

Week 1

The Gospel: Toward a Biblical Definition

Introduction through Chapter 2

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 1) What is your definition of love?
- 2) What is your definition of the gospel?
- 3) Explain the following phrase: We should not let gifts undermine the Giver. What do you think some gifts might be? Who might the Giver be? How can gifts undermine the Giver?
- 4) When you think of the word “salvation” or the idea of “getting saved,” what are some of the first things that come to mind?
- 5) Explain what you think the relationship between the cross and the gospel is. Do you think the cross is central the gospel? Why or why not?
- 6) List as many blessing associated with the gospel as you can.

WHILE YOU READ...

INTRODUCTION:

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS MOST—THE GOSPEL’S GREATEST GIFT, GOD

(pp. 11-18)

- 7) According to Piper, what is a man-centered view of love? (12)
- 8) Explain the distortion of divine love that Piper talks about on p.12.
 - a. Is this really a distortion? Why or why not?
 - b. Is it really placing ourselves at the center of praise? Why or why not?
- 9) Explain what is meant when Piper says that we think we will be happy when we are made much of. (13)
- 10) How can a visit to the Grand Canyon testify to what will satisfy our souls? (13)
- 11) Why must the gift of the gospel be purchased by the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ in order for it to be truly good news to us? (14)
- 12) Why must the gift of the gospel be free and not earned in order for it to be truly good news to us? (13)

- 13) Why must the gift of the gospel ultimately be God himself in order for it to be truly good news to us? (13)
- 14) Explain the difference between the goal of the gospel on the one hand, and the means and application of the gospel on the other hand. (14) Which one of these, the goal or the means and application, is the primary focus of this book?
- 15) How does Christ's death make the worth of God's glory shine all the more brightly? (14)
- 16) How does being prepared for heaven make one more useful on earth? (16)

CHAPTER 1:
THE GOSPEL—PROCLAMATION AND EXPLANATION
(pp. 19-24)

- 17) In your own words, explain why the gospel is to be associated with *news*? (19ff.)
 - a. What is the news all about?
 - b. What does one *do* with news?
- 18) In the illustration of the POW camp on pp.20-21, what is the difference between the prisoners before they had the radio and after they obtained it?
- 19) In what ways are Christians like these prisoners? (21) Are there any ways that you can think of that Piper does not mention?
- 20) What is *doctrine* and why must it be part of the gospel? What does it mean that doctrine is to be *part* of the gospel? (21-22)

CHAPTER 2:
THE GOSPEL—THE BIBLICAL SCOPE OF ITS MEANING
(pp. 25-40)

- 21) What two extremes should we try to avoid when working out a biblical definition of the term *gospel*? Why must we avoid these extremes? (26)
- 22) Try to think of as many reasons as you can for why there can be no good news apart from the truth of a Creator God. (26)
- 23) Try to think of as many reasons as you can for why there can be no good news apart from the truth that the Creator God actively reigns over the world he created. (27)
- 24) What does the title, *Christ*, mean? (28)
- 25) Why would there be no gospel if Christ remained dead? (29; cf. also Rom. 4:25)

- 26) What does the word “other,” in Luke 3:18, tell us both about John the Baptist’s message and about the gospel? (30)
- 27) How do Christians experience fellowship with the living Jesus? (30)
- 28) How did Jesus’ ministry of healing and miracles demonstrate the gospel of the kingdom? (32)
- 29) Why must the cross be central to the gospel? (32)
- 30) How does the gospel bring, as it says in 2 Tim. 1:10, eternal life and light? (33)
- 31) Why is the gospel founded on grace? (34-35)
- 32) How does God *both* extend grace *and* maintain perfect justice in the gospel? (35)

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 33) What do you think Piper’s main concern is in writing this book?
- 34) What are the main questions he seeks to answer in this book? What do you think his answers to those questions will be? (22-23)
- 35) What is the main point of chapter 2 and how does it relate to the aim of the gospel? (25, cf. 37)
- 36) How are the aspects of the gospel, which are discussed in chapter 2, like the facets of a diamond and how does this relate to the main point of this book? (37)

