

#216 “The Big Picture”
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The temptation of man is to go through life and miss the big picture because of sin and selfishness. Man, apart from redemption in and through Christ, is doomed to seek after his own glory, to create a false purpose, and to delight in the wrong things. God’s Word gives us a bird’s eye view of the grand story behind all the little stories that are our lives. In coming to a right view of God, we will come to a right view of ourselves and a proper understanding of what life and existence is all about. Many have asked questions concerning the meaning of life and have sought a deeper purpose, but those questions will go unanswered and purpose will remain unidentified until we see the glory of God.

Even before the world began, God was there, fully sufficient and arrayed in glory and majesty (John 17:5). He didn’t need mankind to fill some void in His life. He was the beginning and the end, the first and the last, that which holds all things together. Life, properly understood, must be understood from God’s perspective, not that of lowly man. Life is not about us creating a purpose for ourselves or worshipping a god who found a purpose in loving us. God didn’t love us because we were valuable; rather, we are valuable because God loved us and created us in the first place. Our worth, dignity, value, purpose, meaning, and direction all stem from God and His glory. Isaiah 42:8 says, “I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.” Our jealous God is jealous for worship, for glory, for honor, and for reverence because He alone deserves it. Revelation 4:11 says, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” No idol, no human, and no random accident of natural laws (which, by the way, were also ordained by God) were responsible for creating the world, including us and everything we see. It was by His will, desire, and purposeful decision that we exist. We do not exist by accident, by chance, or for our own selfish agendas. We exist for God, and He deserves our praise and worship because He created us. Thus, unless we believe that God literally spoke us into being by His divine power, will, and decree, we will struggle to give Him the glory He deserves. When we are in heaven, we will have no such issues, praising God and declaring His worth and majesty for having created all things. That which should get the glory is that which deserves the glory. Can any other god or being lay honest claim to having created the world? Since the answer is “no,” God deserves all glory. “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all” (1 Chronicles 29:11).

Sadly, even though the creation testifies to the glory of God (Psalm 19:1), many refuse to praise Him. Revelation 16:9 says, “Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.” During the tribulation period, most will not repent and give God glory, refusing to humble themselves and submit themselves to His authority. Their own autonomy and love for sin will supersede their willingness to worship God,

choosing rather to blaspheme the only Person Who could save them. The lust of vanity or self-glory is deep within the human heart, and it must be broken in order for us to cooperate with the desires of God.

In the Old Testament, God manifested His presence in a temple crafted with human hands as per His specifications. When all was done as He instructed and when the people earnestly sought to praise Him, there were times when His glory filled the temple visibly like a cloud (2 Chronicles 5:13-14; 7:1-3). The imagery has great implications for believers who themselves are temples of the Holy Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6:19). The whole point of life is to glorify God as we acknowledge, praise, honor, love, and adore God for Who He is and for what He has done. Eternal life is knowing God and having the promise of eternal glory with Him (John 5:44). Our purpose, our individual stories, are all about being shaped by God to live for His glory and to love doing so. It is not about rituals or going through “churchy” activities for the sake of the activities themselves. It is not about doing “Christian” things for the sake of the things themselves. The greatest gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ through which we have eternal purpose, ultimate meaning, and permanent relationship as we are adopted into the family of God. It is all about God’s glory, and the more we draw near in worship and heartfelt obedience, the denser the “cloud” of glory will be in our hearts and lives.

Scripture’s main story is God’s glory. It begins with God in heaven in glory, and it ends with the redeemed in heaven with Him sharing in His glory. In the meantime, our call is to manifest His glory and call others to glorify God along with us. Let our prayer be this: “And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen” (Psalm 72:19).