



SHOW
ME
YOUR
GLORY

UNDERSTANDING *the*
MAJESTIC SPLendor
of GOD

STEVEN J. LAWSON

ENDORSEMENTS

“At the heart of all true spiritual vitality is a prioritization of knowing God. The Cappadocian Fathers, as they defended the deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit in all of their Triune glory, knew this as they emphasized the infinitude of God. Their younger contemporary Augustine was gripped by it as he sought to respond to the fundamental error that the human will is powerful enough to lay hold of God’s salvific mercy by itself. John Wycliffe was ever conscious of the perfect moral excellence of God as he critiqued the institutional church of his day. Martin Luther, Hugh Latimer, and John Calvin were similarly in awe of the greatness of their God and overwhelmed by His lovingkindness as they stood fast for the gospel in the sixteenth century. And in that iconic age of revivals, the long eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards and Andrew Fuller were motivated by the glory of God as the *telos* of all creation as they preached and wrote for their day. In like fashion, this small volume by Steve Lawson confronts our generation with this great truth of the glory of God in all of His divine attributes. Must reading for a man-centered day!”

—DR. MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN

Chair and professor of church history,
the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, Ky.

“The longer I live, the clearer it becomes to me that unless one begins with the true knowledge of God, nothing else in the world, in life, or in the Christian life makes any sense at all. Those who begin below, with circumstances, and attempt to reason up,

drawing conclusions about God (that He is kind or cruel, accessible or aloof, powerful or weak) inevitably err. Only as we begin with the truth of God (that He is sovereign, almighty, wise, good, and just) and reason down to our circumstances (be they good or bad), does life begin to make sense. Steve Lawson has provided us with a comprehensive survey of the attributes of the God of the Bible. His twenty chapters of roughly six pages each can easily be incorporated into one's morning devotions, providing his readers with a satisfying diet of biblical insight into the God of whom to know is life eternal (John 17:3)."

—DR. TERRY JOHNSON
Senior minister, Independent Presbyterian Church
Savannah, Ga.

"On the eve of His crucifixion Jesus prayed that God, the Holy Trinity, would be glorified through the cross. He then added, 'This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent' (John 17:3). Our experience and enjoyment of eternal life, as well as our progress in the life of faith are inseparably bound up with knowing God and bringing Him honor. Dr. Lawson, with a pastor-teacher's heart and skill, takes us by the hand in this volume and brings us face-to-face with God as He has revealed Himself in the Bible and supremely in His Son, Christ Jesus. In so doing, he will surely bring some to know and love God for the first time, others to know Him better, and all to be filled with worship, love, and praise for the One who alone can make us whole."

—REV. MARK G. JOHNSTON
Minister, Bethel Presbyterian Church
Cardiff, Wales

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LIGONIER MINISTRIES

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This book is dedicated to:

John and Dori Anderson

I give thanks to God for these dear and faithful friends,
who have been like family to our family.
Their love and friendship have meant the world to me,
which has greatly encouraged me through the
many years.

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Preface

HIGHER GROUND

I will never forget when I first became aware of the attributes of God.

As a young seminary student, I walked into the campus bookstore to browse through the books on the shelves. One particular book spine caught my attention, and like a proverbial moth to the flame, I was drawn to pick it up.

The book was *A Body of Divinity* by Thomas Watson. Curious about Watson, I read the book's dust jacket and found out that he was a Puritan who lived in seventeenth-century England. This intriguing book, I learned, contained his sermons on the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

I turned to the table of contents, and I was amazed to discover that the entire first page listed chapters about God. There was more of God in the table of contents alone than there was in many contemporary Christian books I had seen. In fact, the largest section of the two-page table of contents dealt exclusively with God Himself.

The table of contents listed individual chapters on the being and knowledge of God. It followed with chapters on the attributes

SHOW ME YOUR GLORY

of God: the eternality, unchangeableness, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, mercy, and truth of God. The book also touched on the unity, Trinity, and providence of God. The whole rest of the book flowed out of this profound teaching on God.

This was the first time in my life that I had seen a list of the attributes of God. I was immediately captivated by the theocentric emphasis of this book. Impulsively, I bought the book and took it home with me, little realizing the impact it would have on my life.

As I read *A Body of Divinity*, my view of God became bigger and bigger with every page. New categories of thinking about God were being planted in my mind. My heart was being deepened. My theology was being dramatically elevated. My worldview was being expanded. My Christian life was being steered in a radically different direction, toward higher ground.

What made the difference? I was seeing God for who He is. The attributes of God so clearly revealed His holy character that my life would never be the same again.

This book, *Show Me Your Glory*, is a humble attempt to set before you these same attributes of God that so revolutionized my life. My desire is that these same transcendent truths will significantly shape your life into who you must become. May you never see God the same way again, and may you therefore never see yourself, your salvation, or the world in which you live the same way again.

Blessings in Christ,
Steven J. Lawson
Dallas



Chapter One

MAJESTICALLY AWESOME

The Glory of God I

*I think the greatest weakness in our day is the virtual eclipse
of the character of God, even within our churches.*

—R.C. SPROUL

In the early years of Ligonier Ministries, when its outreach began to blossom and expand, a consultant was brought in to meet with its founder, Dr. R.C. Sproul. The goal was to develop a vision and strategy for this rapidly growing ministry. In the initial phase, the consultant asked Dr. Sproul two diagnostic questions. The first was this: “What is the greatest need of people in the world?” Without hesitation, Dr. Sproul answered, “People in the world need to know who God is.”

