
‘We have seen his glory’

**The meaning and function of ‘glory’
within the Fourth Gospel, and its theological
importance within John’s narrative.**

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ABSTRACT

This project undertakes a detailed narrative and theological survey of the concept of ‘glory’ in the Fourth Gospel. After beginning by surveying the linguistic and etymological background to the Greek words δόξα and δοξάζω – translated ‘glory’ and ‘glorify’ respectively throughout John’s Gospel – the majority of this paper focuses on a detailed exegetical study of the relevant passages within the Gospel. Along the way, key theological observations are made, before the threads of our discussion are drawn together with some broader theological conclusions.

In light of the inherent difficulties in closely analysing subtle, imprecise words such as δόξα and δοξάζω, this study works toward some definitions for these words. This is achieved through a careful survey of their usage throughout the Gospel, examination of the contexts in which these words occur, observation of connections with other key Johannine themes, and analysis of the part these words play in John’s unfolding narrative. It is our suggestion that, while more traditional biblical notions of ‘praise’, ‘honour’ or ‘exaltation’ are certainly present in John’s use of the words, the Evangelist’s most distinctive and important category of thought centres on revelation – God’s ‘divine nature’. Seeing Jesus’ δόξα means seeing God’s character and attributes in the incarnate Word, and God is glorified as this character is made known.

However, while probing for definitions forms an important part of our study, this project aims to move further. While previous studies have focused on linguistic analysis, there remains a pressing need for a broader, narrative-theological study to δόξα and δοξάζω in the Fourth Gospel. This project therefore seeks to make a small contribution by offering such a study. By following the flow of the Fourth Gospel’s narrative, and by keeping in mind John’s overall christological and theological

purposes, our aim is to understand 'glory' not simply as an end in itself, but as a means to the end of better understanding Jesus as he is presented in the entire Fourth Gospel.

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Introduction: The how and why of ‘glory’

Some words almost defy description. Attempts at defining, labelling or contextually analysing such words can scratch the surface, yet fail to capture the essence. Like a bar of soap, it is almost as though they slip through our fingers the more firmly we try to grasp them.

Readers of John’s Gospel could be forgiven for approaching the word ‘glory’ this way. On the surface, it is a simple enough idea. But the more one investigates and ponders ‘glory’ as used by John, the more one senses the elusiveness of this concept. By nature, it is a subtle, somewhat nebulous idea. As Don Carson says, ‘*glory* and *glorify* are powerful words which call up mighty images but do not convey precise information.’¹

Yet as we will see, John unashamedly places ‘glory’ front-and-centre at key points in his Gospel. Not only does the word-group occur frequently, but it is particularly prominent in several key passages and is often placed alongside other key Johannine themes. Despite the complexities, then, ‘glory’ cannot be ignored. To deeply understand Jesus as presented in the Fourth Gospel, we must grapple with the idea of ‘glory’ and how it functions within John’s narrative.

In the light of such challenges, this study aims to provide a narrative and theological investigation of ‘glory’ in John’s Gospel. By carefully examining this word and theme in the context of the whole Gospel, we will not only gain a proper grasp of the meaning and function of ‘glory’ within the book; we will also see John’s big picture more clearly. Understanding how glory plays a crucial part in the Evangelist’s unfolding narrative, and how it contributes to his overarching theological and Christological purposes, will take us deep into John’s portrait of Jesus. So, while

¹ D. A. Carson, *Jesus and his Friends: An Exposition of John 14–17* (Biblical Classics Library; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), 37 (italics original).

concentrating on one very particular idea, our study aims to approach the narrative on its own terms so that the theological message of the entire Gospel is illuminated.

Before proceeding to the substance of our analysis, however, some important foundations must be laid. In this introductory chapter, we will examine the linguistic and etymological background to ‘glory’ and ‘glorify’ as found in John’s Gospel. We will also outline New Testament usage of ‘glory’, and make some preliminary comments on defining ‘glory’ within the Fourth Gospel.

Linguistic background

Almost all modern English translations of the New Testament render the Greek noun δόξα as ‘glory’. The verb δοξάζω is likewise translated ‘to glorify’. But this almost-universal translation belies a rich and often complex linguistic background.

Etymologically, δόξα is linked to the verb δοκέω.² In non-biblical Greek of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, δόξα commonly meant something like ‘opinion’, ‘repute’ or ‘renown’. It could also carry more subjective notions such as ‘expectation’ or even ‘mere conjecture’.³ Similarly, the verb δοξάζω meant ‘to think’, ‘to imagine’, ‘to magnify’ or ‘to extol’.⁴

However, an examination of the New Testament usage of δόξα-δοξάζω reveals a sharp discontinuity with the word-group’s function in Classical Greek. Aalen says both words ‘were transformed in the LXX’.⁵ Kittel concurs, noting that the New Testament uses δόξα ‘in a sense for which there is no Greek analogy whatever and of which there is only an isolated example in Philo’.

“That is to say, [in the New Testament] it denotes ‘divine and heavenly radiance’, the ‘loftiness and majesty’ of God, and even the ‘being of God’ and His world. How does

² Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 2.233; S. Aalen, ‘Glory, Honour’ in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (ed. Colin Brown; 4 vols.; Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 2.44. δοκέω means ‘think’, ‘consider’, or ‘seem’. cf. Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (ed. Frederick William Danker; 3rd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000), 254-55.

³ cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: SPCK, 1962), 138; Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.233-34.

⁴ Barrett, *St John*, 138; Kittel, *TDNT*, 253.

