PART II

THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

No one word or term describes adequately the Christian life and its ethic. Several terms that can properly be used provide the basis for the lesson titles in Part II. Each of these is related to some aspect of the Christian life: its motive, its authority, its values, its ideal, and its virtues. A descriptive word is used with each aspect or subject: its *highest* motive, its *ultimate* authority, its *supreme* value, its *comprehensive* ideal, and its *crowning* virtue. These defining words correctly suggest that there may be and are other motives, sources of authority, values, ideals, and virtues.

The subjects for the lessons set forth various aspects of the Christian ethic which has been defined as "an attempt to study and interpret the Christian life." In other words, the Christian ethic is a glory of God ethic, a will of God ethic, a perfectionist ethic, a kingdom of God ethic, and an ethic of love or *agape*. It can also be correctly described as an ethic of the Cross, a grace ethic, a commitment ethic, and an ethic of the Holy Spirit. Except for the increased length of the manuscript, each of these could justifiably have been the basis for a lesson. The Christian life, along with the ethic that describes it and gives guidance to it, is so broad, so deep, so complex that many terms are needed to provide a proper understanding and interpretation of it.

LESSON 6

Its Highest Motive: Glory of God

Every aspect of the Christian ethic and of the Christian life in general should be God-oriented rather than man-oriented. This God-orientation or God-centredness in the area of motives can be expressed in various ways. The most inclusive way is to say that the highest motive for the child of God is the desire to glorify God. Some may contend that the glory of God[1] should be considered the goal of life rather than the dominant motive in life. But as a goal it should so possess us that it becomes the controlling motive in our lives. This does not mean that the desire for the glory of God will actually be the dominant motive in every time of decision. Most of what Christians do is prompted by mixed motives. We do believe, however, that the glory of God should be the motive by which all other motives are evaluated. If there is a hierarchy of motives, the glory of God belongs at the apex.

Meaning of "Glory"

The references in the Bible to the glory of God are frequent and varied. It is said that the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34). There were times when "the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people" (Lev. 9:23; cf. Num. 16:19). Isaiah heard the seraphim singing:

> Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
> the whole earth is full of his glory. (Isa. 6:3)

The Psalmist said that "the heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1, KJV). People should declare the glory of God and ascribe to Him the "glory due his name" (1 Chron. 16:24, 29). When the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds to announce the birth of the Messiah "the glory of the Lord shone around them" (Luke 2:9). These are only a few of the many references to the glory of God in both Testaments.

It is doubtful if the glory of God can operate as an effective motive in our lives unless we have a reasonably clear idea of the meaning of "glory." When the children of Israel used the term "the glory of God" they referred primarily to the majesty of God. The Hebrew word *(kabod),* most frequently translated

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The highest motive for the child of God is the _____ to _____.

The motive to evaluate all other motives is _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

List and briefly summarize five Scripture references to the glory of God.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

When the children of Israel used the term "the glory of God," they referred primarily to the _____ of _____.

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[1] The following will be helpful if you wish to do general reading concerning the glory of God: Bernard Ramm, *Them He Glorified* (Eerdmans, 1963), the subtitle describes the nature of the book—*A Systematic Study of the Doctrine of Glorification;* Arthur Michael Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration* (Longmans, Green, 1949), approximately two-thirds of this book is a scholarly, compact study of "glory" in both Testaments. Excellent articles will be found in some of the Bible dictionaries and in Bible helps such as J.-J. Von Allmen (ed.), *A Companion to the Bible* (Oxford University Press, 1958).

"glory," carries the idea of weight or mass. But "for the Semite what has weight has importance and value."[2]

An examination of the Scriptures reveals, in the main, two concepts or perspectives concerning the glory of God, both of which are related to and could be derived from the idea of "weight" or "importance and value." The term "the glory of God" was frequently used to refer to some physical phenomenon in or through which the presence of God was manifested. The phenomenon provided the setting or the channel for the revelation of the glory; it was not the the glory itself. From this perspective the glory is frequently associated with natural phenomena such as "a devouring fire" (Ex. 24:17) and the lightning and thunder that accompany a storm. It was Ezekiel who said: "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory" (Ezek. 43:2). Evidently the reference was to lightning and thunder. Most frequently the glory is associated with the cloud (see Ex. 16:10; 24:16; 40:34–35), which may suggest that the glory of God was concealed from man and never fully comprehended by him.

