

The Supremacy of God in the Care of Souls



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God & Soul Care

THE THERAPEUTIC RESOURCES

— of —

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

What is human flourishing?

The capacity, tendency, and often experience humans have of developing their myriad powers of personhood-in-communion to maturity and expression in life.

-adapted from Christian Smith, *To Flourish or Destruct*

What is glory?

The outshining of God's internal, Trinitarian greatness, beauty, love, and excellence
-adapted from Jonathan Edwards, *The End for Which God Created the World*

What is the glory of the Trinity?

The beauty of their personhood-in-communion
and its manifestation over time

“God is love” (1Jo 4:8)

“ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jo 1:14)

“ And now, glorify me together with yourself, with the glory which I ever had with you before the world was.”
(Jo 17:5)

The Manifestation of the Trinity's Glory in the Creation

- ▣ How does God's glory outshine?
 - In theophanies
 - In the beauty of creation (incl. culture)
 - In his verbal revelation
 - In the story of the Son of God, Jesus Christ: his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension
 - In the work of the Holy Spirit in his Church as its members flourish according to God's design plan

The Manifestation of the Trinity's Glory in Humanity

- ▣ How is being an image of God related to glory?
- ▣ How do humans glorify God?
 - ▣ Resembling God in any way
- ▣ How do Christians specially glorify God?
 - ▣ Active receptivity in Christ
 - Conscious awareness and participation
 - Worship, fear, praise, and love of the Trinity above all else (incl. ourselves), and in spite of our suffering
 - ▣ The practice of loving others as ourselves
 - ▣ Speaking of God's goodness to others

The Manifestation of the Trinity's Glory in Humanity

- Humans alone can *participate* in his glory
 - But only through union with Christ and his story
 - Then, through growing conformity to him *in Christ*
 - Analogical likeness: The Form of Christ
 - Through deepening communion with him *in Christ*
 - Relationship of dependence, intimacy, enjoyment
 - In the depths of God/in transparency
 - Through overcoming personal and social hindrances to glory: Sin, suffering, and damage to created structures
 - Through deepening communion with others *in Christ*
 - Through work, rest, and play *in Christ*

EMERGING FROM THE MATRIX

The Developmental Journey to the
City of God/Celestial City



Christian looks for a way of escape outside the City of Destruction.

Humans in Christ are temporal, so their capacity to glorify God is supposed to increase over time

The Manifestation of the Trinity's Glory in a Developing Humanity

The glory of God is a human alive!

Irenaeus

Creational development

Awareness, memory, emotion, rational

Fallen development in self and others?

Sin, suffering, weakness/damage

Redemptive development

Love of God, others, and self

As Christians flourish more (become more
beautiful), they glorify God more

How can we participate in the Trinity's glory and flourish?

Participating with God's glory in Christ is the apex of human flourishing, intended by God to permeate all of life and promote the fullest human flourishing

- ▣ Worship is the purest of joys
 - We are made for this
 - Better/higher than all creaturely joys
 - This joy carries over into rest of life (bec/ it deals with the core dimension of life)
- ▣ God's glory gives us a sense of peace
- ▣ Living for God's glory reduces sin (which hurts us and others)

How can we participate in the Trinity's glory and flourish?

- ▣ Meditating on God's beauty is good for our brains
 - It reduces stress, anxiety, depression, promotes physical health
- ▣ The beauty of God wondrously distracts us from our troubles
- ▣ God's glory gives us transcendent sense of purpose/ meaning
- ▣ We flourish by knowing we are not God
- ▣ God's glory makes suffering bearable (e.g. loving a difficult spouse)