⁵ Aalen, ‘Glory, Honour’, 44.

the word come to have this new significance? To answer this question it is necessary that we study the OT כְּבוֹד.⁶

Throughout the Old Testament, the word כְּבוֹד assumes enormous importance. While the Hebrew root כָּבַד can mean ‘heavy’ or ‘weighty’, the most basic meaning is closer to ‘honour’ – or ‘weighty in the figurative sense, i.e., what is impressive to men’.⁷ The range of meaning for כְּבוֹד includes ‘dignity’, ‘high position’, ‘reverence’ and an ‘object of respect’.⁸ In relation to man it denotes what makes one impressive or recognised, but in relation to God it refers to ‘that which makes God impressive to man, the force of his self-manifestation’.⁹

Perhaps most importantly, כְּבוֹד יְהוָה – ‘the glory of the LORD – emerges as an important technical term in Old Testament theology, referring to ‘God’s manifest presence’¹⁰ or ‘the impressive element in God’.¹¹ God is intrinsically invisible, but where he reveals, declares or manifests himself, or where he is said to be present among his people in some way, כְּבוֹד or יְהוָה כְּבוֹד are frequently used to describe the phenomenon.¹²

We will explore the Old Testament background further throughout our detailed exposition of John’s Gospel. For now, we have already observed the most important point: the Old Testament frames the notion of ‘glory’ in an essentially *theological* way.

The significance of this observation for our study becomes fully apparent when we turn to the Septuagint. The word δόξα appears in the canonical books of the LXX some 280 times. While it is used to render around 25 different Hebrew equivalents, by far the closest and most frequent connection is with כְּבוֹד, such that Kittel claims, ‘כְּבוֹד is the true and dominant equivalent of the

⁶ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.237.

⁷ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.238.

⁸ Willem A. VanGemeren, ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (5 vols.; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), 2.580-81. ‘Glory’ is by far the most common word used to render כְּבוֹד in most modern translations of the Old Testament. Other words used include ‘honour’ and ‘wealth’.

⁹ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.238.

¹⁰ VanGemeren, *OTTE*, 2.581.

¹¹ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.239.

¹² eg: Exod 16:10; 24:16-17; 33:18, 22; 40:34-35; Lev 9:23; Num 16:19; 1 Kgs 8:11; Ezek 1:28.

LXX δόξα.¹³ Hence, the translators of the LXX effectively overhauled the meaning of δόξα and δοξάζω, moving it away from Classical Greek ideas of ‘opinion’ or ‘what one thinks’, and transforming it into a richly theological word. “So complete was the semantic change which overtook δόξα and δοξάζω because of their use in the LXX, that they simply assumed all the meanings and associations of the Hebrew words they had been used to translate.”¹⁴ There is no precedent in extra-biblical Greek literature for the way in which the LXX uses δόξα.¹⁵

Hence Kittel rightly concludes that “the NT view of δόξα ... undoubtedly derives directly and uninterruptedly from the OT and Jewish view”, rather than from non-biblical Greek.¹⁶ This understanding is vital if we are to properly grasp John’s use of the term and how it contributes to his Gospel. In employing δόξα-δοξάζω, John is deliberately employing a term with an immense weight of theological meaning, and employing it in a way that parallels the Old Testament.

Given the rich Old Testament background, it is unsurprising that δόξα-δοξάζω occur often in the New Testament. The noun occurs 166 times, while the verbal form appears 61 times, giving a total of 227 uses. John himself deploys this language with striking frequency: δόξα occurs 19 times within the Gospel, while δοξάζω is used 23 times.¹⁷ This high usage becomes even more glaring when compared with the Synoptic Gospels, which total only 37 uses of δόξα-δοξάζω combined.¹⁸ Even mere statistics, then, suggest that observing John’s use of ‘glory’ is a worthwhile and important venture.

¹³ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.242.

¹⁴ G. B. Caird, ‘The Glory of God in the Fourth Gospel: An Exercise in Biblical Semantics’, *New Testament Studies* 15 (1969): 268.

¹⁵ Caird, ‘Glory of God’, 276.

¹⁶ Kittel, *TDNT*, 2.253.

¹⁷ Put another way, the Fourth Gospel’s overall usage of δόξα and δοξάζω accounts for 18.5 per cent of the total NT usage (11.4 per cent for δόξα, 37.7 per cent for δοξάζω). This is to say nothing of the 19 occurrences within Revelation. Discussion of ‘glory’ in Revelation lies beyond the scope of our study, but we note in passing that John’s deployment of the terminology there provides further evidence of how important this theme is for Johannine theology.

¹⁸ Matthew uses δόξα-δοξάζω 11 times, Mark four times and Luke 22 times. Broadly, Synoptic usage may be divided into four categories: (1) Jesus’ δόξα seen at the Transfiguration; (2) Δόξα ascribed to God by humanity; (3) Jesus’ eschatological δόξα, associated with his promised Second Coming; (4) the δόξα belonging to (or sought by) various other people or objects.

Before analysing the distinctive Johannine contribution, it is worth briefly noting how the term is used throughout the New Testament. Broadly speaking, linguistic analysis reveals a range of meaning which is remarkably similar to that already observed in the LXX. Key concepts conveyed include ‘a state of being magnificent’, ‘honour as enhancement or recognition of status or performance’, ‘a transcendent being deserving of honour’ or simply ‘reputation’, ‘esteem’ and ‘value’.¹⁹ Thus the other New Testament writers, like John, employ the language of δόξα in ways that ran counter to common Greek usage, but corroborated closely with the Old Testament. However, John’s usage has several distinctive features, as we will see.

Approaching glory in John’s Gospel

Surprisingly, relatively few scholars have set out to directly address this topic. A small number of recent studies have undertaken detailed linguistic analysis of δόξα-δοξάζω in John, seeking to carefully define the term and categorise exactly what John means by it. In particular, contributions by G. B. Caird, Margaret Pamment and Robert Bratcher have offered important insights and helped to illuminate this subject.²⁰ These articles aim to explore the ‘ingredients of meaning’ that define the term,²¹ offer definitions and categorisations for the various uses of δόξα, and generally describe the ‘sense’ that it bears in the Fourth Gospel. For example, Pamment uses words like ‘splendour’, ‘power’, ‘exalted renown’ or ‘resplendent majesty’ to define δόξα,²² while Bratcher concludes by offering the intriguing (yet overstated) suggestion that δόξα-δοξάζω be rendered ‘divine nature’, ‘divinity’ or ‘God-likeness’.²³ In an insightful yet elusive article, Caird probes the linguistic background and examines selected Johannine texts, yet ultimately fails to dig deeply into the theological meaning of the word-group.