The glory was not only revealed, to some degree, in the storm and through the cloud, it was also associated with light. There is radiance in His presence. This is the secret to the shining face of Moses (Ex. 34:29): "he had been talking with God" and something of the glory of God had become his. This was also the secret to the transfiguration of Jesus, which, according to Luke, took place as He prayed (Luke 9:29). Also, Moses and Elijah "appeared in glory" (v. 31) and the three disciples "saw his /Christ's/ glory" (v. 32). Saul was stricken blind on the Damascus road by the brilliance of the light which accompanied the appearance of the glorified living Christ (Acts 9:3–9). It is no wonder that the writer of the Revelation says that the new Jerusalem "has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light" (Rev. 21:23).

In addition to the manifestation of the glory of God through natural phenomena, His glory is also associated with and revealed by His "moral excellence" or character. For example, when Moses asked God to show him His glory, the Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you . . . I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Ex. 33:19). This aspect of the glory of God may not be self-evident as that which can be revealed by means of natural phenomena, but it is present and is particularly important for any study of the Christian life. It is possible that these two aspects of the glory of God are not as mutually exclusive as the preceding might imply. God's radiance and splendour are most fully revealed by His character, and in the final analysis, they are dependent on what He is.

A clue to the meaning of "glory" *(doxa)* from the New Testament perspective can be found by the words with which "glory" is linked or associated. It is associated most frequently with honour (see Rom. 2:10; Heb. 3:3; 1 Peter 1:7; 2 Peter 1:17;

(majesty, God)

The term "the glory of God" was frequently used to refer to some physical phenomenon in or through which the _____ *of* _____ *was* _____.

(presence, God, manifested)

The glory was also associated with _____.

(light)

God's glory is also associated with His _____.

(moral character)

In the New Testament perspective, glory is most frequently associated with _____ *and* _____.

[2]Von Allmen, *A Companion to the Bible*, p. 137.

and numerous references in Revelation) and power (see Rev. 4:11; 7:12; 15:8; 19:1). When associated with power, the glory evidently refers to something inherent in God. When associated with honour it refers primarily to the attitude that men should have towards Him. One reason for honouring or glorifying God is His power or glory.

(honour, power)

Rewards and the Glory of God

While the glory of God should be the highest or supreme motive for the child of God, there is a place for lower or secondary motives. Many of us are too immature for the glory of God to serve as the only motive and even in some cases the most effective motive in our lives. This justifies, if it does not actually necessitate, an appeal to more than one type of motive. There is a continuing place, but it is hoped a decreasing place, for an appeal to fear of punishment and expectation of reward.

In the Christian walk, there is a place for _____ or _____ motives.

(lower, secondary)

There is considerable evidence of such appeals in the Scriptures. For example, God said to Abram: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great" (Gen. 15:1). The Psalmist said that in the keeping of the precepts and ordinances of the Lord "there is a great reward" (Ps. 19:11). Such a prudential appeal is particularly prevalent in the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. The general or orthodox position among the Jews was that the good or righteous man prospered. In contrast, suffering or personal misfortune was an evidence of God's displeasure. This perspective provides the background for an understanding of the approach of Job's friends to his problems. Job's suffering, from their viewpoint, was an evidence of God's displeasure because of his sins. They contended that he should confess his sins and make things right with God. The close relation of righteousness and reward is spelled out with particular clarity in Proverbs, where it is said: "One who sows righteousness gets a sure reward" (Prov. 11:18). Also,

List four examples of secondary motives mentioned in the Old Testament. Give Scripture references with each one.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

> The reward for humility and fear of the Lord
> is riches and honor and life. (Prov. 22:4)

It should be noticed, however, that these and other references in the Old Testament are, in the main, simple statements of fact. God is not under obligation to give a reward. Whatever is given is of grace.