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 37) What if you failed the acid test that Piper talks about on p.11? What should you assume or not assume about your heart? Your faith? What should be your response?
- 38) Consider the illustration of the POW camp. Why did the radio cause such a change in their lives? What about good news is so transformative?
- 39) Test yourself – what does your life say about the worth of God’s glory and the beauty of Jesus Christ? (15)
- 40) What first came to mind when you thought of “salvation” and “getting saved”?
 - a. Is this different or similar to the way Piper describes in on pp.31-32? How so?
 - b. Is Piper’s way of explaining these things broader or narrower than how you would typically conceive of them?

- 41) Why might the distinction between the *events* of the gospel and the *promises* of the gospel be an important one to make? Think of as many reasons as you can.
- 42) When talking about the gospel do we need to mention (or at least assume) all the things highlighted in this chapter?
 - a. Do we need to explain each heading listed in this chapter to feel like we have adequately shared the gospel? Why or why not?
 - b. Should we want to move in this direction and seek to communicate more and more a broader and more filled out understanding of the gospel when we share the gospel? Why or why not?

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts” (pp. 171-172)

Week 2

The Goal of the Gospel: Seeing God’s Glory in Jesus Christ

Chapter 3 and Chapter 4

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 43) Explain how someone could spend a lot of time sharing many of the aspects about the gospel discussed in chapter 2 but never actually communicate the heart and goal of the gospel?
 - a. Do you think this happens often? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you find yourself talking about the gospel in this way? If so, why?
 - c. If we find this happening, what should be our response? Consider your answers to question 42.
- 44) What do you think is the most fundamental need of humanity?
- 45) How do we know anything about God? What things reveal who God is, what God is like, what his purposes are in the world?
- 46) Why do you think that the narrative of Jesus’ trial, death, and resurrection take up an overwhelming majority of space in all four of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John)?

WHILE YOU READ...

CHAPTER 3: THE GOSPEL—“BEHOLD YOUR GOD!” (pp. 41-58)

- 47) What is the “wrong way” to use the gospel, according to Piper? (42)
- 48) What is the most fundamental need of man and how does the gospel address it? What are the two sides of justification which accomplish this need? (42-44)
- 49) What does Piper mean by saying that justification is “the *heart* of the gospel”? What does it mean to be “the *sustaining source* of all the other benefits of the gospel”? (44)
- 50) Knowing that justification is the “heart of the gospel,” is justification good news in and of itself? According to Piper, why not? What makes justification, and all the other aspects of the gospel discussed thus far, ultimately joyful and good news? (44-45)
- 51) In what two senses is reaching the ultimate good of gospel impossible for us? (48)
- 52) What does it mean to see God through a *mediator*? (48-49, cf. also footnote 10) What are some ways in which the vision of God is mediated to us?

- 53) What, or who, is now the fullest and most perfect mediation of the glory of God? Why is he the fullest and indeed the perfect revelation of God’s glory? (49-51)
- 54) Humiliation, suffering, and shame are usually not thought of as admirable or glorious things. Why should they be considered so in Jesus’ life? (53)
 - a. What does it mean that Christ has a *complex* beauty, excellency, glory?
 - b. What would be an example of “simple” beauty in contrast to a “complex” beauty?
- 55) Using the example of the raising of Lazarus explain how it is possible to see without really seeing. If raising Lazarus was how Christ demonstrated the glory of God, how could someone see the raising of Lazarus and be blind to the glory of God? (53-54)
- 56) What is “spiritual seeing”? (55)

CHAPTER 4:
THE GOSPEL—THE GLORY OF CHRIST, THE IMAGE OF GOD
(pp. 59-76)

