

## COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**5 Solas***Soli deo Gloria: To God Be the Glory Alone*

## REVIEW

Salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone according to Scripture alone for the glory of God alone. These “5 Solas” have become the tagline of the Protestant Reformation that began 500 years ago. Saints from the past, most notably, Martin Luther, sought to reform the Catholic church by returning to the pure, unadulterated word of God that revealed an assured salvation by the merits of Jesus alone, not by the works of man. Throughout October, we’ll examine these “5 Solas” being reminded of the beauty of the one, true gospel.

## APPLY // 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

1. What are the main truths this passage reveals about Scripture?
2. Besides Scripture, what are some things that we/others take to be authoritative for our lives? Why is Scripture a better authority than these things?
3. Why is it important to recognize Scripture is necessary and sufficient for our salvation and sanctification?
4. How can we use Scripture in community for teaching, reproof, correction, and for training in righteousness that we might grow into Christlikeness as God’s people?
5. How have you been personally challenged or encouraged by God’s word recently?
6. Where are you tempted toward the behaviors listed in 2 Timothy 3:2-5? How does Scripture address those and show us a more joyful way to live?

## STUDY // VARIOUS SCRIPTURES

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

**NOTE:** We’ll be discussing the historic 5 Solas over the five weeks. While distinct, much of the truths overlap one another. Therefore, our discussions, especially the first three weeks, will highlight similar truths. That’s okay. We should never get over the gospel of being saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone according to Scripture alone for God’s glory alone.

1. Read Psalm 19:1-6 and Isaiah 43:1-7. Discuss how these passages teach that all of creation, including us, exists for glory of God.
2. Using your own words, describe or define the “glory of God.” (See notes below for additional thoughts).
3. How does creation speak of the glory of God? Give some examples.

4. What are some ways to see this glory in your daily lives? Why is seeing God's glory revealed this way important?
  5. Read Romans 3:19-26. Focusing on verse 23, what does sin have to do with God's glory? How would you use this verse to tie specific sins to the glory of God (e.g. How is pornography tied to the glory of God? How is anger tied to the glory of God? etc.). Why is it important to connect our sin to God's glory and not just focus on our "bad" behavior?
  6. Read John 17:1-4. What does this passage tell us about the purpose of Christ's death? How does the death of Christ glorify God?
  7. How do we often try to live for our glory? Discuss why living for our glory ultimately fails.
  8. Discuss more practically the ways that living for the glory of God completes us.
  9. How does the glory of God inform our suffering and sorrow? Share any passages that help you connect these two ideas.
- General Bible study questions:
    - What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
    - What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
    - How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
    - How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

### What Is the Glory of the Lord? 3 Clues

Well, it's a bit hard to define because it's used so many ways in Scripture – it's a noun, verb, adjective. It's something God has and we give. But I think a couple of clues gives us a working definition.

First clue: The root word for glory in the Old Testament is weight. And the root word for glory in the New Testament refers to splendor or beauty and brilliance. So the glory of the Lord has something to do with his weightiness, his infinite worth and splendor and beauty.

Another clue comes from Exodus 33. In verse 18 we read, "*Moses said [to God], 'Please show me your glory.'*" And in the very next verse God responds, "*I will make all my goodness pass before you.*" This tells us the goodness of God is one of the main aspects of His glory.

One more clue. Isaiah 6. Isaiah says the angels are crying out, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty; The whole earth is full of his....*" We might expect him to say "holiness." But that's not what he says. "*The whole earth is full of his glory.*" So another aspect of God's glory the display of his holiness; it's the beauty and manifold perfections of God going public.<sup>1</sup>

Putting all these 3 clues together, I think we can say this: The glory of God is the weight of God's intrinsic goodness and display of his beautiful holiness. The glory of God is the public display of God's infinite goodness, worth, and beauty.

And where do we see this glory most clearly?

### Where Is the Glory of the Lord?

Drop your eyes down to 4:6 – "*For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*"

So the glory of God is most clearly seen in the face of Jesus Christ. And where do we see the face, the person of Christ most clearly and distinctly? Is it not in the gospel? This is why in 4:4 Paul says,

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus 10:3 tells us to see, to apprehend and to reckon with his holiness and in some sense perceive it is to see glory and, thus, to glorify him.

*“The gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”* The gospel is a gospel of glory, the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ.

We behold the glory of the Lord when we stare into the excellencies of gospel. The gospel reveals God’s intrinsic goodness and displays his beautiful holiness. The cross of Christ is where God publicly displays his goodness and holiness that we might see and savor Him in all his beauty.

The apex of the glory of God is the slaughter of the Lamb of God. This is why, when we the apostle John’s account of staring into heaven we read this:

*“I saw a Lamb standing as though it had been slain...and [the living creatures and elders] sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”*

For all of eternity we will celebrate Jesus, the Lamb that was slaughtered for sin and who rose from the dead to reign forever. This is the pinnacle of God’s glory. Throughout all of eternity we will peer at the cross of Christ beholding the glory the Lord, savoring God’s intrinsic goodness and beautiful holiness shining from the face of the resurrected Savior.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

**QUESTION:** What do you enjoy most about the gospel?