** say that the Christian life is about the reflection of the glory of God off of our lives into the universe

-In **Psalm 23:3**, it says, “*He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake*.”

**-2 Thessalonians 1:9-10** says the second coming is about the consummation of the glory of God.

**-Revelation 21:23** says the consummation of all things is that God might be praised.

The story of the Bible is NOT about you, not me, **it’s about God!**

**This church is not about you and me…it’s about God.**

**15. Why did God make us?**

God made us to glorify Him, so His glory would be known and praised.

**He does all these things so that His glory-- His name-- would be known and praised!**

The Confession of Faith again, says: God works all things according to the counsel of his own unchangeable and completely righteous will **for his own glory**.

Look with me at another memory verse in our Catechism:

**1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

The command upon us is to live our lives for the glory of God, so the next question helps us flesh out **how we should do this.**

**Q16. How should we glorify God?**

We glorify God by trusting in Jesus, enjoying Him, treasuring Him, growing in our knowledge of Him, believing His words, obeying His commands, and by showing and telling the world how great He is.

Now, we have covered how God receives glory in all of mankind. This is true of all of Man.

But there are specific ways that God is glorified by the redeemed….

That is what this Catechism answer helps us understand. First:

**1. We glorify God by trusting in Jesus:**

There is an active way that we glorify God with our lives: first by trusting our lives to Jesus.

Hebrews 11:6 (NASB) … without faith it is impossible to please Him ...

Glorifying God rightly starts with truly believing into Christ—having saving faith. And in this we live by faith. One is not saved unless God regenerates him or her and gives that person saving faith. It is when we trust our lives to Jesus that we are saved and reconciled to Him on account of Christ’s perfect work and shed blood. This opens the door for our lives to worship and glorify Him in a way that we couldn’t before.

Romans 14:23 says, “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”

It is only by God’s grace to give us real and saving faith that we can joyfully and rightly worship and glorify Him with our lives!

He does this for His glory!!! Look with me:

Both we and our fathers have sinned... Yet he saved them for his name’s sake, that he might make known his mighty power.

**-**[**Psalms 106:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalms%20106.6)**,** [**8**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalms%20106.8)

**Not only do we exist for God’s glory, but we are saved “ultimately” for the glory of God.**

**Isaiah 43:25** “I, I am he who blots out your transgressions **for my own sake**, and I will not remember your sins.

**Ezekiel 20:44** And you shall know that I am the LORD, **when I deal with you for my name’s sake**, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.”

Turn with me to Ephesians Chapter 1:

**Ephesians 1:3-14** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, **6 to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory**.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**

**\*Expand on this text and how it shows how His will, His predestined plan to save His people is for the “praise of His glory and grace.”**

**2.** We glorify God by **Enjoying Him:**

**Psalm 37:4** "Delight yourself in the Lord; and he will give you the desires of your heart"

**Psalm 42:1–2 "**As a deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God"

Our Mission statement as a church is: To Glorify God through lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A transforming life includes three main pillars that we have held high for over a decade here at DC. They are: ENJOY GOD, GROW WITHIN COMMUNITY, and LOVE OTHERS.

We glorify God by **Enjoying Him.**

**This means we glorify God when we are happy, not in our circumstances, but “IN THE LORD.”**

Our ultimate purpose in life is to **give God Glory,** and the best way we can do that is not to begrudgingly crouch on bended knee for every hour of our life; instead, our lives will most purely, authentically, and fully point to His glory and wonder when **it is an overflow of our joy in Him!**

**The problem is in our sin, we pursue the pleasures of the world to fulfill us; we choose scraps for pleasure instead of a feast of the best God has to offer, which is HIMSELF!**

**-C.S. Lewis says it so well in “The weight of Glory!”**

“…It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when **infinite joy** is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. **We are far too easily pleased.”**

**We dream about temporary pleasures:** we try to find deep lasting joy in **fast cars, big screen TV’s, dream jobs, healthy kids, easy circumstances, no consequences, extra-marital sex, and tasty meals**.

The late Philosopher, Blaise Pascal, agrees:

“But these are all inadequate, because… the **infinite abyss** can only be filled by an **infinite and immutable Object**, that is to say, **only by God Himself**.”