There are similar statements of fact, with at least an implied motivation, in the teachings of Jesus. The beatitudes are examples: the blessings are the natural results of the virtues. Jesus also said that one who gives his alms and fasts secretly will be rewarded (Matt. 6:4, 18). Again, He said that one who gives a cup of cold water to one of the little ones "shall not lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42). The main thing from the perspective of our study is that the cup of cold water which was a proverbial expression for minor or relatively insignificant service, was not motivated by the desire for reward. Here as elsewhere the reward was "not set forth as the motive for right conduct,"

List two New Testament passages that imply rewards for service. _____

_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

rather "a certain type of conduct will bring its own reward."[3]

There was at least one occasion when Peter, possibly representing the disciples, asked Jesus about a reward. Peter's statement and question were: "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" (Matt. 19:27; cf. Mk. 10:28; Lk. 18:28). In reply to the question, which is specifically stated only in Matthew, Jesus said that they would be abundantly rewarded "in this time" "with persecutions" and "in the age to come eternal life" (Mark and Luke). It has been suggested that this is the only occasion when Jesus promised a reward in this life.[4] And notice that even here the final point of reference is to the life to come.

Jesus frequently promised a reward or stated that a reward would follow a certain action or attitude. It seems, however, that the reward would come only to those who were prepared to follow Him and to do what was right on the basis of a motive other than reward. An example of this is what He said concerning losing and saving life. The promise is reserved for those who lose their lives for His sake (Matt. 16:25).

Jesus frequently stated that a reward would follow a certain _____ *or* _____.

(action, attitude)

There were times when Jesus called for service without reference to reward (Lk. 9:57–62; 14:25–33).Many of His parables limited, if they did not eliminate, the idea of reward (Matt. 20:1–16; Lk. 17:7–10). In the judgement scene (Matt. 25:31-36) those on the right hand were rewarded but they were unaware of their service. This meant that the expectation of a reward could not have been their motive. Really, in most cases where a reward is mentioned or implied by Jesus, it comes as a natural, inevitable consequence. In other words, it is simply how things actually work. For example, Jesus on more than one occasion said: "He who humbles himself will be exalted" (Matt. 23:12; Lk. 14:11; 18:14). Was Jesus using this as a basis for an appeal to humility, or was He simply stating a fact? It seems clear that it was the latter. Selfish, self-seeking "humility" would not be real humility. One thing that true humility requires is a forgetting of self. Again, Jesus said, "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mk. 9:35). But can one become first by deliberately becoming servant of all with the expectation that this will make him first? No, the service must be rendered without any motive beyond the service itself except as that motive moves us towards God and the glory of God. Generally speaking, when a Christian does a thing for the sake of a reward, he will not be rewarded. Self-seeking service is self-defeating. C. S. Lewis says that "the proper rewards are not simply tacked on the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation."[5]

There were times when Jesus called for _____ *without reference to* _____.

(service, reward)

True humility requires a _____ *of* _____.

(forgetting, self)

Self-seeking service is _____.

(self-defeating)

There is some evidence in the Pauline epistles of an emphasis on both punishment and reward (Rom. 2:1–11;14:10–12; 2 Cor. 5:10). His moral exhortations are accompanied with threats and

[3] Alan Richardson (ed.), *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (Macmillan, 1950), p. 202.

[4] Gerhard Kittel (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Eerdmans, 1967), IV, 715.

[5] C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (Macmillan, 1949), p. 2.

promises (Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 6:9). He himself runs the Christian race like a contestant in a race seeking to win the prize (1 Cor. 9:24–27). In a few places Paul refers to rewards that come in the present life (see 2 Cor. 9:6ff.; Eph. 6:2–3; Phil. 4:17–19), although in most places the reference is to rewards in the next life. In Paul, as was true of Jesus, in most places where the idea of reward is used, it is simply a statement of fact, a certain type of conduct will bring its own reward.

The New Testament perspective in general is that any reward that one may receive is of grace not of merit. Salvation is a gift of God and the blessings that come to the saved are also gifts from God. God is not a debtor to those who do good works. Rather, men, because of the grace of God, are debtors to Him. The good we do is not an achievement that merits a reward. Rather, it evolves from our inner relationship with the resurrected Christ. This relationship and what flows from it are results of the working of God's grace. Out of gratitude to God for what He has done and what He does for us, we should seek to glorify Him by the quality of life we live for Him.

