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# VIDEO LECTURE MODULE: BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

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## LECTURE 30: GLORY

Lecture Presenter: Robert D. McCurley M.Div.



**The John Knox Institute**  
of Higher Education

*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

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# *Module*

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## **BIBLICAL THEOLOGY**

**30 LECTURES**

***ROBERT D. McCURLEY M.Div.***

**21 CHAPTERS OLD TESTAMENT · 9 CHAPTERS NEW TESTAMENT**

### *Old Testament Lectures:*

1. Introduction
2. Creation
3. Fall
4. Noah
5. Abraham
6. Patriarchs I
7. Patriarchs II
8. Exodus
9. Sinai
10. Tabernacle
11. Sacrifices
12. Priesthood
13. Inheritance
14. David
15. Psalms
16. Solomon
17. Temple
18. Kingdom
19. Prophets
20. Exile
21. Restoration

### *New Testament Lectures:*

22. Incarnation
23. Atonement
24. Resurrection
25. Pentecost
26. Church
27. Union
28. Application
29. Mission
- 30. Glory**

# Lecture 30

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## GLORY

### *Lecture Theme:*

The culmination of history, like its inception, sets forth the glory of God in Christ, which is magnified through the consummation on the Last Day.

### *Text:*

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Rev. 21:22–23).

## TRANSCRIPT LECTURE 30

Perhaps you've seen pictures taken from a satellite looking over the face of the earth. In a glance, you can survey the big picture of continents, countries, and oceans. Well, throughout this course, we have looked at the theology of the Bible as a whole and studied the contours of the landscape of the history of redemption. In doing so, we have sought to connect some of the big pieces in God's overarching story. We have seen that we need the whole Bible because from beginning to end, it reveals the knowledge of God in Christ and unfolds the wonderful plan of redemption throughout biblical history. Christ is not confined to the New Testament. Far from it. His glory is displayed throughout the Scriptures, and He has provided one way of salvation through one Covenant of Grace for the one people of God throughout time.

There is a dominant continuity that connects all the parts of the whole Bible. What transpires on the last day? What is the nature of Christ's second coming? Why is the resurrection of the body essential to the salvation of God's people and damnation of the unbelieving? What is involved in the final judgment, and what are the consequences? How does all of this relate to the revelation of Christ's glory? What is the culmination of the believers' redemption? What in particular makes heaven so glorious? In this final lecture, we will consider the end and culmination of all of history. This means that we are looking forward into the future, rather than backward into the past, like we have throughout most of this course.

We will consider the last great events of redemptive history, but we are unable to consider the book of Revelation in particular. You should note that it is an important book for understanding the theology of the Bible. It pulls together essential connections between the Old and New Testaments and provides significant truths for understanding God's character and glory. It also picks up where the book of Daniel leaves off and connects the history from the period of the apostle John through the last day.

We will note a few things. First of all, the last day. The natural man cannot see the future, despite all of his scientific instruments and intellectual prowess. But, the believer can see what would be otherwise impossible through the revelation that God has given of the future in the Bible. God alone has foreordained the future. He alone knows it. In I Corinthians 2:9–10, we read, “But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” So, we must fast-forward to the end of time, the conclusion of this age. In this world, we experience day after day after day after long day, but the Bible teaches that there is a last day beyond which there are no more days known in the present world.

We will highlight a few of the events awaiting the end of time. First of all, Christ’s second coming. The New Testament teaches that the first coming of Christ will be followed by a second and final coming. Jesus foretold of this Himself in several places, for example John 14:3, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” At His ascension, the angels also reassured His disciples of this reality, Acts 1:11, “which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Well, there are numerous references to this throughout the epistles, but this will only take place after the gospel has been preached to all nations. And, all that the New Testament says must first be fulfilled in connection with that, which we will not take time to cover here.

But regarding Christ’s second coming, we learn a handful of things by way of summary. We learn that He will return personally, as we saw just a moment ago in Acts 1:11. We also see that He will return physically: Revelation 22:20, “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” We see that He will return visibly. We see this in many passages, but in Revelation 1:7 it says, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” It will be a glorious and triumphant coming: I Thessalonians 4:16, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” But, it will also be a final coming. When Christ returns, it will be at the end of the world. He does not come a third time with other events taking place in the intervening period, contrary to what premillennialists teach. No, we read in the Bible, for example 1 Corinthians 15:22–24, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” Christ will bring about two great events that coincide with His second coming: the resurrection of the dead and the last judgment.