- 57) How is God’s work in the hearts of believers similar to his work of creation? (61)
- 58) According to Piper, what does Satan hate most about the gospel? (62)
- 59) Explain the differences that Piper highlights on p.63 between “spiritual tasting” and “rational tasting,” and between seeing “mere news” and seeing the *light* of that news. (63-64; 68)
- 60) Why is it important that the glory of the gospel is the glory of a *person* and not a *thing*? (65)
- 61) What kind of person is Christ and why is he so glorious? (65; cf. also your answers to question 54)
- 62) What is the climax of Christ’s glory and how does this relate to the gospel? (66)
- 63) Why is it important not to separate the death and resurrection of Jesus, but always to see them together? How are they the climax of Christ’s glory and the “explicit and essential” and “indispensable deeds” of the gospel? (67)
- 64) What’s the first reason we know that Christ’s glory revealed in the gospel is God’s glory? (67)
- 65) What’s the second reason we know that Christ’s glory revealed in the gospel is also God’s glory? (69)
- 66) What does Piper say is significant about the reference to Christ’s face? (69)

- 67) What is the third and most important reason that Christ’s glory is also the glory of God? (71)
- 68) What is a biblical definition of “the glory of God”? (73-74)
- 69) If you do not “see” the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus does that tell you something about the nature of the gospel or the nature of our eyes? What does it tell you? (74)
- 70) In your own words, come up with a clear and concise definition of the gospel that takes into account the events of the gospel, the promises of the gospel, and the ultimate aim of the gospel.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 71) How does Piper express his burden for writing this book in chapter 3? (41-42)
- 72) How is chapter 3 distinct from chapter 2? Why is chapter 2 incomplete on its own as a definition of the gospel? How does chapter 3 complete chapter 2? (41-42)
- 73) How is chapter 4 really just a continuation of chapter 3? How does its purpose advance the purpose of chapter 3? (59; cf. 38-42, 56)
- 74) Read “THE GOSPEL IS NOT GOOD NEWS WITHOUT THE GLORY OF GOD” on p.73 and explain in your own words Piper’s main purpose in writing this book.

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 75) On p.42, Piper explains the “wrong way” to use the gospel. Think of a few reasons *why* the gospel might be used wrongly. What would be the “right way” to use the gospel?
- 76) Explain what it means to pursue the gifts of the gospel without actually pursuing the gospel. (44-45)
 - a. What might this kind of pursuing look like?
 - b. What might it look like to pursue the true point of the gospel? Consider the illustration on p.46.
 - c. How would pursuing the true point of the gospel also enable you to truly enjoy all the other aspects fully and appropriately?
- 77) “WOULD YOU BE HAPPY IN HEAVEN IF GOD WERE NOT THERE?” is an extremely important paragraph in explaining the difference between one who is converted and one who is not. What is the litmus test? Is the test in what we do or in who we are? (47)
- 78) What is a broad, biblical definition of the gospel that you have come to thus far? (47) What is the ultimate good that this gospel secures?

- 79) What must be true (or rather not true) of people who do not see glory and beauty in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection? How does this realization encourage prayer?
- 80) Is this spiritual seeing an all-or-nothing thing? That is, do we either see everything there is to see or nothing at all? If not, explain the nature of this spiritual seeing. (55)
- 81) If there are degrees of spiritual seeing, how can we know if we do have spiritual sight, even if to a small degree, or if we have no spiritual sight at all?
- 82) How does Satan prevent the glory in the gospel from being seen? Think of as many ways as you can and ways in which we can combat them. (62)
- 83) How, in what way, does one who has broken free of Satan’s blinding power “see” the gospel? Consider your answers to questions 55-66, 79. Taking into consideration what “spiritual seeing” is, what must happen to a person to break free from Satan’s blinding power?
- 84) If you don’t see the light of the glory of God in the gospel, can you *make* yourself see it? In light of your answer to this question, explain why God in 2 Cor. 4 is said to speak light into our hearts as he did into the world at creation. Consider your answer to question 79.
- 85) Why might seeing God’s glory in historical events and having God’s glory shine in our hearts seem to be in tension? (68)
- 86) Why is it important that the light Paul talks about in 2 Cor. 4 is “the objective light of the glory of the *events* of Good Friday and Easter,” and that it is “what Christ revealed *in history*,” and not some other kind of light? (68)
- 87) What other kinds of “light” might we mistake for this gospel light that is rooted in history?
- 88) What about the nature of the light that Paul talks about in 2 Cor. 4 distinguishes Christianity from all other religions?
- 89) Read John 14:6-9. How have the things in this chapter affected your understanding of this passage? What reasons can you give for Jesus saying these things? (71-73)