¹⁹ Bauer et al., *Lexicon*, 257-58; Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds., *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (3 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990), 1.345.

²⁰ Caird, ‘Glory of God’, 265-277; Margaret Pamment, ‘The meaning of *doxa* in the Fourth Gospel’, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 74:1 (1983): 12-16; Robert Bratcher, ‘What Does “Glory” mean in relation to Jesus? Translating *doxa* and *doxazo* in John’, *The Bible Translator* 42:4 (1991): 401-409.

²¹ cf. Caird, ‘Glory of God’, 265-66.

²² Pamment, ‘*doxa*’, 12.

²³ Bratcher, ‘Glory’, 409.

Such linguistic analyses are foundational to any comprehensive study of glory in John. Naturally, therefore, this approach will form one component of what follows. Yet ultimately, this approach proves inadequate. Any enquiry that does not move beyond labels, definitions or linguistic analysis does not do justice to the breadth and depth of John's depiction of Jesus. Hence, there remains a need for a fully integrated theology of glory in John's Gospel that takes account of its unfolding narrative, unpacks how and why glory interacts with other key Johannine themes, and observes in detail how glory is used by John to draw out his central message.

Hence we propose to examine δόξα-δοξάζω throughout the Gospel, but not merely to provide linguistic analysis. Rather, our aim will be to provide a distinctively theological analysis of glory, taking into account John's overarching theological and christological purposes as they unfold within his narrative. Our interest in glory should not displace or diminish John's own stated aims. Rather, it should enhance and illuminate them.

We will proceed, then, through the 21 chapters of John's Gospel, interacting with the text in its final form.²⁴ We will focus on key verses and passages that are relevant to our topic, while still demonstrating an awareness of the overall flow and emphases of the Gospel.²⁵ Our study will feature close exegesis of key passages, observations on the importance of these passages within the unfolding narrative, and comments on the larger theological importance of 'glory' as used by John. We will conclude by drawing our exegetical analysis together with some synthesising theological conclusions, allowing us to grasp what John means by 'glory', how the concept fits within his theological purposes, and how it contributes to our overall understanding of Jesus.

²⁴ While it is our conviction that the apostle John is directly responsible for this final form (whether or not he utilised external sources in some manner), issues of composition are beyond the scope of this study and will not be directly taken into account. For more on this issue, see Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 81-139 and D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (The Pillar New Testament Commentary; Leicester: Apollos, 1991), 68-82.

²⁵ Of the 42 uses of δόξα-δοξάζω within John's Gospel, not all are of equal importance – especially in light of the particular aims of this study. For example, little time will be spent on passages such as 9:24, 12:43 and 21:19.

John 1-4: The glory of the one and only Son

‘In the beginning’: The importance of John’s Prologue

If John concludes with one of the most transparent purpose statements in all of Scripture (20:30-31), the deliberate ambiguity of the Prologue offers a stark contrast. At once mysterious, intriguing, confronting and breathtakingly insightful, John’s first 18 verses stand as one of the most unique openings to any biographical work in history.

Questions about the origin of the material contained in the Prologue have elicited much speculation.²⁶ While such debate lies beyond our immediate interest, it should be noted that, whether existing sources were adapted and used – and whether it was composed before or after the rest of the Gospel – the Prologue, in its final form, provides a masterful introduction that operates on many levels.²⁷ It serves as a ‘foyer’ to the rest of the Gospel,²⁸ operating like ‘the opening bars of a symphony, in which the main themes of the tune are announced.’²⁹ Moreover, both the placement and the ‘poetic-hymnic style’ of the Prologue ensure that these early references become programmatic for the rest of John’s account, shaping the expectations with which readers will approach the whole Gospel.³⁰ A symbiotic relationship between Prologue and Gospel also emerges:

²⁶ For a comprehensive overview of theories and issues relating to the composition of the Prologue, see Keener, *John*, 331-363.

²⁷ Without denying outside influences and even the adaptation of existing material, we hold that the apostle John, as the author of the Gospel, is directly and personally responsible for the final form of the Prologue. The tight thematic connections between the Prologue and the rest of the Gospel present the most compelling reason in favour of this view. Contrary theories, while interesting, are often fanciful, speculative, and impossible to verify, and can distract from interaction with the Prologue as it stands. However the final form was arrived at, the Prologue stands as a profound and richly interwoven unit of literature. It is this final form that should therefore consume the bulk of the commentator’s attention. cf. Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Gospel according to John: A Theological Commentary* (trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 17-23; Ruth Edwards, *Discovering John* (London: SPCK, 2003), 96.

²⁸ Carson, *John*, 111.

²⁹ William J. U. Philip, ‘The Light of Glory – An Exposition of the Prologue of John’s Gospel’, *Churchman* 116/2 (2002): 113. Key ideas introduced in the Prologue include Jesus’ pre-existence (1:1-3), life (1:4), light and darkness (1:4-5), belief (1:7, 12), seeing and witnessing (1:7-8, 14-15), the world (1:9-10), Jesus’ rejection by his own (1:5, 10-11), truth (1:9, 14, 17), the Father-Son relationship (1:14-18) – and, of course, glory (1:14-18).

³⁰ cf. Ridderbos, *John*, 19. Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 72, cautions against describing the Prologue as poetry, preferring instead to call it ‘elevated prose’, but a tentative use of the term ‘poetry’ seems appropriate. cf. Andreas Köstenberger, *John* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 19-20; Carson, *John*, 112.

readers returning to the Prologue after reading the whole story will see previously ambiguous references with new understanding.

Therefore, Brown rightly calls the Prologue ‘the pearl within this Gospel’;³¹ it is ‘John’s supreme achievement’,³² instantly placing the events of Jesus’ life on a theological and cosmic scale.