So next, we consider the resurrection. The Old Testament teaches the future bodily resurrection, and Christ defends it against the errors of the Sadducees. Likewise, the New Testament epistles are full of references: most notably, I Corinthians 15. We learn that it will be a resurrection of the physical body. Romans 8:11 says, “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” This will involve both the resurrection of the just and the unjust, as we read in Acts 24:15, “and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.” The unbeliever will be raised to condemnation and the believer to glory.

The resurrection of the body is a necessary part of the salvation of the Christian. Christ came to redeem the whole person, so without the resurrection of the body, their salvation would be incomplete. Shorter Catechism question 38 says, “At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.” Just as Jesus Christ rose as the firstfruits, so those in union with Christ will also be raised up to glory.

But, in connection with this, the last day will also be the judgment day. Christ’s return and the resurrection will lead immediately to the final judgment of all men. This belongs to part of Christ’s exultation and glory. Paul says in Philippians 2:9–11, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Both the Old Testament, and numerous passages throughout the New Testament, foretell of this sober event. We learn that Christ as the mediator will be judge and will assemble all men before His seat of judgment. Paul writes, II Timothy 4:1, “I charge thee therefore before God, and in the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.” We learn that all mankind will appear before His judgment seat: II Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” The consequences of this judgment are equally clear in Scripture. The judgment will result in the great divide, the divide between heaven and hell. The unbelieving will be cast into the lake of fire, deprived of all comfort, and [suffer] the pains of body and soul under God’s just wrath for all eternity without end.

The final state of believers will be in the gracious presence of God in the new heavens and new earth under the enjoyment of eternal life. For the believer, the weekly Sabbath in this world will be fulfilled in an eternal Sabbath in heaven. We read this in Hebrews 4:9, where it says “there remaineth therefore a rest.” That word *rest* in the Greek is different than the other words *rest* in the surrounding verses. It literally means a *Sabbath-keeping*. “There remaineth, therefore, a rest,” or Sabbath-keeping, “to the people of God.” This will bring about the culmination of the Covenant of Grace.

Notice that the covenant promise that we’ve heard so much about throughout the Bible in Revelation 21:2–3, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.” Listen, “and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” That leads us, next, to the consideration of the eternal glory that belongs to the believer, and we’re going to spend some more time on this particular point.

We’ll turn our attention to the eternal glory that awaits the believer in eternity. What might that be? For many in our generation, they conceive of heaven as a celestial playground where they indulge in all of the enjoyments of this world to a maximal degree, but that would be far too paltry. Christ did not die to bring His people to heaven so that they would only cling to the things of this world. The salvation of men centers on God and His glory. The final destruction of Christ’s enemies and the receiving of His redeemed bride is the eternal delight and reward of Christ, of which, His bride is a humble partaker, His bride being the church.

The glory of heaven is the sight of God, what theologians call the beatific vision, or the blessed or happy sight of God. We sing of this in Psalm 17:15, “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” At the fall, man was thrust out of the garden, separated, alienated, cut off from God’s gracious presence, but through Christ, Who is the Door, believers are given entrance into glory. Christ’s prayer in John 17:24 will be fulfilled. Jesus prayed, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.” In this world, the Christian beholds the glory of God indirectly through a mirror. They behold the glory of God by faith, but in heaven they will see Him directly, face to face, no longer by faith but by sight.

Seventeenth century English theologian Thomas Manton said, “We go to heaven to study divinity,” or theology, “in the Lamb’s face.” Even Job, in the Old Testament, spoke of beholding Christ, Job 19:25–27, “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” It is God’s glory that will fill the expanse and atmosphere of heaven. Revelation 21:22–23 says, “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” This will result in the pure pleasure and maximal satisfaction of adoring God Himself. That means both in the destruction of His enemies, as well as the deliverance of His people. We read in Revelation 19 about this in verses 1 to 7, and I’ll cite a few of those verses.

It says, “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore.” It goes on a little bit later, “and a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent

reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him.” The fact is that nothing that is created can bring ultimate satisfaction or truly fill the soul, and children see this. They look forward with eager anticipation to perhaps receiving a toy, and they talk about it, and they dream about it. The day comes; they finally receive the toy, and they’re all excited. And for the first day, it’s great deal of fun. The next day it continues, perhaps. And then, the day after that and the day after that, the pleasure diminishes a little; until a few weeks later, the toy is found along with the rest of the others, and it is of no great pleasure more than the others. What’s true of children is true of every adult as well.