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“I Will Glory In My Redeemer” (pp. 178-179)

Week 3

The Power and Proof of the Gospel: The Gospel

Chapter 5

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 90) What assures you that you have truly seen the light of the gospel?
- 91) What sorts of things would be untrustworthy things to put our assurance in? What sorts of things would be good things to put our assurance in?
- 92) How do you think the Holy Spirit relates to the Word of God?

WHILE YOU READ...

CHAPTER 5:

THE GOSPEL—CONFIRMED BY ITS GLORY, THE INTERNAL TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
(pp. 77-86)

- 93) What does it mean that the gospel is “self-authenticating”? (77)
- 94) What is dangerous about relying on the church or human counsel or even our own conscience for the assurance that we have truly seen the light of the gospel? Why is the Holy Spirit a better source of assurance? (78)
- 95) How does the Holy Spirit grant us a conviction of the truth and beauty of the gospel? Does he simply tell us the gospel is true? What would be the effect of him whispering, “It is true,” to us? (79-80)
- 96) What about the nature of the gospel enables it to be self-authenticating? (81)
- 97) What does Edwards mean when he says faith must be grounded on a “*reasonable* persuasion” or it is not saving faith? (82)
- 98) When the Spirit enlightens the mind to see divine glory, what are “the things it exhibits” for us to see? (83)
- 99) Why does Edwards consider that the conviction of the gospel’s truthfulness that we arrive at when the Spirit enlightens our minds is “*spiritual* belief or conviction”?
- 100) Explain the distinctions and necessary connections between the glory of God seen in Jesus Christ and the gospel. (84) Compare with your answer to question 70.
- 101) Why is it important that the Spirit, in enabling us to see the truth and beauty of the gospel, not add anything above and beyond the revelation of the written word? (79-80)

- 102) On p. 84, footnote 14, Piper lists a number of other biblical texts that support the idea of the Spirit-enabled seeing of the glory of God as the ground of saving faith and assurance. Meditate upon these texts and explain the ways in which each may teach or imply this truth.
- 103) If the gospel were *not* self-authenticating, what would that imply about its authority? What would it imply about the authority of whatever authenticated its truthfulness?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 104) In a sentence or two, summarize the first paragraph of this chapter. What is the topic that this chapter will focus on? (77; cf. 81)
- 105) Why is it so important for Piper to show in this book that saving faith must be grounded on the evidence of the glory of God seen in the gospel of Jesus Christ? (82-83)

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 106) Why would an irrational or arbitrary faith, in contrast to faith grounded in the internal testimony of the Spirit, be a faulty kind of faith? Would you agree with the idea that saving faith is a “blind leap”? Why or why not?
- 107) How does the Holy Spirit’s work in granting us this conviction relate to the illustration of tasting honey on p.63 and the need for rebirth discussed on pp.54-55? How does it relate to the raising of Lazarus? How did Lazarus know he was alive after he was raised from the dead?
- 108) How does this way of authenticating the gospel not add any more revelation than what is revealed in Scripture?
- 109) Explain why saying that the Spirit enlightens our minds and saying that the Spirit grants us new eyes to see are two ways of saying the same thing.
- 110) How is it glorifying to Jesus Christ for the Spirit to enlighten our minds to see in the gospel what is truly there?
- 111) Why are the literal, historical events of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection crucial to seeing the glory of God?