There is a sense in which the glory that is God's is our chief source of inspiration, while at the same time the promotion of His glory among men is our highest motivation. This highest or purest of all motives will become increasingly dominant in our lives as we mature in our union with Christ. And interestingly, the more mature we become as children of God the less conscious we will be that we are seeking to live for the glory of God. What Carpenter says about Christian virtue could be said concerning life in general of the mature Christian. He says, "Christian virtue . . . has about it something of the effortless ease of a great work of art."[6] Such "effortless ease" is evident in the lives of God's saints. Not many of us, however, would claim that we have reached that stage yet. We see it as an ideal towards which to move. One factor that will move us in that direction is to set our faces towards the glory that is the Lord's. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). The reference is to an essential, a real, or an inner change in contrast to a change of external appearance. The change is continuous but never complete until the end of the journey when we shall awake in His likeness. As Ramsey says, "There is no despair, for glory is a present possession: there is no contentment, for a far greater glory is the final goal."[7] Also, the more thoroughly we are "changed . . . from one degree of glory to another," the more we will glorify God. In turn, the more the glory of God becomes the dominant motive in our lives the more the glory that is His will become an integral, meaningful part of our lives.

Christian Conduct and the Glory of God

"The role of glory in Christian conduct is of primary importance."[8] There is or should be a basic difference in the good

Paul most often emphasizes _____ *in the* _____.

(rewards, next life)

One receives rewards from God out of _____ *and not* _____.

(grace, merit)

The grace of God makes men _____ *to Him.*

(debtors)

The glory of God is both our:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

What will move us in the direction of "effortless ease" in Christian living?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

[6] Edward Carpenter, *Common Sense about Christian Ethics* (Macmillan, 1961), p. 61.

[7] Ramsey, p. 54.

[8] Von Allmen, p. 139.

"conduct" or good works of Christians and non-Christians. The fundamental motive of the former should be the glory of God; of the latter on its highest level it is the well-being of man.

Jesus admonished His disciples as follows: "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). A light does not shine to call attention to itself. It shines that others may be seen. The Christian does not carry a light; he *is* a light, the light of the world. Also, his is not a reflected light, such as the moon. His is an inner light, derived from his union with the One who is the Light of the World. The light we have comes from God, belongs to Him. It should be used to glorify Him. We shine only to the degree that we permit the Divine Inner Light to touch and transform our lives. The more fully we let that Light permeate our lives the more we will produce good works. Also, as we mature in our experience in and with the resurrected Christ, who is that Inner Light, the more completely whatever good works we produce will glorify God rather than be produced for our own personal glory. As this is true, others will increasingly understand the real source of the light that produces the good works in our lives. Furthermore, the more they recognize the True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the more they will glorify or praise God.

It may be wise to suggest that when men glorify God, they do not add to His glory. His glory is complete or perfect. Even the best and most mature men, however, can never completely comprehend the glory of God. As we put the glory of God first in our lives, we will understand more fully the nature of that glory. Also, by the light revealed by the good works of Christians, others will be enabled to recognize more clearly the nature of the glory and will be led to praise, honour, or glorify God. Ramsey, referring to Israel, says that Israel could give God glory and "set forth his glory among the nations only if Israel is herself a people in whose conduct He is glorified."[9] This statement can be adapted and applied to the new Israel. We can "set forth" God's glory among the peoples with whom we have contact only as we glorify Him in our conduct.

Another way of expressing the same idea is to say that we glorify God by living a fruitful life. In the great vine and branches statement Jesus said: "By this my Father is glorified, that you shall bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples" (John 15:8). Williams, typically bringing out the verb tense, translates the verse as follows: "By your continuously bearing abundant fruit and in this way proving yourself to be real disciples of mine, my Father is glorified." Notice the "*is* glorified." This is timeless: any time we bear fruit we glorify the Father. And the more abundant the fruit we bear, the more our lives will glorify God. Also, it can wisely be repeated over and over again that the yield depends on how thoroughly we abide in Him or how fully we let Him live in us. Furthermore, since our abiding in Him is not perfect or complete, the increase is seldom if ever "a hundredfold" or possibly even "sixtyfold." It is in

The Christian is a _____.