Even within the Prologue, certain focal points emerge. While the opening lines are difficult to match for importance or sheer audacity, verse 14 – which includes the first occurrences of δόξα in the Gospel – is a culminating moment. With good reason, it has been called ‘the key verse of the Prologue’.³³ Harrison goes so far as to claim ‘John has made 1:14 the seed-plot of all that follows.’³⁴ Dumbrell says 1:14 ‘summarises the theological emphasis of the Gospel’;³⁵ Carson agrees, expanding on this point by arguing that “supremely, the Prologue summarises how the ‘Word’ which was with God in the beginning came into the sphere of time, history, tangibility.... The rest of the book is nothing other than an expansion of this theme.”³⁶ It is 1:14 where this theme is succinctly and stunningly summarised. Hence this verse, and its use of δόξα, takes on enormous importance – not just within the Prologue, but within the whole Gospel.

1:14: ‘We have seen his glory’

To properly grasp the meaning and significance of δόξα in 1:14, we must begin by turning to the Old Testament, as John draws on a rich matrix of ideas from Israel’s history.

The concept of glory is introduced when John says that the Word ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. Just as God was present with his people when he ‘tabernacled’ among them in the wilderness – where his כְּבוֹד filled the tabernacle (Exod 40:34-35; cf. 16:7-10) – so he was present with his people in the

³¹ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (2 vols.; The Anchor Bible; New York: Doubleday, 1966-1970), 18.

³² Edwards, *Discovering John*, 97.

³³ Everett F. Harrison, ‘A Study of John 1:14’, in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd* (ed. Robert A. Guelich; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 23.

³⁴ Harrison, ‘John 1:14’, 29.

³⁵ William J. Dumbrell, *John: Gospel of the New Creation: A New Covenant Exposition* (Caringbah: New Covenant Publications, 2006), 10.

³⁶ Carson, *John*, 111.

incarnation of the Word. Several commentators have also noted a connection between the verb σκηνώω and the Hebrew noun *shekinah* (derived from the root שָׁכַן). This term, often found in Rabbinic literature,³⁷ was used as ‘a technical term for God’s presence dwelling among his people’.³⁸ More specifically, *shekinah* commonly referred to ‘the glory of God as it is manifested to men’.³⁹

With this foundation in place, John then makes the idea of glory explicit: ἔθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ. Along with the background already noted, several allusions within 1:14-18 direct the reader to the book of Exodus, specifically chapters 33-34, where Moses asks to see the glory (כְּבוֹד) of Yahweh.⁴⁰ But how does this background inform our understanding of δόξα as used by John?

Three points are of particular relevance. First, John presents Jesus’ incarnation as a climactic, eschatological moment in God’s dealings with his people. Throughout the Old Testament, God’s glory was present with Israel at key moments (Exod 16:7-10; 40:34-35; 1 Kgs 8:10-11), but only partially and imperfectly. Moses’ request to have God reveal himself ‘in an unmediated way’ is denied,⁴¹ and God’s glory could still depart from Israel as part of God’s judgment (Ezek 11:23).⁴² In fact Dumbrell notes that the divine glory was never again available to all Israel after the Golden Calf incident.⁴³

However, with the coming of Jesus, ‘the climactic revelation of glory has occurred.’⁴⁴ Where God’s glory had been, in a sense, denied Israel after the events of Sinai, a new moment has now arrived in God’s redemptive plans. Israel’s experience has been superseded. “What had been hinted at and even realised in a dim, imperfect fashion earlier was perfectly fulfilled in the Word made flesh.”⁴⁵ Many commentators have noted the realised eschatology of the Fourth Gospel, and it is this

³⁷ Keener, *John*, 408-9.

³⁸ Brown, *John*, 33.

³⁹ Leon Morris, *Reflections on the Gospel of John: The Word Was Made Flesh: John 1-5* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 19.

⁴⁰ cf. Carson, *John*, 129. For more on the connection between כְּבוֹד and δόξα, see p. 8-11.

⁴¹ Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (The Old Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster Press, 1974), 595.

⁴² Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel* (The NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 151-2.

⁴³ Dumbrell, *John*, 20.

⁴⁴ Keener, *John*, 410.

⁴⁵ Morris, *John*, 104.

early reference to δόξα that establishes such a framework. Keener says, “in the Hebrew Bible (Isa 60:1-3), Judaism continued to associate an ultimate revelation of ‘glory’ with the eschatological time.”⁴⁶ John tells us that this time has come with the arrival of Jesus.

Secondly, Moses’ experience with God illuminates the true nature of Jesus’ glory. What is involved is not just God’s physical presence, but his *character*. In Exodus 33:18-23, Moses is not permitted to physically gaze upon the glory of God. But in 34:6-8, Yahweh passes before Moses (cf. 33:19, 22), proclaiming his name and revealing his attributes. “The special divine revelation which Moses requested and God provided is no longer seen primarily in terms of a visible appearance. Rather, God let all his ‘goodness’ pass by, which in v. 22 is identified with his ‘glory’. The revelation of God is in terms of his *attributes* rather than his *appearance*.”⁴⁷ God’s glory is connected to his essential, personal nature.

For John, then, δόξα is more than God’s physicality; it is first and foremost God’s *goodness*, seen in Jesus. “The glory revealed to Moses when the Lord passed in front of him and sounded his name ... was the very same glory John and his friends saw in the Word-made-flesh.”⁴⁸ Jesus’ δόξα is nothing less than the reality of the divine character.

Thirdly, by defining the λόγος with a term steeped in this theological meaning, the Evangelist demands that readers approach Jesus with appropriate reverence. As Moses discovered, the כְּבוֹד of Yahweh was ‘a vast and awesome thing for the believing Israelite’, with elaborate ceremonies ‘to protect the people’ from encountering God’s fearful glory.⁴⁹ So the Word – though he has chosen to become σὰρξ and tabernacle among us – must still be approached with wonder and trepidation. “God is glorious. But men may not presume on that glory just because God is pleased to manifest it to them. They must retain a proper awe.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Keener, *John*, 410.

