

Study 2 - You Are Made For Glory

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...’ So, God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (**Genesis 1:26-27**)

Introduction

When God created human beings, He bestowed His glory on them as a gift. And glory is in the inheritance of every child of God – those whom Jesus Christ has redeemed from sin and death. We are specifically designed for God’s glory. As Jesus prayed:

“And the glory which You [God the Father] gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one.” (**John 17:22**)

God’s glory was the environment in which the first human beings lived before they rejected His loving command and were separated from His Presence. For us to be disconnected from God’s presence is spiritual and physical death. Yet, when we remain connected to His presence – when we, in essence, continually draw in His breath through which He gave life to Adam – we experience true life. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

Study Questions

Part I: Life Within God’s Glory

1. By whom were the heavens and earth made? (Genesis 1:1)

2. (a) Genesis 1:11-12 explains that God created vegetation on the earth. What did He cause to appear first as an environment in which that vegetation could live? (Genesis 1:9b-10a)

(b) In Genesis 1:20a, we read that God created sea creatures. What did He prepare first as an environment in which those creatures could live? (Verses 9a, 10b)

(c) Genesis 1:24-25 tells how God created animals. What did He produce first as an integral part of the environment that would nourish and sustain their lives (Verse 11)

Before God created anything, He prepared the environment that would perfectly sustain it.

3. (a) From what did God form the man’s (Adam’s) body? (Genesis 2:7a)

(b) What action did God take to cause the man to become a living being? (Verse 7b)

(c) How did God create woman (Eve)? (Verses 21-22a)

4. In whose image were human beings – both male and female – created? (Genesis 1:26-27)

5. What is God's essential being, as described by the apostle John? Complete the following:
John 4:24: "God is _____."

6. What is the essence of a human being – something that is both greater than and separate from his physical body and that returns to God after the body dies? (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

7. Whom does God the Father seek to worship Him? (John 4:23b)

8. In Psalm 8, David praised God, mentioning several ways in which He has designed man to reflect His image and likeness. Complete the following:

(a) Verse 5b: "You have _____
_____."

(b) Verse 6: You have _____
_____ over the works of your hands; You have _____
_____."

The glory of an individual resides in his intrinsic worth.

9. (a) God prepared the special environment in which man was to live on earth. How was this act of preparation described? Complete the following:

Genesis 2:8a: "The Lord God _____ eastward
in Eden ..."

(b) What elements were included in that environment? (Genesis 2:9-10a)

(c) How did Adam come to live in the garden? (Verse 8b)

10. (a) Whose presence was in the garden with Adam and Eve? (Genesis 3:8a)

(b) What was one way in which God's presence in the garden was perceived by Adam and Eve? Complete the following:

Verse 8a: "And [Adam and Eve] _____
_____ walking in the garden..."

REFLECTIONS OF EDEN AS THE ENVIRONMENT OF GOD'S GLORY

In Hebrew, the word "Eden" means "pleasure" or "delight", while the word "garden" signifies "enclosure" or a "fenced" place. It comes from a root word meaning "to hedge about"; it is something that "protects," "defends," "covers," or "surrounds." When we are in God's glory, we are surrounded

and protected by God’s presence. I believe that rather than being a particular geographical place, Eden was a carefully prepared, delightful “spot” of glory that God designed mankind to dwell in.

God put Adam right into the environment of His presence and glory. He never told Adam, “I want you to search for Eden.” He placed him there. He didn’t give him any choice because that was the only environment in which he could be sustained and thrive. And in that setting, God revealed Himself and His ways to humanity.

KEY DEFINITION: Eden was a spot on the earth for a moment in time where the presence of God was a gate to heaven.

Part II: Life Outside God’s Glory

11. What commandment did God give Adam (and, through him, to Eve) regarding his environment, including the consequences for violating it? Genesis 2:16-17)

12. (a) God’s enemy, the devil, who had taken the form of a serpent, tempted the first human beings to violate God’s command. (See Genesis 3:1-6) How did they respond? (Verse 6b)

(b) What were Eve’s motivations for her actions? (Verse 6a)

13. (a) What had the serpent told Eve *would* and *would not happen* if she ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? (Genesis 3:4-5)

(b) Were Adam and Eve already like God? If so, in what way? (Genesis 1:26a, 27a)

(c). Did Adam and Eve die after eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil, just as God had said they would? (Genesis 5:5; Romans 5:12)

14. (a) What was the immediate result for Adam and Eve after they ate the fruit of the tree? (Genesis 3:7a)

(b). How did they react to this discovery? (Verse 7b)

(c). How did Adam and Eve react to God’s presence after they had disobeyed His command? (Verse 8b)

The presence of God – His glory – is not a “place” but an environment.

15. In what state are human beings when they are separated from God? (Ephesians 2:1b)

16. God told Adam and Eve of the various consequences and curses that would fall on them due to their wilful act of disobedience. (See Genesis 3:16-19.) What other action did He take in regard to the environment in which Adam (and Eve) lived?