**The point is:** All the daily things we have been trying to gain satisfaction from “can” be great things that are to be enjoyed according to God’s design, **but** if that is all we have dreamed of and learned to enjoy, then we have settled for a hot dog stand outside of Wrigley Field instead of attending the game itself. Or we are looking up at a plane in flight instead of soaring high above in one.

**TRUE authentic praise of anything is out of the mouth of one who found great enjoyment in it.**  IF not, then that praise is quite possibly founded in something fake or mechanical.

**This is where John Piper’s most famous quote comes from:**

**<>** **GOD IS MOST GLORIFIED IN US WHEN WE ARE MOST SATISFIED IN HIM. <>**

When we enjoy God, we will glorify Him with our lives!

This leads to the next way we should glorify God:

**3.** We glorify God by **Treasuring Him:**

When it comes to the greatest thing you and I could ever and will ever ENJOY-- the greatest treasure you and I will ever know--  **is God HIMSELF.**

**The Apostle Paul got this when he said:**

Philippians 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the **surpassing worth** of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

**How does Paul glorify God above all else?**

Piper also says this well:

**“By treasuring Christ above all else so that everything else in his life is as nothing by comparison.**

**I count everything – money, as loss; food, as loss; beauty, as loss; friends, as loss; family, as loss; job and success, as loss; graduation, as loss in comparison with the treasure that Christ has become for me.**

**What does this practically look like in everyday life?**

You steward the money entrusted to you in such a way that shows money is not your treasure, Christ is!

You steward the food entrusted to you in such a way that it shows food is not your pleasure, Christ is!

You steward the friends and family entrusted to you in such a way that it shows they are not your treasure, Christ is!

You steward computers, toys, houses, houses, and cars, entrusted to you in such a way that it shows these are not your treasure, Christ is!

The way we display the supreme worth of Jesus is by treasuring Him above all things and then making choices which make the joy we have in His supreme worth clearly evident to the world around us.

And if He is not that for you today, if He’s not that treasure for you, **then PRAY** – all day and all night if you have to;

**FEAST in His Living Word** day and night so that your heart would be so impacted with His truth, that you would treasure Jesus above everything else in your life.

This brings up the next way we should glorify God:

4. We glorify God by **Growing in our knowledge of Him:**

**Jeremiah 9:24** (NKJV) “But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and **knows Me**, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the Lord.

**Do you understand and know God?**

How do we enjoy Him, treasure Him, if we do not understand or know Him?

Do you know Him here (head), and do you know Him here (heart)?

If you do, you will glorify God in your life! You can’t know God personally (not just know about God but know Him personally), and not live your life to glorify and make much of Him.

This is why it is so important that we are studying His Word and learning His truths (catechism), because it helps us to grow in our knowledge of Him!

Scripture is the high and ultimate authority.

The Historic 1689 Confession of Faith says this: “By this faith Christians believe to be true everything revealed in the Word, recognizing it as the authority of God himself. They also perceive that the Word is more excellent than every other writing and everything else in the world, because **it displays the glory of God in his attributes, the excellence of Christ in his nature and offices, and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his activities and operations**. So they are enabled to entrust their souls to the truth believed.”

Peter finishes his 2nd letter by saying this to the church:

**2 Peter 3:18** But grow in the grace and **knowledge of our Lord** and Savior Jesus Christ. **To him be the glory** both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Our mission as a church is to GLORIFY GOD!

One of the ways we do this is by growing in community in the knowledge of our Lord.

**5.** We glorify God by **Believing His words:**

**1 Thessalonians 2:11-13** For you know how, like a father with his children, 12 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and **glory.**

13 And we also thank God constantly for this, that when **you received the word of God**, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Those who are called into God’s glory are those who have received or believed the Word of God.

We honor and glorify God when we believe Him and “lean not on our own understanding.”

When the heart of a man or woman hears God’s Word and takes it all the way in as true instead of rejecting any part of it as false, we glorify Him. The opposite of this is true. We do not glorify Him if or when we deny His words to be true.