⁴⁷ Childs, *Exodus*, 596 (italics added).

⁴⁸ Carson, *John*, 129.

⁴⁹ Philip, ‘The Light of Glory’, 123.

⁵⁰ Morris, *Reflections*, 21.

In all of the above, a critical feature of the Fourth Gospel has begun to emerge: the connection between δόξα and *revelation*. Throughout the Old Testament, Yahweh revealed his glory as and when he willed. But the final and complete revelation of his glory did not take place at Sinai, in the tabernacle, or in the temple. Now, in the coming of the Son, we have received the revelation of God's glory *par excellence*.

Some commentators have suggested a gulf between the revelation of glory in the Word and the glory of the Father. Debate centres on the conjunction ὡς (1:14), which is often seen as being comparative. Moloney argues as such, concluding that '[t]he glory which the Son had with the Father before all time ... is unknown and unknowable to the human situation.'⁵¹ Köstenberger concurs: "The believer cannot see the glory of the Father in the Son, but rather a glory 'as of'."⁵²

However, this is an unnecessary and misleading distinction. Firstly, Schnackenburg addresses the grammatical issue, showing that 'ὡς does not mark a restriction ... or make a comparison, but defines the glory precisely and indicates its exact nature'.⁵³ Secondly, if our analysis of the Old Testament background for 1:14 is correct, John's use of δόξα indicates the full weight of divine revelation, without limitation. Thirdly, Jesus himself will later declare ὁ ἑώρακὼς ἐμὲ ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα (14:9). It seems inappropriate, therefore, to place a divide between the revelation of God and the revelation of Jesus. The glory revealed in the Word *is* the very glory of God himself.⁵⁴ Thus, in the coming of the Word, Moses' prayer (Exod 33:18) has been answered with the fullest, most personal, most intimate revelation of God ever experienced. "The δόξα of God can now be revealed, not simply to one man but to all who long to see it."⁵⁵ Here δόξα also serves another vital function:

⁵¹ Francis J. Moloney, *Belief in the Word: Reading John 1-4* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 43.

⁵² Köstenberger, *John*, 42. cf. Henry Mowvley, 'John 1:14-18 in the light of Exodus 33:7-34:35', *The Expository Times* 95 (1983-84): 137.

⁵³ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John* (trans. Kevin Smyth; 3 vols.; London: Burns & Oates, 1968-1982), 1.270; cf. Ridderbos, *John*, 53, classifies the conjunction as 'explanatory': 'in keeping with his nature as'. For more on the range of meaning for ὡς, see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 669-678.

⁵⁴ This is not to say that the Son reveals everything there is to know about the Father, but it is to say that what the Son reveals of the Father is true and accurate, not a mere reflection or a mediated, second-hand knowledge.

⁵⁵ Harrison, 'John 1:14', 29.

placing Jesus ‘in the cosmic setting of his relationship to the Father’,⁵⁶ a central idea throughout the Gospel (as we will see).

Closely related to the notion of revelation are the key Johannine ideas of seeing and witnessing. Throughout the Gospel, a startling truth emerges: Jesus’ followers alone see his δόξα.⁵⁷ The ensuing narrative suggests that ‘we’ in ἐθεασάμεθα refers not to all of humanity, nor to every believer, but to ‘those who saw the glory of the incarnate Logos – the witnesses ... of his work on earth’.⁵⁸ Jesus’ δόξα is not openly and unavoidably visible to all. As the rest of the Gospel will show, there is a hiddenness to the display of glory in the λόγος, ‘a hiddenness penetrated by the Evangelist and the early witnesses.’⁵⁹

Therefore, holding together the Mosaic allusions and the ideas of revelation and witnessing, it becomes clear that those who saw Jesus, including John, ‘are mediators of a revelation greater than that of Moses but in a manner analogous to Moses.’⁶⁰ In this way, John offers untold hope and encouragement to believers re-reading his story. The one they follow is the the ultimate revelation of the Father, the one who shares all God’s goodness and power, and who brings to fulfilment God’s divine purposes for the ages.

But not only is Jesus the ultimate revelation of the Father; John tells his readers that this revelation happened when ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. God’s glory is seen *in* the flesh of Jesus – not despite the flesh of Jesus, ‘nor through the σὰρξ as through a window’.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (New Century Bible; London: Oliphants, 1972), 76.

⁵⁷ The only exception is 12:41, where Isaiah – who is obviously to be counted among ‘the faithful’ – is spoken of as seeing Jesus’ glory (cf. chapter 3 below).

⁵⁸ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 1.270; cf. 2:11 and 11:40, discussed below. This need not imply that the Word dwelt only among this group of faithful witnesses; Harrison, ‘John 1:14’, 27, shows that ‘us’ in ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν points to 1:11.

⁵⁹ Carson, *John*, 130.

⁶⁰ Keener, *John*, 412. While many have drawn parallels between Moses and Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, Keener rightly observes that it is the disciples who are paralleled with Moses, while Jesus parallels ‘the glory that Moses witnessed on the mountain’.

⁶¹ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 63, although we would take issue with the methodology Bultmann uses to reach this correct conclusion.

John's choice of *σὰρξ* to describe Jesus' incarnation is striking, not least because he previously included it as one of three elements arrayed against God (1:13).⁶² But in becoming *σὰρξ*, the *λόγος* has not ceased to be God; on the contrary, Jesus' *σὰρξ* is now the location of God's presence on earth, like the tabernacle in times past.