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“Fairest Lord Jesus” (pp. 172-173)

Week 4

The Glory of the Glad God as the Ground of Christian Living

Chapter 6 through Chapter 8

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 112) Is the self-authenticating nature of the gospel an encouraging and comforting thing to you? Why or why not?
- 113) What relationships, if any, can you see between conversion on the one hand, and ongoing transformation of the Christian on the other hand? Are they two completely separate things, only related in that one follows the other, or are they much more closely tied together? Why do you think so?
- 114) Do you ever think of God as a *happy* God? Why do you think it is a very good thing that God is a happy God?
- 115) How do you think seeing the all-satisfying, infinitely beautiful glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ produces *both* an unmatched joy *and* a profound sadness in a person's soul? Do these seem to be in tension?
- 116) How do you think viewing the gospel in the way that Piper is advocating combats pride and presumption?

WHILE YOU READ...

CHAPTER 6:

THE GOSPEL—THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN EVANGELISM, MISSIONS, AND SANCTIFICATION

(pp. 87-98)

- 117) What does Edwards mean by “internal evidences”? (88) Think of the topic of the previous chapter.
- 118) To what does Piper say, in the last paragraph of p.89, the Spirit and the Word are essential? Why are they essential to this?
- 119) Why does Piper say, “Beholding is becoming”? (90)
- 120) How does the Spirit glorify Jesus in evangelism and sanctification? Why is it important that everything the Spirit does be for the purpose of glorifying Jesus? (91)
- 121) Why is the first work of the Spirit in the hearts of people not first to change bad habits but first to transform the condition of our hearts? (91-92)
- 122) According to Piper on p. 92, what do we “absorb” in beholding Christ with admiration?

- 123) What does Christian *glorification* consist of? When does this process begin? (93)
- 124) Can we see God *truly* if we cannot see him *fully*? Why or why not? (93-96)
- 125) Why does the transformation into Christ-likeness not also necessarily extend to our bodies in this age? What foretastes are there that such whole-body transformation is indeed to come? (95)
- 126) How does one *look* to things that are *unseen*? (95)
- 127) Why will we be fully transformed when Christ appears a second time? (96)
- 128) How is every aspect of the Christian life grounded in and connected to the gospel? (97)

CHAPTER 7:
THE GOSPEL—THE GLORY OF THE GLADNESS OF GOD
(pp. 99-104)

- 129) How is 1 Tim. 1:11 similar to 2 Cor. 4:4?
- 130) Why is it so great to know that God is a happy God? Why would there be no good news at all if this were not so? (100-101)
- 131) According to John 17, why did Jesus make the Father known? How did he make the Father known? (101-102)
- 132) What three obstacles stand in the way of our experiencing infinite joy forever? (102)
- 133) How does Jesus' work of enabling us to love him with the very love the Father has for him overcome each of these obstacles? (102)

CHAPTER 8:
THE GOSPEL—THE GLORY OF CHRIST AS THE GROUND OF CHRIST-EXALTING CONTRITION
(pp. 105-116)

- 134) Why is God-awakened contrition called an *echo* of Christ's glory? (105)
- 135) What is meant by the term "warranted self-loathing"? (105)
- 136) Why does the nature of true repentance necessarily imply the presence of true delight in God? (107)
- 137) What is true, godly sorrow over sin? (107) How is it rooted in the gospel? (108-109)

- 138) What does the reality of true, godly sorrow for sin imply about the aim of our preaching, teaching, and evangelism? (109) Consider your answers to questions 120-121.
- 139) What is “triumphalism” and how does this book combat it? How does seeing and savoring the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ cultivate meekness and humility in our lives? (111-112)
- 140) What reasons does Piper suggest for God’s allowing Satan to remain in the world? How is Christ’s beauty magnified by such endurance on God’s part? (113-114)
- 141) How does failing to call people to see and savor the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ “play into the hands of the devil”? (114)