The Christian's light shines only to the extent he allows the Inner Light to _____ *and* _____ *his life.*

The mature Christian works for God's _____ *rather than* _____ *glory.*

(light, touch, transform, glory, personal)

Men cannot add to God's _____.

(glory)

We can "set forth" God's glory among the people with whom we have contact only as we _____ *Him in our* _____.

(glorify, conduct)

Are the following statements true or false?

1. We glorify the Father when we fail to bear fruit. _____
2. The Christian's yield of fruit has little reference to abiding in Christ. _____
3. A Christian is always becoming a Christian. _____
4. Bearing fruit is a proof of one's discipleship. _____

[9] Ramsey, p. 92.

this sense as well as from other perspectives that "a Christian never 'is' but always 'is becoming' a Christian." But whether the increase is thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or a hundredfold, the fruitfulness of the Christian indicates or proves his claim to be a disciple of Christ.

But what is meant by "fruit" and "fruitbearing"? It seems that "fruit" refers to the qualities of life that people associate with God. As we bear the fruit of dependability, holiness, justice, righteousness, impartiality, love, and other qualities that men attribute to God, such fruit glorifies Him. This makes fruit bearing closely related to the everyday decisions and issues of life.

Paul, in discussing the eating of meat offered to idols, said, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory [*"honour," NEB*] of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). The "whatever" and "do all" make this statement by Paul an inclusive guideline for life and for life's daily decisions. It represents for the Christian the highest possible motive. We may fall short of measuring up to it, but we should all agree that it should be the ultimate ideal of our lives. It should be the standard by which we would measure all other standards.

There are many other direct and indirect references in the Pauline epistles and elsewhere in the New Testament to the glory of God as the goal and motive of the Christian life. For example, since the body is "for the Lord," is a member of Christ, "is a temple of the Holy Spirit," it is to be used to glorify God (1 Cor. 6:13, 15, 19, 20). Paul also said that the offering for the saints at Jerusalem was for the glory of God (2 Cor. 9:13). He appealed to the Philippians to be "filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11). Notice two things: source—"through Christ," and purpose—"to the glory and praise of God." Paul made a statement to the Ephesians that can appropiately apply to us today although the immediate reference was evidently to Jews like himself: "We . . . have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12).

There is an exhortation in First Peter that summarizes the place of the glory of God as a motive in the Christian life. After suggesting that "as each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Pet. 4:10), he then says that "whoever speaks" and "whoever renders service" should do so "that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ." He then breaks out in a doxology: "To him belong glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:11). Notice the inclusive "in everything," which is comparable to Paul's "whatever you do" (1 Cor. 10:31). As *Interpreter's Bible* says, Peter "sums up all he has tried to say. The end, as well as the dynamic of it all is *that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*"

Peter even suggests that those to whom he wrote should rejoice in so far as they shared in the suffering of Christ, knowing that they will also rejoice "when his glory is revealed" (1 Pet. 4:13). Furthermore, if they suffer as Christians, let them not be ashamed but let them glorify God (1 Pet. 4:16).

(1.false; 2.false; 3.true; 4.true)

"Fruit" refers to the qualities of life that people associate with _____.

(God)

First Corinthians 10:31 is an inclusive _____ *for life's* _____.

(guideline, decisions)

There are many references in Paul's writings and elsewhere in the New Testament to the glory of God as the _____ *and* _____ *of the Christian* _____.

(goal, motive, life)

What is the meaning of the following Scriptures?

1 Peter 4:10-11 _____

_____

_____

1 Peter 4:13 _____

_____

_____

1 Peter 4:16 _____

_____

_____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The Cross and the Glory of God

Although the Cross will be discussed more fully in a later lesson, at least a brief statement should be made concerning the relation to the Cross, which is suffering voluntarily accepted and redemptive in purpose, to the glory of God. Jesus closely related His suffering on the cross to His own glory and to the glory of God. This was particularly true in the closing conversations He had with His disciples as recorded in the last chapters of John's Gospel. To the Greeks, to Andrew and Philip who had brought the Greeks to Him and possibly to the other disciples, Jesus said: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (John 12:23). What is meant by "the hour" and how was He to be glorified?

