

## Lesson 1: Glory Defined

**Objective:** The point of the lesson is that students would understand that God's glory speaks predominantly to the honor and awe due to God simply for who He is, and that they would be challenged to both look for God's glory and respond to it in their daily lives.

**Scripture Focus:** Exodus 24:15-18, Luke 2:8-10, Revelation 21:22-25, 1 Chronicles 16:23-29, Psalms 19:1-3, Romans 1:18-20

**Overview:** God's glory is one of those "churchy" concepts we sort of understand . . . or at least we think we do. But when we attempt to really define it, we have a hard time pinning it down. These three lessons will help your students know exactly what God's glory is, how it is expressed through Christ's work on the cross, and what it means to reflect God's glory in the world around them. But for lesson 1, your students will dig in deep to look at God's glory from a few different angles. They'll be challenged to begin to have a greater awareness of God's glory, and to consider what their personal response to God's glory should be.

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## Teacher Prep Video

The *elements Teacher Prep Videos* are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "God's Glory Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/gods-glory-teacher-prep>

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## Bible Background

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book, while *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passages are used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **ym360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What's The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

## The Details

### Exodus

- **Author:** While there's no specific author named within the text, the traditional authorship of Exodus is attributed to Moses.
- **Time frame:** It's hard to know when Exodus was written. There are two different arguments for the date of the exodus of the Jewish people from Israel, an earlier date (around mid-1400s BC) and a later date (around the mid-1200s BC). The writing would fall sometime around these general dates.

- **Purpose:** Exodus is the continuation of Genesis. As such, it's the continuation of the story of God's covenant with His people, His desire to uphold and act on His covenant, and the emergence of Israel's inability to uphold their end of the covenant.

### 1 Chronicles

- **Author:** We don't know for sure who the writer of 1 Chronicles is. Scholars point toward Ezra who lived in the latter half of fifth century BC. However, some assert that Nehemiah was an author.
- **Time frame:** 1 Chronicles has traditionally been hard to date. We know it was written after the exile from the Babylonians, around 1000 BC. It's likely written in mid 400 BC.
- **Purpose:** In some sense 1 Chronicles is a worship manual for the people of Israel returning after the exile. Specifically it focuses on the Southern Kingdom, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. It helped the exiles understand what real worship looked like, while also bringing unity and direction to the people.

### Psalms 19

- **Author:** The majority of the Psalms were written by King David, as is the case of Psalm 19.
- **Time frame:** Psalms were written over a span of centuries from Moses in Psalm 90, to the latest Psalm 137. Therefore, they were written between about 1440 BC to 586 BC. Given that Psalm 19 was written by David, we can conclude that it was written somewhere around 1000 B.C.
- **Purpose:** The main purpose of Psalm 19 is to point us to the Glory and majesty of God. Not only has God revealed Himself to us through creation, he has also given us His Word to us as. Only by studying God's Word can we be kept from sin.

### Luke

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels and has much in common with the Matthew and Mark.

### Romans

- **Author:** Paul is the author of Romans.
- **Time frame:** Romans was probably written From Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- **Purpose:** Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive teaching on the basic system on salvation and other truths of Christianity, a main purpose for Romans was to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, it was essential that a 'level playing field' be given to all Believers.

### Revelation

- **Author:** The writer of Revelation identifies himself as John four times. Scholars agree that it is most likely John the Apostle, son of Zebedee, one of Jesus' most beloved disciples.
- **Time frame:** Revelation was written toward the end of John's life somewhere between 90 and 95 AD.
- **Purpose:** The purpose of Revelation was to reveal the fullness of Christ's identity and to provide hope for suffering Believers at the time who were encountering grave persecution and suffering. Today it provides us hope of what is to come, as well as a stark warning of the battle that rages until Christ returns.

## The Main Point

God's Glory is all around us. He speaks to us constantly through His marvelous works of creation that His hands have formed. When we recognize God's incredible works all around us, we begin to have a greater appreciation, wonderment and awe of who God is. His glory is all around us, but we need to take the time to recognize it, celebrate it, and respond to a magnificent creator God. Seeing His glory and understanding how it reflects on who God is and His relationship with us, is key for every Christian.

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## Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

### The Lead In

- **Goal:** The idea is to get the students to consider that God's glory is all around us, if only we begin to look for it.
- **Set-Up:** If possible, find photos or a YouTube video that displays scenes awesome natural beauty. The goal is to help students pause and reflect on creation in our world and how God's awesome handiwork is displayed for all to see.
  - Either cut out photos for you group to look at, or display them on a screen. As an alternative, you can look to use a YouTube video like this:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbPSTGpxv5E>
  - If is video isn't available, search for "amazing nature photos" instead.
  - If you live in an area of natural beauty, consider taking your students "on location" and doing your study outside with them.