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 142) The self-authenticating nature of the gospel was explained in chapter 5. God’s glory seen in the gospel is so absolutely true that we need only to see it for what it really is to be convinced of its supreme truthfulness and supreme value. Chapter 6 takes up a very important implication of this truth. What is it? (88-89)
- 143) Chapter 7 relates very closely to chapter 4. What is the relationship between these two chapters? How does chapter 7 serve as a fitting conclusion to the discussion of the aim of the gospel in chapters 4-6? (99-100; cf. 97, 73-74)
- 144) What does Piper say is the argument of this book on pp.99-100?
- 145) In what surprising way does chapter 8 advance the argument of this book? Why is this surprising? (105)
- 146) How is Piper, in chapter 8, putting the “previous conclusions to the test”? (106)

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 147) Does Christian glorification occur all at once or incrementally? Why? Why isn’t the transformation into Christ’s image that occurs when we see the glory of God immediate and complete?
- 148) Why should Christian’s rejoice in and marvel at the infinite happiness of God? Consider the relationship with gods in other religions. How does Christianity compare and contrast with them?
- 149) What does the happiness of God chiefly consist of?
- Does this make God out to be self-exalting?
 - Is this a virtuous thing or a base thing for God to be?

- 150) Why is the second quotation of Edwards on p.88 of immense practical and pastoral importance? Why should such a realization greatly encourage gospel-preaching and gospel-sharing in our counsel?
- 151) If the primary and initial work of the Spirit is to address the state of a person's heart rather than the bad habits they have, should we model our ministry and counseling after this? Why or why not?
- 152) Restate in your own words the first paragraph under "TOTAL SIGHT WILL MEAN TOTAL CHANGE" on p.96.
- Why is Piper making such a big deal about this here?
 - What would be the effect of saying that our final meeting with Christ and our final transformation do not depend on our beholding him *in the present*?
- 153) What sorts of things do the hope of many, including yourself, often "stop short" on instead of seeing and savoring the glory of God in Christ? (102)
- 154) What would an ungodly sorrow for sin consist of in contrast to the godly sorrow for sin that Piper is trying to teach?
- 155) On p.106 Piper talks about a "warranted self-loathing." Is there an *unwarranted* self-loathing? What might that consist of?
- 156) Another way to describe disinterested love is to say that we must seek God, the giver of all gifts, above the gifts themselves. God must be sought as the ultimate end of our lives, not as a means to some other more supreme end. What assures you that you love God supremely and not some gift of his supremely?
- Is this a reasonable and trustworthy ground of assurance? Consider your answers to questions 94 and 77.
 - If not, what would be a trustworthy ground of assurance (see p.81)?
- 157) How do the assurance we are talking about here and the self-authenticating nature of the gospel (see chapter 5) relate to each other?
- How would you counsel someone who really struggles with doubt over whether they love God supremely or his gifts supremely?
 - Why is it important to keep in mind the self-authenticating nature of the gospel? How should this truth affect the way you counsel (cf. questions 107, 111, 143)?
- 158) Does it seem fair or loving that God would allow so much suffering in the world for the ultimate purpose of showing his own beauty and glory?
- Why is it dangerous and foolish to assume such things about God?
 - Why must we battle in our own hearts with all our might not to accuse God of injustice or of being unloving? How should we fight this battle?
 - Does this mean we cannot struggle with doubt and grief and anger and bewilderment? What sort of attitude or disposition would be an appropriate one to have when expressing such emotions toward God?

159) How should we combat the devil in our gospel-preaching?

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (pp. 175-176)

Week 5

The Glorious God and His Gracious Gifts

Chapter 9 and Chapter 10

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 160) Summarize the ultimate aim of the gospel as it has been laid out thus far.
- 161) Are you generally a thankful person? How do you honor God in your gratitude for the gifts he gives? Could people infer from your gratitude that you treasure the Giver above the gift?
- 162) How do you express gratitude to God for suffering and trial? Do you express gratitude to God for such things?
- 163) What do you think is the ultimate reason for God blessing his people?