At this point it is worth briefly examining Käsemann's reading of 1:14. He argues that the statement *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* is 'completely overshadowed' by *ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ*, so the Word becoming flesh means nothing more than the Word 'came into contact with earthly existence, so that an encounter with him became possible.'⁶³ Further, he says the glory of the *λόγος* is seen in the *σὰρξ* via miraculous signs. While claiming that John upheld certain 'features of the lowliness of the earthly Jesus',⁶⁴ Käsemann concludes that the Evangelist failed to avoid 'the danger of docetism'.⁶⁵

Käsemann's analysis, however, appears to be eisegetical. It fails to properly grapple with the deliberate and remarkable conjoining of *σὰρξ* and *δόξα*, and therefore misses the extraordinary truth: the *δόξα* of the *λόγος* – the culmination of every manifestation of God's *δόξα* – is seen in the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth.⁶⁶ The connection of two such disparate elements neither dilutes the *δόξα* or deifies the *σὰρξ*. "The incarnation is a phenomenon remote alike from a demi-god or a superman. It is *sui generis*."⁶⁷ More remarkable by far is that, by the end of his Gospel, John portrays the high point of glory as the *crucified* flesh of Jesus.

This is the best explanation for John's omission of the Transfiguration. While he was present at this event,⁶⁸ he makes no explicit mention of it – despite his obvious interest in *δόξα*. But his

⁶² cf. Harrison, 'John 1:14', 26.

⁶³ Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17* (London: SCM Press, 1968), 9-10.

⁶⁴ Käsemann, *Testament*, 10.

⁶⁵ Käsemann, *Testament*, 26.

⁶⁶ contra Käsemann, Edwards, *Discovering John*, 92, states that John may well have chosen the word *σὰρξ* specifically to avoid and rebut the Docetic heresy.

⁶⁷ Harrison, 'John 1:14', 29; cf. Ridderbos, *John*, 100: "Any suggestion that in the Fourth Gospel one can separate 'flesh' and 'glory' ... violates the most specific aspect of the Gospel's character."

⁶⁸ cf. Matt 17:2; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28; contra Brown, *John*, 35, who speculates on whether or not 'the Johannine writers' even knew of the Transfiguration scene.

emphasis is different to the Synoptists, who portray a distinction between Jesus' earthly life (especially his sufferings) and his glory (eg: Luke 24:26). John, meanwhile, intends all of Jesus' earthly life (including, or especially, his sufferings) to be seen as his δόξα. Focusing on the Transfiguration would distract from this perspective. John's point is that "God does not need tinsel. There is no need for the outward trappings of majesty and pomp for God's purposes to be carried out."⁶⁹

John's Prologue could easily have presented the story as a tragedy: the λόγος comes to his own, only to be unrecognised and unaccepted. Yet the overarching concept of δόξα ensures that the Prologue's dominant note is not tragedy, but triumph. This is a clear example of what Stibbe calls Johannine 'tragic irony', where '[certain] people claim to know who or what Jesus really is, while the paradigmatic reader knows only too clearly (because of the hints given by the narrator) that this is not so.'⁷⁰ By introducing Jesus this way, John brings readers into the 'inner sanctum', presenting Jesus from the true, theological perspective, demonstrating the folly of those who reject Jesus throughout the narrative. Thus, while some negative elements remain, the real story is that Jesus came with δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

This truth shapes the whole Gospel. From the outset, readers know that Jesus has come with the very δόξα of God himself. Regardless of opposition, he will surely triumph in the end. Moreover, John has laid a foundation that ensures the whole of Jesus' life must be viewed in light of δόξα. "His idea of glory cannot be concentrated into any one incident. He has the distinctive idea of seeing glory everywhere in Jesus' life."⁷¹ Indeed, Käsemann says 'we beheld his glory' summarises the whole Gospel.⁷²

⁶⁹ Morris, *Reflections*, 23. Keener, *John*, 876, offers the intriguing suggestion that John makes 'Jesus' whole public ministry a transfiguration of sorts'.

⁷⁰ Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 18.

⁷¹ Morris, *Reflections*, 18.

⁷² Käsemann, *Testament*, 6.

Thus δόξα is connected to several key Johannine themes from the very outset, and is used to help unfold several key ideas. While it retains a certain ambiguity – only truly illuminated by further reading (as we will see) – already a rich complex of ideas is being drawn together in this term such that it pervades the whole Gospel. However, the language will not directly appear until another key moment in the narrative, 2:11.

The first sign: Jesus manifests his glory

If the Prologue has primed readers to expect displays of Jesus' δόξα, the initial display comes in chapter 2. The first of Jesus' signs, at the Wedding in Cana, concludes with John commenting that Jesus ἐφάνηρωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ (2:11).

To understand what δόξα means in this context, and how it contributes to John's unfolding portrait of Jesus, we must once again turn to the Old Testament. Keener detects an echo of Exodus 16:7, where Israel sees God's glory in his signs in the wilderness.⁷³ The LXX also connects signs and glory explicitly in Numbers 14:22. Riga sees the Old Testament as the origin for the connection between sign and glory, for it is here – especially in Exodus – that God 'marvelously demonstrates his power to save the world, and especially Israel.' "Among the Jews it was commonly thought that with the coming of the messianic era the same kind of miracles would be performed."⁷⁴ The manifestation of God's glory through signs is therefore connected to salvation for God's people. Signs also confront people – both Israel and the nations – with Yahweh's might, rendering them culpable for their 'utterly incomprehensible' rejection of him.⁷⁵

More specifically, the content of this sign finds important Old Testament parallels. Abundant wine is a common prophetic category to describe 'the glory of the coming Kingdom of God',⁷⁶ an eschatological time when salvation had drawn near.⁷⁷ This provides the backdrop to John's

⁷³ Keener, *John*, 516.

⁷⁴ Peter Riga, 'Signs of Glory: The Use of "Sēmeion" in St. John's Gospel', *Interpretation* 17/4 (1963): 411.

⁷⁵ Willis Hedley Salier, *The Rhetorical Impact of the Sēmeia in the Gospel of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck: 2004), 23.

⁷⁶ Ridderbos, *John*, 108. cf. Gen 49:11; Isa 25:6; Jer 31:12; Amos 9:13-14; Joel 3:18. Edwards, *Discovering John*, 51, provides a survey of Jewish literature showing connections between wine and the presence and favour of Yahweh.