FIRST, if you have the ability to show the clip from YouTube, start the discussion by showing all or some of it. When you've finished, ask students what they thought as they watched the scenes. Ask if anyone has ever been somewhere that looked close to one of the images pictured in the clip. Allow students to share the circumstances surrounding where they visited, and any sort of emotions being in that place evoked in them.

THEN, open it up a little bigger. Ask for anyone to share the most beautiful, or picturesque place they've ever been. Again, encourage them to really share what it made them feel like, or how vivid the memory is, and so on. Once you've worked a few minutes of feedback out of the group, lead them in a short discussion. Ask:

- **Do you ever feel closer to God when you're in natural surroundings? If so, why?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **How does creation speak to you about the existence of God?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **If you weren't a Believer, do you think seeing the beauty of creation might stir any questions in you about a higher power?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **When you consider the amazing world we live in, how does this impact the way you see God?**
  - Answers will vary.

FINALLY, explain to your students that this lesson is the first lesson on God's glory. Explain that God's glory is kind of a hard concept to pin down. But inform them that the definition has a lot to do with how you were speaking about God and creation in the opening activity. Say:

- **Over the next few lessons we're going to not only define God's glory, but learn that being aware of it changes the way we see God and the world. What we're going to learn today is that once we begin to look for God's glory, we can't help but encounter it all over the place!**

## The Main Event

- **Goal:** For students to see their only response to God's glory is to be in awe of who He is, and to respond with honor and praise.
- **Set-up:** None

FIRST, kick things off by talking to the students about what they think the word "glory" actually means. Ask:

- **When we talk about God's glory or the glory of the Lord, what do you think "glory" means? (Allow students a few moments to brainstorm what they think this word actually means.)**
  - *Answer:* "Glory" was used by men to describe the immense weight, or worthiness of God's character, combined with the awesomeness, splendor and majesty of God. Explain that God's glory is kind of like taking in all of who God is at once and being blown away by it. Can you imagine

Explain to students that whenever they see the word "glory" written in God's Word, or sing it in a worship song, they should pause to consider what's really being said. In the same way, when we look around at our world and see God's creation and natural beauty, we should stop to respond. Say something like this:

- **The idea is that whether we see "glory" written in the Bible, or whether we see it "painted" in God's creation, we need to respond to God's immense worthiness, character, awesomeness, splendor, and majesty in the only way fitting. Let's look at some places in Scripture where we see this happen.**

THEN, explain to students that there is one way to understand God's glory that is really common in Scripture. Ask for three volunteers to read a passage of Scripture. As each volunteer reads his or her passage, instruct the group to listen for how God's glory is described similarly in each of the passages.

- Volunteer 1: Exodus 24:15-18
- Volunteer 2: Luke 2:8-10
- Volunteer 3: Revelation 21:22-25

When the volunteers have read their passages, ask the group:

- **How was God's glory discussed and described? What were the similarities in each passage?**
  - *Answer:* In each of the passages God's glory is really the physical manifestation of His presence. Go back over the passages and pull out where you see this occur.
    - Exodus 24:15-18: "To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain."
    - Luke 2:8-10: "And the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified."
    - Revelation 21:22-25: "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp."
- How is this different than the definition of God's glory we were just talking about earlier?
  - *Answer:* It's different in that it is a very physical occurrence of His glory. It is literally a physical sign of the presence of God.
- How is it similar?
  - *Answer:* It's awesome! It's terrifying at first in its brilliance. It's so incredibly God-like. IN other words, it has no equal on this earth.

NEXT, explain to students that God's visible glory is definitely one way of understanding His glory. But you're going to focus the rest of the lesson on the original idea you discussed, namely, God's glory as the reverence and awe due Him because of who He is.