WHILE YOU READ...

CHAPTER 9:

THE GOSPEL—THE GIFT OF GOD HIMSELF OVER AND IN ALL HIS SAVING AND PAINFUL GIFTS

(pp. 117-132)

- 164) Explain what “belittling the gifts of God” and “making the gifts of God into god” entail. (117)
- 165) What is the difference between a natural desire and a supernatural desire? (121)
- 166) What is the difference between things that are good for us and things that we might want? What is our ultimate good; what do we ultimately need in life? (124-125)
- 167) How is death made to serve Christians? (125-126)
- 168) Why are things like suffering, pain, and death to be considered *gospel gifts*? Why does Piper think this is so strange? (127)

CHAPTER 10:

THE GOSPEL—THE GIFT OF GOD HIMSELF OVER AND IN ALL HIS PLEASANT GIFTS

(pp. 133-146)

- 169) In Piper’s note to his wife on p.134, how does he describe unbelief? What does “pleading [to God] for something with the tone that if I don’t get it I will be perpetually unhappy” imply about God?

- 170) Why does James call us adulteresses in James 4:2-5?
- 171) What goes into making “‘Hallowed be thy name’ the heart-cry of every petition”? How is seeking this end the same as seeking joy in God as a supreme end? (135-136)
- 172) How can someone be thankful for the gift and *not* love the giver? What does gratitude that is pleasing to God look like? (136-137)
- 173) What does it mean to have gratitude for the cross ultimately because it is an “echo of our worth”? Why is this a misappropriated gratitude for the cross? (137)
- 174) What was God’s purpose in creating the world? (138)
- 175) How can God loving us and God displaying his glory be the same act? (138-139)
- 176) How is the revelation of God’s glory in creation related to but distinct from the revelation of God’s glory in the gospel? (139)
- 177) Why did God create bread and water? (140)
- 178) How do feasting and fasting both magnify God as the highest good? (140-141)
- a. What are the dangers in feasting? In fasting?
 - b. Are these dangers intrinsic to food or rooted in who we are?
- 179) Why are signs and wonders no different than bread and water in our pursuit of God as our ultimate treasure? (142)

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 180) What is the main question Piper is trying to answer in chapter 9? (117)
- 181) What truth do chapter 9 and chapter 10 seek to demonstrate? (117)
- 182) In what ways can chapter 10 be viewed as the flip-side of chapter 9? (133)
- 183) Why are any answers to prayer that God grants blood-bought gifts? How does this single fact support the whole point of this book? (134-135)

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 184) Why does the love of God demonstrated in the gospel and worked out in our lives look foolish to many people? (128) Take into consideration question 158.
- 185) How are dependence on Christ and delight in Christ united together in saving faith? (129-130)

- a. What is the nature of saving faith?
 - b. How do these things relate to *seeing* and *tasting* the glory of God with spiritual sight and taste discussed on pp.63-64 and questions 83-84?
- 186) Why might someone think that God created the world simply as a temptation to idolatry? (138) Why would such an outlook on creation be demeaning to God's work in creation, and why must we fight against coming to this conclusion in our hearts?
- 187) Why would retreat from or total isolation from the world, if they were even possible, be no solution to the problem of sin in our lives? (140) How does the answer to this question relate to your answer to the previous question?
- 188) How does Piper define biblical love? (138-139) How does this biblical definition of love affect your view of suffering and death? Consider your answers to questions 158 and 167-168.
- 189) Make a list of things you are thankful for and things you enjoy. Try to articulate how your joy in each of these things could be seamless with your joy in God.

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“Knowing You” (p. 177)

Week 6

God’s Glory Covering the Earth as the Waters Cover the Seas

Chapter 11 (and Conclusion)

BEFORE YOU READ...