Probing deeper to better understand the focus of the ministry, the consultant then asked, “What is the greatest need of people in the church?” Dr. Sproul again answered without hesitation: “People in the church need to know who God is.”

Dr. Sproul was right. The greatest need of every individual is

SHOW ME *YOUR* GLORY

to know who God is. No matter who a person is—whether he is inside the church or outside of it, whether he is a true believer or a militant atheist—his most basic need is to know God if he is to know himself and understand the world around him. He must know who God is and what He is like. Every other knowledge that someone may acquire is a far distant second in importance. Everything in an individual's life is affected by his knowledge of God. A true knowledge of what He is like is *that* important.

NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT

The most important aspect of who we are is what comes into our minds when we think of God. The trajectory of our lives is directed by our understanding of God. Moreover, our eternal destiny hinges on our relationship to Him and who we believe He is. If we are to live as He intends us to live, we must know who He is and what He is like.

As our knowledge of God goes, so goes the direction of our lives. A high view of God will lead us to lofty worship of Him. A growing understanding of His character will lead to holy and righteous living in the pursuit of His will. Conversely, a low view of God will lead to diminished praise of Him. Inevitably, base views of Him will lead to low and empty living.

There is nothing more important in our lives than knowing God and living for the glory of His great and awesome name.

The apostle Paul wrote, “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31). Living for God's glory must permeate every part of our lives—as we wake up in the morning, as we go to work, as we attend school, as we worship in church, as we serve the Lord, and as we go to

MAJESTICALLY AWESOME

sleep at night. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, every moment is to be lived for the glory of God.

THE FIRREST FOUNDATION

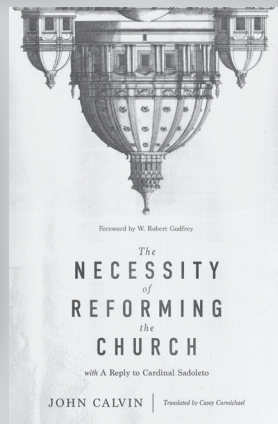
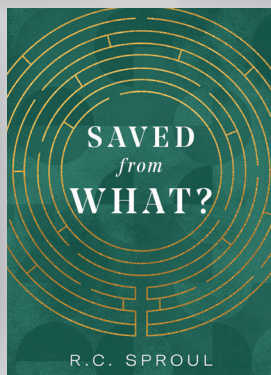
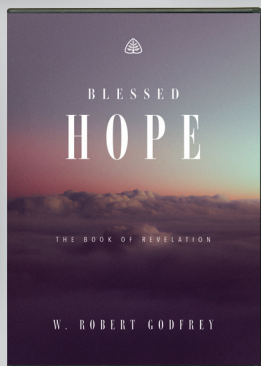
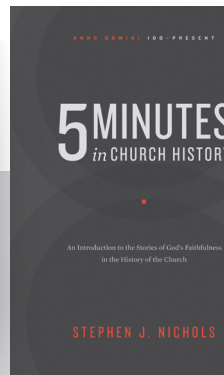
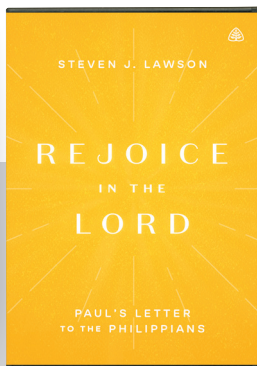
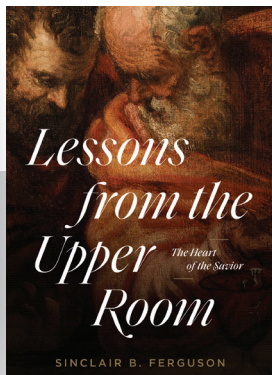
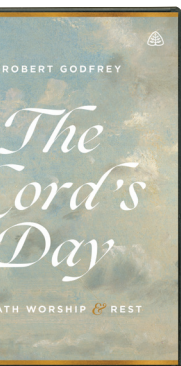
Knowing God and beholding His glory is foundational to everything in our lives. To build on any other footing is to build on shifting sand. Either we live for the glory of God, or we do not live at all—we only exist. If we are to truly live as He intends, our hearts must be, first and foremost, directed toward the pursuit of God's glory. God's glory must be primary and all else a far distant second. To fail to live for the glory of God is to endure an empty existence. God must be the epicenter of our lives. We exist for His glory—God created us for this high purpose. This must be our chief end. Otherwise, we have squandered our lives.

Living for the glory of God is the beginning and end of all things. This divine glory is the blazing sun around which our lives must revolve. When we come to the end of our lives, all that will matter is an affirmative answer to this crucial question: Did we live for the glory of God? If we fail to live for God, we have wasted our lives upon the earth. But if we seek God's glory, our lives will have been well spent and lived to the fullest. Only in the pursuit of the glory of God will our lives count for time and eternity.

ONE COMPELLING PASSION

To best grasp this ultimate priority, I want us to consider a man who lived more than three thousand years ago for the glory of God. He stands as a timeless example of a life lived for God, and he is just as relevant today as when he first pursued God. This man was Moses, who led the exodus of the nation of Israel out of Egyptian

We want to see men and women around the world connect the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



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