

Introduction:

1. I have two goals in mind in the study before us. First, to change your thinking about God and self. Second, if your thinking doesn't need to be changed, then to solidify your thinking on God and self.
2. Many of us need to see God and ourselves in a different way. Ben says that when this change in thinking takes place, then everything changes. He calls it "the game-changer." You be the judge.

The Lesson:**I. What is the purpose of our existence?**

- A. One might answer from Ecclesiastes 12:13, and that would be correct. That has to do with our duty. But why does God want us to keep His commandments? There is something more.
- B. Our ultimate purpose and the reason we keep His word is to give glory to God. That is the direction this lesson is going; that is the direction our lives need to go.
- C. For the moment, I ask you to accept that the most critical thing to God is that He be glorified.
 1. Illustration: If you asked your children, "What is the most important thing to you as their parent?" what would they say? If they responded, "I don't know," how would you react? If they said, "I don't care," how would you react? If they said, "I know, but I don't care," that would be even worse. If they said, "I know and I care," then you have a good response. It ought to matter to a child what His father regards as the most important thing in his life.
 2. If it matters to a dad, do you not think it matters to God? And, it ought to matter a lot to us about the most important thing to God. What if God asked us, "What is the most important thing to Me?" How would we respond? Do we even know?
- D. The purpose of our existence, the most significant thing to God, is that we give Him glory! It now becomes my task to establish that proposition from Scripture.
- E. But first, we must define glory. Some terms that help us understand God's glory are: honor, splendor, dignity, majesty, power, admiration, beauty, goodness, worthiness, grandeur, exaltation, brilliance. The word is used of God being honored for all that He is.

II. Glorification of God is a major theme of the Bible.

- A. I begin with two texts: one from the New Testament, one from the Old Testament.
 1. Ephesians 3:20-21. The purpose—of our reliance on God, of His power working in us, of the church—is to give Him glory forever. (See also Ephesians 3:10-11.)
 2. Psalms 79:8-9. Israel appeals to God for deliverance from their enemies (Babylon). The appeal is not made for the sake of Israel, but for the sake of "the *glory of Your name...for Your name's sake*." The credibility of God and His promises to Abraham are at stake.
 3. The first text addresses the church; the second addresses Israel. It is my understanding that all that is done in respect to Israel and the church is so that God will be glorified.

- B. The history of God's dealings with Israel shows this to be a major Bible theme. The coming of Christ into the world—His birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and the establishment of the church—further emphasizes the theme of glorification of God. Here are 20 primary texts:
1. God's purpose concerning Israel's deliverance was expressed to Pharaoh, Exodus 9:16.
 2. At the Red Sea, the Egyptians saw God gain honor for Himself, Exodus 14:18.
 3. When God provided food for Israel, His glory was manifested, Exodus 16:7.
 4. God's punishment of Israel was to show His glory to all the earth, Numbers 14:20-22.
 5. David praised God's glory as He received offerings for the temple, 1 Chronicles 29:10-15.
 6. The Psalms are filled with expressions of praise of God's glory, Psalms 29:1-4.
 7. God chose Israel for His renown, praise and glory, but they rejected Him, Jeremiah 13:11.
 8. God's purpose in creating Israel was for His own glory, Isaiah 43:6-7.
 9. Israel was preserved, not for their own sake, but for God's, Isaiah 48:9-11.
 10. God's restoration of Israel was not for their sake, but for His, Ezekiel 36:22-23.
 11. The song of the angels at the birth of Jesus was one of glory to God, Luke 2:9, 14.
 12. The very coming of Jesus into the world was to show the glory of God, John 1:14.
 13. Jesus, throughout His ministry, sought the glory of God, John 7:18.
 14. The miracles of Jesus were done for the glory of God and for His own glory, John 11:4.
 15. Jesus taught His disciples to pray and honor God for His glory, Matthew 6:13.
 16. Jesus taught that His own judgment throne is a throne of His glory, Matthew 25:31.
 17. The death of Jesus, and His resurrection and ascension, was for glory, John 17:1-5.
 18. A primary purpose of our calling by the gospel is to glorify Jesus, 2 Thessalonians 2:14.
 19. The Lord's second coming will be a time of great glory for Jesus, 2 Thessalonians 1:10.
 20. The church exists not just for our benefit, but for the glory of God, Ephesians 3:20-21.
- C. We have seen 20 critical texts that speak of God's interactions with mankind—that express His purposes. Now, we add one more—the application passage! All (not some) of our actions are to be for His glory, 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Conclusion:

1. The whole plan of God isn't really about us—but about God and His glory. We fit in that plan in the sense that we are allowed the privilege of giving Him glory. God is the center—not you and not me!
2. And, yet what may be the most amazing thing about God's glory and the glory of Christ is the fact that we get to share in that glory, Romans 8:17-18.
3. As we extend the invitation, we point to Romans 6:4. It was by the glory of the Father and to the glory of the Father that Jesus was raised from the dead. What, then, should our raising up be—but to the glory of the Father?
4. What does this say of the person who refuses to be baptized? What do they withhold from God? A refusal to be baptized into Christ is another manifestation of a sinful heart that refuses to give glory to God, Romans 6:23; Luke 7:28-29.