⁷⁷ cf. Edwards, *Discovering John*, 51, 61.

connection between this sign and glory – rather than comparisons with Dionysus, the pagan provider of wine, as some commentators have claimed.⁷⁸

Hence this sign manifests Jesus' divine character by symbolising the beginning of a new eschatological era when God would decisively intervene for his people. It portrays Jesus as the one who fulfils and even supersedes Judaism by replacing the Jewish purificatory water with choicest wine.⁷⁹ Brown masterfully summarises Jesus' δόξα in this passage as being revealed through 'Messianic replacement and abundance'.⁸⁰ The sign is best understood as 'a divine manifestation ... within the framework of the history of Israel'.⁸¹

Incredibly, John relegates the actual miracle to a subordinate clause in 2:9, almost as though the ability to physically perform the task is unimportant, or at least taken for granted. What matters is its theological significance.⁸² The miracle manifests Jesus' δόξα not through a magic trick, but by showing that the promised Messiah had come, fulfilling Old Testament hopes and expectations. The Messianic age, when God would decisively make himself known, has arrived.

Many have suggested that true understanding of this sign – and all the signs – comes only post-cross, as the signs point forward to Jesus' atoning, life-giving death, the decisive act for which he came. As Morris says, "[t]he meaning of the individual signs is only to be discerned in the light of the great work of salvation God is doing in his Son."⁸³ While the display of δόξα and the faith of the disciples should be seen as real, both can be called partial and preliminary, as the hour for Jesus' true glorification had not yet come (12:23; cf. 2:4).⁸⁴

The sign also shows Jesus' δόξα by revealing that the Father is working in his Son (cf. 5:17; 10:32). With the Old Testament foundations in mind, the episode implies Jesus' divinity without

⁷⁸ eg. Barrett, *St John*, 157-8, though Barrett is admittedly reticent about overplaying these comparisons. George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (Word Biblical Commentary; Vol. 36; 2nd ed.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 35, rightly claims that, '[t]o suggest that the Evangelist or his source wished to demonstrate through the Cana miracle that a greater than Dionysus [sic] had appeared is a speculation without warrant.'

⁷⁹ The wedding setting is also an important Old Testament symbol of 'the messianic days' (cf. Brown, *John*, 104).

⁸⁰ Brown, *John*, 104.

⁸¹ Salier, *Sēmeia*, 51.

⁸² Carson, *John*, 175, coins this emphatic use of the word.

⁸³ cf. Leon Morris, *Jesus is the Christ: Studies in the Theology of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 8f.

⁸⁴ Barrett, *St John*, 161.

making it explicit. “The signs ... could be performed only by one who stood in a special relationship to God.”⁸⁵ This, of course, is the expectation so pointedly raised by the Prologue.

In analysing the place of δόξα within John’s overarching theological purposes, two further points of great importance emerge from this passage. First, John’s explanation forms a close connection between δόξα and belief (πιστεύω), a (if not the) key idea in the Gospel. There is a profound irony in this manifestation of δόξα. The sign itself is public, seen by all, yet perceived by few. Indeed, the master of the feast praises the bridegroom (2:10), remaining ignorant of the wine’s true source and of the true δόξα involved.

As noted above, Jesus’ δόξα was not displayed through incontrovertible displays of power. Indeed, his aim was never to obtain public acclamation.⁸⁶ Almost shockingly, it was possible for observers to reject displays of Jesus’ δόξα and fail to discern what was happening. True δόξα does not match human standards, and is seen only by those who believe; its real purpose is to reveal the identity of Jesus, and the one who sent him.⁸⁷ Thus John draws readers inside, describing the disciples’ perspective and showing that the appropriate response to a manifestation of Jesus’ δόξα is to believe. “The reader is implicitly invited to join the disciples and draw the same conclusions.”⁸⁸

This connection is of enormous importance in the context of the whole narrative. If the aim of John’s Gospel was to elicit belief in Jesus (20:31), then the concept of δόξα is intimately connected to the Evangelist’s overall purpose. We will explore the precise nature of this connection in more detail below.

Secondly, John’s interpretation of this sign directs the reader to see all subsequent signs as manifestations of Jesus’ δόξα. John describes it as the ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων, where ἀρχή can be rendered ‘beginning’, ‘primary’ or even ‘foundational’.⁸⁹ More than a purely temporal category, it

⁸⁵ Morris, *Jesus is the Christ*, 7.

⁸⁶ 5:41, 44; 7:18, discussed below.

⁸⁷ cf. 7:18; 8:54.

⁸⁸ Salier, *Sēmeia*, 51.

⁸⁹ Kostenberger, *John*, 99; cf. Bauer et al., *Lexicon*, 137-8.

was ‘certainly not read as wholly synonymous with *πρῶτος*’.⁹⁰ Hence, what John says about this sign becomes ‘paradigmatic for Jesus’ signs in general.’⁹¹

Furthermore, John explicitly describes the climactic sign – the raising of Lazarus – as a manifestation of Jesus’ *δόξα* (11:4, 40). Together, the first and last signs thus form an *inclusio* that invests all the signs with overtones of *δόξα*, while still pointing forward to a fuller, more definitive manifestation of *δόξα* to come. Thus the wedding at Cana is best understood as ‘the opening act of a much larger work, the foundation and pattern for everything that follows.’⁹²

Again, *δόξα* therefore impacts our reading of the whole Gospel. Raymond Brown’s enormously influential analysis of John’s Gospel classified 1:19–12:50 as ‘The Book of Signs’, while labelling chapters 13–20 ‘The Book of Glory’.⁹³ Without rejecting this analysis, the understanding of the signs we have outlined puts Brown’s division in a new light. For the signs themselves are nothing other than manifestations of Jesus’ *δόξα*.⁹⁴ Though the word itself may be absent from John’s description of the other signs, he clearly intends the concept of *δόξα* to pervade our reading of them.