Complete the following:

(a). Genesis 3:23a: “The LORD God _____ [Adam and Eve] _____
_____”

(b). Genesis 3:24: “So He _____”

17. What did God place at the east of the garden to guard the way to the tree of life, so that Adam and Eve could not return and eat of it in their present state? (Genesis 3:24b)

18. What has been the behaviour and condition of all human beings since Adam and Eve’s disobedience and exile from the garden of Eden? (Romans 3:23)

19. Thousands of years after Eden, the nation of Israel experienced a tragic loss when the ark of the covenant – the place where God chose to manifest His presence to His people – was captured by the Philistines. What statement did the daughter-in-law of Eli the priest make that also describes humanity’s rejection of God in the garden and subsequent loss of His presence? (1 Samuel 4:21a)

Sin caused man to fall short of the glory of God and to be exiled from His presence.

20. God made a declaration to the serpent (the devil) that was the first of many promises He would make concerning the coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer of humanity. The Messiah would defeat the devil and restore human beings to their lost glory. What are the words of this first messianic promise? (Genesis 3:15)

REFLECTIONS ON LOST GLORY

God’s presence is pure, uncontaminated, holy. Human beings did not essentially fall from a place; they fell from God’s presence, from the environment of glory. So, humanity as a whole has been “short” of His glory from that day. Human beings’ existence under the curse of sin is one lost relationship with God and lost potential of life in His glory. Left to ourselves, we are unable to live in accordance with the high existence for which we were created.

When Adam and Eve sinned, their spirits – the essence of who they were as human beings made in the image of God – died. They also began to die physically. If something is removed from its natural environment, you don’t have to actively kill it; it will die on its own. For example, if you take a fish out of water, it will slowly die of suffocation. Likewise, if you pull up a plant from the earth and set it on top of

the ground, it will soon wither and die from lack of water and nutrients. In the case of Adam and Eve, they essentially removed themselves from God’s presence by choosing to go against His ways and seeking to live outside the parameters of His glory and protection. Yet God created mankind to live in His glory – that was His plan from the beginning. This is the reason human beings die when they are estranged from His presence. It is the environment we were designed for! We are meant to have God’s glory within us and to be surrounded by the glory of His presence.

That which is created cannot live independently of its God-given environment; it will die.

21. God desires human beings to be His own “garden,” the place where His glory dwells and through which He accomplishes His purposes in the world. In the Old Testament, how are the “house of Israel” and the “men of Judah” depicted? (Isaiah 5:7a)

22. (a) In the New Testament, what did Jesus call Himself, using similar imagery? (John 15:1a)

(b) What did He call the heavenly Father? (Verse 1b NIV)

23. (a) What are we in relation to Jesus, the “vine”? (John 15:5a)

(b) What will we produce if we abide in Jesus, and He in us, thereby enabling us to live in God’s presence and glory? (John 15:5b)

24. (a) What do the Scriptures say about those who are continually guided by God? Complete the following:

Isaiah 58:11b: “You shall be like a _____, and like a _____ whose _____.”

(b) What statement did Jesus make about Himself as the Provider of this perpetual, flourishing life? (John 7:38)

The glory of God was the original environment in which mankind lived, and it is the environment to which we must return if we are to have abundant spiritual life.

Conclusion

Human beings’ wonderful existence in God’s glory – the atmosphere for which they were created – did not last. Adam and Eve sinned by choosing to rebel against God’s instructions. As a result, they were disconnected from His life and were separated from the fullness of His glory. As we have seen, they fell “short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Adam and Eve lost the tangible presence of God when they disobeyed Him. It is sad when the presence of God departs, and it is pitiful today to observe believers, churches, and ministries that “survive” without it, having only an appearance of holiness and godliness. On the surface, everything may appear fine, but the truth is that the presence of God is not on the inside. When you see a church in which no one is getting saved; people are not changed or transformed; holiness is not encouraged; miracles, healing, and power of God are non-existent; and God’s presence is no longer evident, it means that place is without glory – and this is equivalent to death.

God is everywhere, all the time, but He doesn’t manifest Himself tangibly everywhere on earth today. He manifests Himself where He is welcomed, where people are in right relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, and where they seek His glory. Eden was an environment that was a “gate” to heaven because God manifested His glory there to human beings who were made in His image and were in unbroken fellowship with Him. God’s presence with humanity was truly heaven on earth. It is time for all of us to diligently seek the manifestation of His glory once more so that we may receive the very life of God and be transformed into His likeness. (See 2 Corinthians 3:17-18.)

Prayer of Activation

Father of glory, forgive us for the times we have acted like Adam and Eve – going our own ways, living for ourselves, and not trusting You and Your Word. Pour out Your Spirit into our hearts now as we seek You and Your glory in our lives. Transform us into Your likeness, so that Your thoughts are our thoughts and Your ways our ways. May we experience Your presence in a tangible way, for the earth is filled with Your glory. Then, activate us for Your service, through Your Spirit. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Action Steps

- ▽ Think about how you feel or react in God’s presence when you know you have disobeyed Him or have neglected to do what He has asked you to do. Do you try to “hide” from Him, as Adam and Eve did? How successful were they at hiding from God? Read 1 John 1:8-9 to remind yourself of how He wants you to respond if you sin. Then, confess your sins and receive His loving forgiveness.
- ▽ Commit the following passage to memory and say it every morning:

“I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples. (John 15:5-8)