Direct students to turn to 1 Chronicles 16:23-29. While they are finding the passage, give them some brief context for the book using the Bible Background. Then read or have a student read the passage. Then have your students work through the passage and create a list of God's characteristic or actions for which we are to give Him glory (for example, His "salvation" or "marvelous deeds," of verse 24). Consider writing your list on a dry-erase board if you have one. Then, ask them:

- **Why would it have been important for God's ancient people to "proclaim his salvation day after day"?**
  - *Answer:* As a nation they had been delivered countless times from their enemies, and had been given a way back to God despite their continuous rebellion against God. It was only God's incredible power and grace that had brought them into salvation.
- **Why is it important for us to continuously proclaim and return back to God's salvation day after day? What is at stake if we forget all He has done?**
  - *Answer:* It's easy to become numb to all that God has done. Just like the Israelites in the desert became numb and hard hearted to God's glory, we too need to keep reminded that it is God who has saved us and to not ever take His salvation lightly.
- **The passage says we are to "declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples." What does it mean to declare His glory for us today? What deeds has God performed in our lives that deserve us to give Him glory?**
  - *Answer:* Answers will vary. But the idea is to remember His great deeds in our lives and we bring praise to God as instructed in verse 25.
- **Looking again at verse 25, what does it mean to "fear" God? How can fearing God lead us to give glory to Him?**
  - *Answer:* The word "fear" used here communicates a healthy fear of God based on reverence, appreciation, and respect. When we see God in this way, we can only help but give Him glory.
- **Looking at verses 28-29, what do you think it means to "Ascribe" to the Lord? In the context of the passage, what clues do we have about the meaning of that word?**
  - *Answer:* The word basically means to give credit to a person. In other words, we are called to give God the credit He is due, and make sure we acknowledge His wonderful works.
- **God does not always get ascribed the glory. In your world, who or what often gets the credit in place of God?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **Once we have ascribed glory to God, how does this passage show us to respond to His glory?**
  - *Answer:* The passage talks of bringing an offering to God in worship. For us today, Jesus sacrifice is the offering that makes us right with God. Therefore, each day, our lives should worship God in the way we respond to God's glory.

FINALLY, instruct students to turn to Psalm 19: 1-3 and Romans 1:18-20 and follow along as you bring the lesson full circle. Explain that God's glory is on display all around us, all the time and these passages prove this point. Read the passages, then ask them how the Psalm 19 passage relates to how we introduced the lesson. Then, ask students to respond to the Romans passage. Ask:

- **What is so shocking about what Paul says here in Romans?**
  - *Answer:* People who choose not to give glory to God because they've chosen not to believe in Him have no excuse. God's presence, His glory, is evident to them in the beauty and majesty of this world.



Transition into the Last Word by saying something like:

- **God's glory—His power, His majesty, His greatness—is on display all around us, all the time. It's up to us to look for His glory, and ultimately respond to it. If we are not looking for God in His creation, we will not likely find Him. When we slow down to look for God, we should be in awe of just how powerful He is and how much credit He is due for all He has done and will do.**

## The Last Word

- **Goal:** The goal of this section is for the students to reflect on God's glory and how our lives are to be lived in response to His glory.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need a dry-erase board or some other way to record a list.

FIRST, explain to students that learning to open our eyes and hearts to see the glory of God around us should be second nature for us as Christ-followers. And yet it isn't. Why not? Ask:

- **Do you think it's possible to miss God's eternal power and divine nature when we look at the world around us? Why or why not?**
  - *Answers will vary.* But it's important to help students realize that we all take God's glory for granted; we can become numb to His amazing creation that reflects His glory.

Lead students to brainstorm a list of nearby locations, places, or things that are in our everyday lives, which display God's glory. Have students consider places or things that are local or nearby to their home.

General ideas are:

- The sunset
- The hills
- Rivers and lakes
- The stars in the sky

Move students beyond some of these expected ways and have them think about more unexpected signs of God's glory: reflected in our friendships or family; His power in things we might consider destructive like the wind or rain; in the intricacy of a fly's eye, or a snail's shell; in the sorrow we feel when we're disconnected from people we love. All of these speak to a Creator who is so rich in His love for us that He chose to create us and place us in a world where our senses are literally overwhelmed.

NEXT, lead students to consider how they respond to God's glory when they do become aware of it. Ask:

- **So, when we see God's glory around us, how should our lives respond when we understand just how great God is? What should our lives look like if we are truly responding to God's glory?**
  - *Answers will vary.* But lead your students to brainstorm a list of different ways they can respond to God's glory in reverence and worship.

Challenge students to really come up with a robust list of ways to respond to God's glory. Challenge them to consider ways that are creative, ways that are personal, ways that are communal, ways that are silent, ways that are loud, and so on!

FINALLY, when you've finished building your list, challenge students to choose two or three of the ways you've listed and commit to responding to God's glory this week utilizing these ways. Close by reminding students of the main way you defined God's glory, and challenging them to look for this in the world around them this week.

Close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the "God's Glory: Lesson 1" devotions to your students. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
  - Consider texting students a couple of times during the week to encourage them to follow through with reading the devotions.
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## We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).

