

Own Up! #9

The Responsibility to Live for God's Glory

Word

Scripture Reference

1 Peter 4:1-11

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever done anything where you can honestly say you humbly gave back the glory to God? Share with the group.
2. The ultimate purpose of a Christian should be to live to give glory to God's name. Your action will never add to or diminish God's glory because His glory is consistent and intrinsic to who He is. But as a believer you do reflect and highlight the glory of God by the way you live. What does living for God's glory look like practically? Read 1 Peter 4:1-11. Peter tells us in this passage that to live for God's glory is to obediently follow His will (v. 1-3). Since Jesus died for you, you should live as a new creation. As a new creation, you have a choice whether to follow God's will or to continue living for the acceptance of a world who would never understand what living to do God's will means. What are the things that a new creation should no longer be doing (v. 3)? Discuss what human desires do Christians still struggle with and why. How can you overcome them?
3. Secondly, to live for God's glory is to live faithfully, even in small things (v. 4-6). Peter clearly stated that everyone will be judged. Those who did not believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior will be punished for rejecting salvation, while the Christians who believed will be judged based on how they lived their lives. You will give an account to God; that's why small things matter. If you allow small things to slip in your character, it will affect the big things in your disposition. Name examples of the "little things"—wrong actions that a believer does thinking it's not a big deal, e.g. not stopping at a red light or parking in handicapped parking slot. Why are those little things not glorifying to God? How can you live a glorifying life to God even when no one is looking? How is your life reflecting God's glory to those who are observing your life intently?

4. Thirdly, to live for God's glory is to serve others (v. 7-10). How do you serve others? Share and discuss the following with the group:
 - (a) Peter says in verse 7 that Christians should be clear-minded and self-controlled so that they can pray. Praying for others reflects God's glory. Is a majority of your prayers about yourself or about others? How do prayers often reflect the selfishness of one's heart?
 - (b) What did Peter urge his readers to do (v. 8)? How does love cover a mass of sin?
 - (c) How did Peter encourage the Christians to love each other (v. 9-10)? Discuss why sometimes it is difficult to love other believers. What do you think can make it easier?

Walk

*To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son
Who yielded his life atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.*

1 Peter 4:11 sums it up: everything should be done for the glory of God. Individual achievements only highlight the glory of God when it serves others. In the midst of your personal accomplishments, do you turn the spotlight to God or just focus it on yourself? Before you say "To God be the glory," run it through these filters:

1. Am I living in obedience to God in accordance to His will as He has stated in His Word?
2. Did I faithfully live out my life in recognition of God's authority?
3. Did I do what I did (or am I doing what I'm doing) as modeled by Jesus Christ, to serve others?

Worship & Prayer

Father, thank You for reminding me through Your Word that I have a responsibility to give glory to Your name. It's so easy, Lord, to take credit for what You have enabled me to do and for what You have blessed me to have. It's also so easy to simply say "to God be the glory" or "praise God" even if I don't really mean it, just to make it look to others that I'm a grateful and obedient Christian. Forgive me for letting pride and selfishness creep into my heart. Cleanse me from those sins, Father, and open my mind to understand and obediently follow Your will. Teach me to genuinely care for others by serving them with humility, just as Christ had done. And should I have the privilege of being in the spotlight, hide me in the shadow of Your grace, so that Your glory may shine through. I ask these in Christ's precious name. Amen.