The thing is, we can believe His words are true but then in sin choose not to obey them or fulfill them.

As we’ve seen in our study through the Book of James, those who believe Him must rightly live it out in God glorifying *doing*—in God glorifying obedience: James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Therefore, our next way we should glorify God is by:

**6.** We glorify God by **Obeying His commands:**

**John 8:31** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,

**Deuteronomy 11:1** You shall therefore love the Lord your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

We honor someone else when we disobey God. We make much of someone else when we disobey God.

**How can we glorify God when we are living lives in disobedience to His commands?**

**How are we making much of who He is and putting Him on display if we disregard His commandments?**

**Are you obedient?**

**John 14:15** If you love me, you will keep my commandments. But it is more…

The Pharisees kept the rules “religiously” but missed true sanctified holiness unto God’s glory that is the result of God refining hearts and lives. They *obeyed*, in many cases, for their own glory. Jesus calls this kind of self-centered motivation out in Matthew 6.

Matthew 6:1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven."

**So it’s not just “external modifications” (Just be better). And it’s certainly not for our glory (our pride, our ego).**

**Rather, it is change at our core and motivations that are for the glory of GOD.**

It is an obedience that is out of a heart that has been made new and a life that is being transformed by God’s sanctifying power.

This is how our obedience doesn’t become glory to us as it was for the Pharisees but Glory to God because it is all for God and making much of His name.

**7.** We glorify God by **Showing and telling the world how great He is:**

**The question here is: Are we making much of His name and glory right here where we live and ultimately around the world?** For many modern-day Christians, this is an out of sight practice. He has us here to be a “City on a Hill”

The question is: **Are you shining bright to point to Him who is light and glory and worthy of our praise?**

**Psalm 96:1-3** Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. **3** Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

Does your life ebb and flow to make much of God? To glorify Him? To speak of how great He is?

***1 Peter 4:11***whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies--in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

What this helps us with is to understand that *the things of life,* the everyday things we have come to enjoy, these things **He has created** and entrusted to us are to be stewarded in such a way that we will **point to Him who is worthy of our praise for them.**

God gave us food and wine, not so we could guzzle it down and gorge ourselves on it, but rather as we take a bite of good food or we take a sip of great wine, something would occur in the deepest parts of our soul where it doesn’t terminate on the thing we are consuming, but rather it stirs in us an awe and a joy for its ultimate Creator, resulting in worship of God's name.

What this means is for many more moments in life, we will open our mouths and sing praise to HIM for everyday stuff. Because in the end, it is Him we are enjoying. It is Him that gives us the very things we enjoy on a daily basis!

🡪So when we say, “God is good,” it isn’t just because He gave it to us; it is because that thing He gave me all points me back in satisfaction **TO HIM!**

***Ephesians 3:21***to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

In the words of a hymn (an oldie, but definitely a goodie!):

**“Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face,**

**and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.”**

*IN Christ,* ***to God alone be the glory***, colors every corner of your life.

Our motivation of “self glory” is replaced with a deep desire to glorify Him above all else.

In this, we begin to ask questions we’ve never asked before:

How can God use this relationship I’m entering to bring glory to Himself?

How can I use this new job to bring glory to God?

How can I use this suffering bring glory to God?

What is God trying to teach me through this circumstance, ultimately for His glory?

How can I use this new car for God’s glory?

How can I use my apartment for God’s glory?

How can I use this computer for God’s glory?

What can I do in my retirement for God’s glory that I couldn’t do otherwise?

How would God have me use this tough time for His glory?

How can I testify more often of the greatness of Christ Jesus?

**God’s glory must be why we do what we do. It is why we have what we have.**

It’s why we pursue marriage with this person, but not that person.

Why we speak like this, and not like that. It’s why we live like this, and not like that.

It’s why we work hard, as for God, not just for men. It’s why we give sacrificially.

It’s why we volunteer our time and talents. It’s why we HOLD FAST to God’s Word.

It’s why we hold things with open hands and don’t dig our roots in too deep, because we know He may call us to go.

**May He be glorified in us through lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

**15. Why did God make us?**

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**16. How should we glorify God?**

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Let’s pray