He evidently had been conscious for some time of a particularly significant hour or time that awaited Him. It is evident in the preceding reference in John 12 and elsewhere that "the hour" referred to His crucifixion, along with His resurrection and subsequent ascension. Immediately after the statement to the Greeks and others, Jesus asked and answered a very significant question. The question, "And what shall I say, 'Father, save me from this hour'?" The answer,"No, for this purpose I have come to this hour" (John 12:27). His marvellous prayer, recorded in John 17, opens with a triumphant note: "He lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee' " (John 17:1). In the Garden of Gethsemane He quietly said just before His betrayal, "The hour is at hand" (Matt.26:45).

The Cross and the glory were not only closely related in the life of Jesus; they are also closely related in the lives of His followers. The resurrected Christ revealed to Peter that when he was old he would stretch out his hands and another would bind him fast (NEB) and carry him where he did not wish to go. Then in parentheses it is said, "This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God" (John 21:18–19). It was at the tomb of Lazarus that Jesus said to Martha: "Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God" (John 11:40). He had previously told His disciples that the illness of Lazarus was "for the glory of God" (John 11:4).

Some may contend that the real glory is in the coming forth from the grave and not in the death. The power of God was demonstrated and His glory was revealed when Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave. But Lazarus could not have come forth if he had not previously died. In other words, there is no resurrection without crucifixion, but there is no real crucifixion without resurrection. It should be remembered, however, that the Christian crucifixion is basically the crucifixion of self with selfish ambitions, motives, and purposes. This means that there there cannot be any element of self-centredness in a real crucifixion. We cannot premeditatively say that we will crucify self that we may be resurrected to a more glorious life. We cannot give life for the purpose of discovering life. There must be a real giving if there is to be a real discovery. This is another place where it is necessary for us to speak in relative terms. To the degree that we crucify self, to that degree and that degree only will we really find life. Only to that degree will we glorify God.

What is the author's definition of the Cross?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

"The hour" referred to Christ's _____ *along with His* _____ *and subsequent* _____.

(crucifixion, resurrection, ascension)

The Cross and the glory were also closely related in the lives of _____.

(His followers)

The Christian crucifixion is basically the crucifixion of self with its selfish _____, _____, *and* _____.

(ambitions, motives, purposes)

And the purpose of real crucifixion or of a real taking up of a cross is the glory of God.

The Future Glory

The glory of God that we can share through our fellowship with Him is never complete in this life. We "are being changed ("transfigured," NEB) into His likeness from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). The change takes place as we behold "the glory of the Lord." The word translated "changed" here and "transformed" in Romans 12:1 is the same word in the Greek that is used for the transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:2; Mk. 9:2). It is the word from which we get our English word metamorphose and related words. We are changed from one degree of glory to another or "in ever-increasing splendour into His own image" (Ph.) by looking to Him, or better, by abiding in Him and letting Him abide in us. Our abiding, however, is never perfect, and hence we never attain the full likeness or the complete glory. It is Christ within us that is our hope of glory in the future (Col. 1:27) but also our hope of glory now and our only hope of moving from one degree of glory to another.

Likewise, the child of God can never in this life comprehend fully the glory that is the Lord's. There will come a time when we will behold His glory in its fullness. We believe we were included in that marvellous prayer Jesus prayed for His disciples. One of the most meaningful petitions in that prayer was as follows: "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am." Then notice the reason or motive: "to behold my glory which thou has given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). The expectation of beholding His glory and sharing, to some degree, in that glory should make a tremendous appeal to anyone who has become a child of God through faith in Christ.

Paul and Peter both made appeals to the future as they sought to lead people to live for Christ. For example, Peter said, "Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles ("pagans," NEB), so that in case they speak against you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" ("in the judgement day," Wm.) (1 Pet. 2:12): "One saintly life is worth a dozen stout volumes on Christian apologetics" (*Interpreter's Bible*). Paul says that "the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us ("which is in store for us," NEB) (Rom. 8:18). Paul goes further and says that "this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Cor. 4:17). Phillips translates the verse as follows: "These little troubles (which are really so transitory) are winning for us a permanent and glorious reward out of all proportion to our pain." It is possible that Paul meant this as a simple statement of fact rather than as an appeal. Even if this were the case, it should operate in our lives as a tremendously strong motive. If we are faithful as children of God, there awaits us "an eternal weight of glory" or a "glorious reward."