We see that there is nothing that is created that can bring ultimate satisfaction if that’s ultimately what we crave. But, we can sing in Psalm 16:11, “Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.” This led Jonathan Edwards, the American theologian to conclude, “The beatific vision of God, that is the tip of happiness.” If a glimpse of God by faith is so great, then what will be the sight of Him? What will the sight of Him be like? Think with me. God is infinite, but men are finite. We’re very limited. That means the believer can never exhaust what there is to see and know about God. Finite cannot contain what is infinite. That means every new sight will be new and truly fresh. It’s not as if they’ll be merely rehearsing things that we’ve already seen, heard, and known, but rather, there will be a gradual disclosure of the glory of God. And, the believer’s abilities will expand with the growing revelation of God throughout eternity, and this will go on and on. So, Paul tells the Philippians that to depart and be with Christ is far better. Well, no wonder!

In this life, joy enters the Christian, so the Christian has joy. But in heaven, they will enter joy. Contrast the difference between taking a glass of water, pouring water into your mouth, water’s going into your mouth; now, contrast that with going out into the wide-open ocean and jumping into the ocean. Now, you’ve gone into the water. That’s how the Lord describes it. He says in the last day that He will say to His people, “Enter thou into the joy of the Lord.” True happiness is the enjoyment of God Himself. All of this is revealed to the believer now, ahead of time. When you set out on a journey, your destination determines which way you will turn when leaving your home, going right or left; and it will determine which way you go at every single intersection you come to along the way. Do I go straight? Do I go right? Do I go left? Knowing the end of the journey affects our present actions.

This is true in God’s present plan of redemption. We read in I John 3:2–3, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” The believers’ destination defines their daily decisions. Moses saw this. In Hebrews 11:24–26 we read, “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”—Why?—“esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” The believers’ present pilgrimage focuses on “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

Paul says in Colossians 3:2, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Like Moses’s face that shone when he came out of the tabernacle, so when Stephen beheld the ascended Christ in Acts 7, the onlookers said that his face was like that of an angel. God, of course, is beauty. It’s not just that He has beauty. He is the definition and the source of beauty. And, the believer is transformed, beautified if you will, by beholding Him. We saw this earlier in II Corinthians 3:18. We behold Him through the revelation that He provides in the Scriptures.

This knowledge of heaven also transforms the believer’s perspective on suffering. Romans 8:18 says, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” In other words, the glory to come is so disproportionate that the sufferings in this world will fade into insignificance. All of the believers’ afflictions have an expiration date on them. They’re not permanent. One Puritan said, “He that rides to be crowned will not be bothered by a rainy day.” Think of Paul’s words in II Corinthians 4:17–18, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” The Christian life is a journey to see clearly. It starts with faith and ends with sight, but both set before the Christian the sight of God. The

believer has been predestined for this glory. We have seen that the whole of biblical history from Genesis to Revelation serves to reveal to us the glory of God in Christ through His overarching plan of redeeming His people.

In our very first introductory lecture, we considered the interview between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba in I Kings 10. We saw how the Scripture connects Solomon and his kingdom to Christ and His kingdom. You can now see, in this last lecture, more of the significance of that interchange. You'll remember that when she took in all that she saw of Solomon of his glory, his kingdom, his servants, his wealth, and the house of the Lord, the Bible says that it took her breath away. And she said, "When I was in Sheba, I had heard many things about all of this, but the half was not told to me." This is true of the believer. When he or she arrives in glory to behold the glory of the Son of God, the one greater than Solomon, the Bible compels us to say that "it will take your breath away." And, though you have diligently read your Bibles and listened to countless sermons and studied deeply these matters, you will be forced to conclude "the half was not told to me." It will far surpass our expectations and fully satisfy all of our longings.

In conclusion, we have now come to the end of our course of lectures on biblical theology, but this is only the beginning of your journey. We have explored the history of redemption and highlighted only a small selection of the dominant themes. As stated at the outset of this course, the aim was to provide you with the basic building blocks for personal, in-depth study. These lectures are a door, not the destination. You must take up these tools to press on in your study of God's Word. There is far more to see and learn, and the prospects are exhilarating. May the Lord richly bless the time and energy you devote to your ongoing studies of Scripture. You can be assured of my own ongoing prayers for those who hear these lectures. While I will not have the privilege of meeting most of you in this world, my prayer is that we will be brought together under the throne to bask in the glory of the full revelation of God, no longer by faith but by sight. As you have heard in this lecture, the best is yet to come.