- 190) Taking into account the burden of this book, what do you think is an appropriate attitude for a Christian to have about themselves? What should our attitude be concerning our worth and our value?
- 191) What would an inappropriate attitude of self-worth look like?
- 192) What is the Christian’s worth ultimately grounded in? Themselves; something outside of them; some combination of the two?

WHILE YOU READ...

CHAPTER 11:

THE GOSPEL—WHAT MAKES IT ULTIMATELY GOOD: SEEING GLORY OR BEING GLORIOUS?

(pp. 147-164)

- 193) What do you think is the most typical “human definition” of love? What does Piper offer as the “human definition” of love? (149)
 - a. What does it mean that the good feeling that comes from being loved in this way is “on wholly natural grounds”?
 - b. Why is rejoicing in a God who loves like this a wholly *natural* enterprise?
- 194) State, in your own words, what conversion is and why it is utterly necessary if we are to truly honor God. (151)
- 195) Explain what using *means* to accomplish something is. How is Scripture God’s means of converting hearts? (152)
- 196) What are the two astonishing things Piper notes about John 11:1-6? (152-153) Do you see any other surprising things in these verses?
- 197) What explanation for Jesus’ delay do these verses give?
- 198) Based on John 11:1-6, how would Jesus define love in distinction from the typical “human definition” of love? (153)
- 199) How should we and should we not imitate Jesus in our love of others? (154)
- 200) How is Jesus’ prayer in John 17, that he would be glorified, a loving prayer? (154)

- 201) Why is the division between either God making much of us or God enabling us to enjoy making much of him a false dichotomy? (155)
- 202) How does God “make much” of us? What has he done to “make much” of us? (155-158)
- 203) What distinction is Piper making on pp.160-161 between “seeing God” and “being like God” on the one hand, and “displaying God” and “delighting in God” on the other?
- 204) Why is seeing not enough but must lead to savoring? (161)

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- 205) How is chapter 11 the climax of chapters 9-10, tying together the aims of both chapters? (155)
- 206) How does chapter 11 seek to resolve tensions created in the previous two chapters?

APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION

- 207) David asks for one thing in Ps. 27:4 – “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord.” According to what you have read thus far, where is this glory to be seen most clearly and most fully? (148) What kind of seeing is required to see God’s beauty there?
- 208) What is the difference between a *goal* and an *ultimate goal*? Between an *end* and an *ultimate end*? (159)
- 209) How can we rejoice in the blessing of being exalted and honored by God in such a way that magnifies him supremely and makes seeing and savoring him our ultimate end?
- 210) Why would it be unloving and evil for God to make much of us as his *ultimate goal*?
- 211) How is the last paragraph on p.162 a description of what Hab. 2:14 will be like?
 - a. Is this an intimidating description of our future hope or an exciting one? Why?
 - b. Why can we be confident that such experiences will be never-ending and ever-increasing?

CONCLUSION:
GOD IS THE GOSPEL—NOW LET US SACRIFICE AND SING
(pp. 165-179)

- 212) Reading through the conclusion, why has Piper titled this book *God Is the Gospel*?
- 213) Now that you have completed the book, summarize how every blessing from God is meant ultimately to help us see and savor more of him.
- a. Demonstrate how and why God is seen most clearly and fully and perfectly in cross of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Summarize the reasons why God’s glory which shines through in the gospel of Jesus Christ is self-authenticating.
 - c. Explain how pursuing the ultimate end of seeing the glory of God in the face of Christ opens up to us a broken-hearted gratitude for even our suffering.
 - d. Describe how you will seek to have God-honoring gratitude for all his blessings with the earnest effort to seek God as the supreme good in all of them.
- 214) How does awakening to the fullness of the gospel have necessary implications for our preaching and sharing the word of God?
- 215) How will it change how we examine our own hearts before the Lord?
- 216) How will it change what we pursue in the hearts of our neighbors?
- 217) Why is worship a fitting end to a book about seeing and delighting in the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ?

SONG OF RESPONSE:

“Be Thou My Vision” (p. 170)