In conclusion, let us suggest again that reward has a place in Christian motivation. We do believe, however, that the highest motive is and the dominant motive should be the glory of God.

The glory of God is real purpose for taking up a _____.

(cross)

Are the following statements true or false?

1. *Through fellowship with Christ Christians grow in His likeness.* _____
2. *Through fellowship with Christ Christians are changed from one degree of glory to another.* _____
3. *A Christian can abide perfectly in Christ.* _____

(1.true; 2.true; 3.false)

There will come a time when we will behold His glory in _____.

(its fulness)

Paul and Peter made appeals to the _____ *as they sought to lead people to* _____ *for* _____.

(future, live, Christ)

In the final analysis "the glorious reward" awaiting the child of God is inevitably related to the glory of God. Only those who have unselfishly sought to glorify God in this life will receive or know the eternal weight of glory in the next life. Deeds that are done with personal reward as the primary motive find their reward in this life and not the next. After all, the most glorious thing for the child of God will be to be in the presence of God, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and beholding the glory of the One who has redeemed him.

The "glorious reward" awaiting the child of God is inevitably related to the _____.

(glory of God)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. What is the motive by which all other motives should be evaluated? _____
2. Although most Christian acts are prompted by mixed motives, what belongs at the apex of motives? _____
3. What was the primary meaning of "the glory of God" to the children of Israel? _____
4. Name two prominent concepts of the glory of God derived from the Hebrew idea of "weight" or "importance of value." _____
5. How are God's radiance and splendour most fully revealed? _____
6. What is meant by secondary motives for the service of God? _____
7. Give two examples of secondary motives from the Old Testament and two from the New Testament. _____
8. While Jesus frequently promised a reward, who could claim the reward? _____
9. List four Scripture references of times when Jesus called for service without reference to rewards. _____
10. In Paul's writings on rewards, when will most of the rewards come to the believer? _____
11. Since the grace of God to us makes us debtors to Him, how can we show gratitude to God? _____

12. What kind of light does a Christian possess?

13. Why is it true that when men glorify God, they do not add to His glory?

14. How can we glorify God among the people with whom we have contact?

15. Since the fruit-bearing Christian glorifies the Father, what determines the yield?

16. What is the author's definition of the Cross?

17. What is the purpose of real crucifixion?

18. Why can we never attain the full likeness or complete glory of Christ?

19. There will come a time when we will behold His glory in all its fulness. What does the author suggest about this expectation?

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3). The following activities are based on the study guide text.

1. Explain the meaning of glory from the perspective of the New Testament.
2. What does the author mean by secondary motives? How does the author evaluate fear of punishment and expectation of reward as motivators in the Christian's life?
3. What does the author mean by this statement: "The New Testament perspective in general is that any reward that one may receive is of grace and not of merit"?
4. Explain this statement: "Christian virtue . . . has about it something of the effortless ease of a great work of art."
5. What is wrong with a Christian carrying a light?
6. Explain Ephesians 1:12.
7. What does the author mean by Christian crucifixion?
8. Write a paragraph explaining "the future glory."

Advanced activity (Level 3). **The following activities are based on the study guide text.**

1. Write a sermon on the topic: "Man's Highest Motive - The Glory of God." Use Scripture references to support your position. (Students who are not pastors or studying to be pastors may prepare a Bible lesson instead.)
2. Justify this statement: A Christian is always becoming a Christian.
3. Conduct a survey in your church to determine the basis of service among the members. Analyse the results and write a one-page report of your conclusions. Be sure you include recommendations in your report.

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the author's emphasis upon the glory of God as the highest motive for the Christian's life. Support this decision with evidence from the Old and New Testament.
2. Discuss the author's interpretation of rewards. Do you agree with him? Why? Why not?
3. Discuss the relationship between the Christian as light and Jesus as the Light of the world.
4. Discuss what is meant by "no crucifixion without resurrection."
5. Level 3 students should share their sermons and Bible lessons with the seminar group. The leader should lead a discussion of the content of the sermons and lessons.
6. Level 3 students also may share their reports on the surveys they conducted in their churches.