

God Deserves to be Glorified

The Bible consistently teaches that it's wrong for us to boast. That is a very wicked thing to do:

Psalm 10:3: "For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth."

Romans 1:29-30: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,"

2 Timothy 3:2: "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,"

James 4:16: "But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil."

Notice that the apostle Paul put boasting and murder on the same list! They're both evil in God's sight and are greatly offensive to Him. Boasting is a form of pride, and God *hates* pride. It's an abomination to Him:

Proverbs 16:5: "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished."

Proverbs 6:16-17: "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,"

Once again we see pride and murder on the same list. That's how much God hates it!

There are *many* more passages that could be cited, but these are enough to establish the point. God hates pride. We must not boast about ourselves or our accomplishments. Even boasting about the things we'd like to do in the future is wrong:

Proverbs 27:1: "Boast not thyself of to morrow;
for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

All of this is simple to understand. It's fundamentally wrong for us to seek to glorify ourselves, which is what we're doing when we boast. Pride is all about self-glorification, and that's a terrible thing for us to do.

Yet throughout the Bible we see that God seeks to glorify Himself. The Lord frequently talks about the great things that He's done:

Job 38:4: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding."

Isaiah 40:12-14: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?"

Amos 2:9-11: "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I

destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath. Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD. "

God does more than just talk about the past. He also tells us about the things that He is able to do:

Isaiah 43:11: "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour."

Isaiah 46:10: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: "

Jeremiah 23:23-24: "Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. "

But that's not all. God also talks about the things He will do in the future:

Isaiah 11:15: "And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod."

Isaiah 14:1: "For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of

Jacob. "

Isaiah 27:12-13: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem."

All of this raises an important question: why is it wrong for us to glorify ourselves when God frequently glorifies Himself? In fact, not only does God glorify Himself, but He commands us to glorify Him:

Jeremiah 13:15-16: "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken. Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness."

1 Corinthians 1:31: "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

2 Corinthians 10:17: "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

The Bible tells us that glorifying God is a great thing to do:

Psalms 34:2: "My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad."

Psalm 44:8: "In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah."

In fact, the reason God killed Herod was because he didn't glorify Him:

Acts 12:21-23: " And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

The Bible actually teaches that *everything we do* should be done for the glory of God:

1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. "

The reason it's wrong for us to boast about ourselves is because we have no right to do so. The reason it's good for God to glorify Himself is because He has every right to do so. That's the difference.

The reason we exist is because God created us. The reason we're still alive is because God preserves us. The only reason we've accomplished anything in this life is because God has given us the opportunity, the ability, and the strength to do so. That means we have no right to boast about *anything*. It's utterly wrong for us to be proud because we have nothing to take pride in. All of our accomplishments are actually God's accomplishments. Without Him we wouldn't even exist and we would have done nothing at all.

This means when we boast, we're stealing glory that belongs to God. That's why pride is evil. It's not wrong to glorify someone who deserves it, or to boast about someone who has truly

done great things. However, we don't deserve it and we haven't done any great things!

This is how the prophet Isaiah put it:

Isaiah 10:15: "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood."

Any time we boast our ourselves or seek to glorify ourselves, we're attacking the God who made our accomplishments possible. The prophet Isaiah compares us to an ax that God is wielding. An ax is incapable of doing anything unless someone picks it up and uses it to accomplish something. Without help, the ax is incapable of doing anything at all. We are exactly the same: if God doesn't choose to work through us then we will accomplish absolutely nothing.

The only person who is worthy of glory is God:

Revelation 4:11: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Why is He worthy? It's because He created *everything*. God is the one who created this universe and all of the life that it contains. We are His creatures and were created for His pleasure. Since God deserves glory, we ought to glorify Him. Since God is responsible for all the great things that are done in this world, He is the one we must glorify for doing them.

God is worthy of praise:

2 Samuel 22:4: "I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies."

He is also worthy of honor and glory:

Revelation 5:12: "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Any praise, honor, or glory that we receive rightly belongs to God. He alone deserves to be glorified.

It's true that one day God will glorify His saints:

Romans 8:18-19: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

However, there's an enormous difference between God choosing to glorify us, and us glorifying ourselves. When we glorify ourselves we're taking something that we don't deserve. When God glorifies us He's giving us a gift that we could never have earned.

For example, God has promised to reward those who faithfully serve Him. That is a magnificent and generous thing to do, because the truth is we don't deserve to be rewarded for anything we've done. Jesus Himself made that point:

Luke 17:9-10: "Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

When we obey God and serve Him faithfully in this life, we're only doing that which God requires us to do. We don't deserve any praise for that! God doesn't owe us anything for

obeying His commands. It's wrong for us to glorify ourselves for doing what God commanded.

Yet in spite of that, God *chooses* to reward those who faithfully serve Him. Now, God doesn't have to do that. If He had decided to give us nothing in exchange for our faithfulness then we would have no right to complain. His rewards are an astonishing act of generosity, and are *not* the payment of a debt (because God owes us nothing). On top of that, the only reason we can faithfully serve God is because of His grace – when means our accomplishments are all His doing! We truly have *nothing* to boast about, which is why the Bible tells us to boast in God and not in ourselves. God is the one who deserves to be glorified.