As the Gospel ends, John informs us that Jesus did many other signs (20:30); he has recorded but a few, and those he has recorded are clear manifestations of Jesus’ *δόξα*. Though we have not seen for ourselves (20:29), all who believe can grasp the true meaning of the signs and confess, with John, ‘we have seen his glory’.

⁹⁰ Salier, *Sēmeia*, 50.

⁹¹ Keener, *John*, 515.

⁹² Ridderbos, *John*, 113.

⁹³ Brown, *John*, cxxxviii.

⁹⁴ cf. Carson, *John*, 166.

John 5-12: Glory amid conflict and unbelief

Following the ‘Cana-to-Cana’ inclusio of chapters 2-4, chapter 5 marks the beginning of a new section of the Gospel which, broadly speaking, continues until chapter 12. Certain thematic links also support this division, with the section being characterised by escalating conflict with religious leaders, who openly oppose Jesus for the first time. Many commentators have noted the presence of a trial motif running through this section, pointing to the real trial Jesus will endure in the book’s final chapters, while also illuminating his mission and true identity.⁹⁵ While chapters 11-12 are in many ways transitional, the dominant structural, thematic and stylistic elements suggest that the traditional division at chapter 13 is appropriate.⁹⁶

John employs the ‘glory’ word-group 22 times within these chapters. Δόξα occurs 13 times, while the verb δοξάζω – first used in 7:39 – occurs nine times. As we will see, the term again surfaces at key moments, proving vital to John’s unfolding message.

John 5-10: Jesus’ surprising glory

Within the overall flow of the Gospel, the usage of δόξα in chapters 5-10 is somewhat less pivotal than most other occurrences, while still contributing a valuable perspective in John’s portrait of Jesus.⁹⁷ Our analysis of this section will therefore be quite brief, allowing us to focus on key references in chapters 11-12.

⁹⁵ eg: Stibbe, *John*, 77-80; Keener, *John*, 391-3. Köstenberger, *John*, 250, points out that ultimately it is the world, not Jesus, that is on trial in this section.

⁹⁶ Carson, *John*, 403, notes that 10:42 closes ‘a giant inclusio’ that encompasses everything from 1:19 onwards through references to John the Baptist. Likewise, Richard Burridge, *Four Gospels, One Jesus? A Symbolic Reading* (North Blackburn: Collins Dove, 1994), 137-8, calls chapters 11-12 an ‘interlude’. However, the presence of the climactic ‘sign’ in chapter 11 suggests that this chapter, at least, is best connected with what has gone before. Furthermore, 12:37-50 is best seen as summarising the unbelief on view in 1:19–12:36, while at the same time paving the way for the Farewell Discourse of chapters 13-17.

⁹⁷ This is not to imply that the 11 uses of δόξα-δοξάζω in these chapters are unimportant. Rather, it is to stress the particular importance of other occurrences, many of which are found at critical turning points in the Gospel as a whole. For example, 1:14 and 2:11 as discussed above, or 12:23 and 12:41, discussed at length below.

Having established that all of Jesus' life is a revelation of the δόξα of the μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, John omits δόξα language for several chapters. For example, two signs – revelations of Jesus' δόξα – are recorded without the word appearing (4:43-54; 5:1-9).

Δόξα is reintroduced in 5:41-44, used for the first time by Jesus himself during a discussion with Jewish leaders over his identity and relationship to the Father. Jesus insists that he does not receive δόξα from men (5:41). By contrast, his opponents fail to seek the δόξα that comes from God, preferring to receive δόξα from one another (5:44). A double meaning is apparent. Not only do they prefer praise from men to praise from God; Jesus obliquely refers to himself – the one who possesses the δόξα of God but remains unsought by his people (1:11; 5:40, 43). To reject Jesus is to reject God's δόξα.

The notion of seeking God's δόξα arises again in 7:18. Jesus, explaining his relationship to God and the source of his teaching, claims that he neither speaks on his own authority nor seeks his own δόξα. Rather, he seeks the δόξα of the one who sent him – namely, the Father.⁹⁸ Those seeking to do God's will recognise this (7:17); those who judge by appearances do not (7:24).

Importantly, 7:39 contains the first occurrence of the verb δοξάζω. John refers, somewhat indirectly, to Jesus' future glorification and to its connection with the giving of the Spirit. Much more will be said below on the meaning and function of δοξάζω for John.⁹⁹ For now, we briefly note two points. First, readers already familiar with the story will realise that the Spirit is given only after Jesus' death and resurrection.¹⁰⁰ Hence John hints that Jesus' ultimate glorification will involve these events. Moreover, the gift of the Spirit (cf. 3:1-15; 6:63) is dependent on Jesus' glorification.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ This point is explicit in 5:23, 37; 6:44; 8:16, 18; 26-27, 42; 12:49; 14:26; 20:21.

⁹⁹ See especially comments on chapters 12, 13 and 17 below.

¹⁰⁰ cf. 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; 20:22. For an effective summary of the issues surrounding the precise meaning of 20:22, and how the Johannine description should be harmonised with the account of Acts 2, see Carson, *John*, 649-655.

¹⁰¹ cf. Barrett, *St John*, 272.

Secondly, something of a disparity between δόξα and δοξάζω is introduced. From the Gospel's opening, Jesus possesses and manifests δόξα. Yet here it seems that, though he has glory, it remains for him to be glorified. We will analyse this interplay of ideas more fully below.

Another cluster of references come in 8:50-54. As Jesus clashes with a group of Jews, he reiterates that he does not seek his own δόξα (8:50). However, rather than Jesus seeking the Father's δόξα (cf. 7:18), here the opposite is on view: the Father (ὁ κρίνων)¹⁰² seeks Jesus' δόξα (8:50) and is ὁ δοξάζων him (8:54). Contrary to his opponents' charges, Jesus is not claiming for himself something inappropriate (8:52-53), but the Father himself is at work in Jesus. The real reason these Jews fail to recognise Jesus is because they do not truly know the one who sent him and glorifies him.

What theological conclusions can be drawn from these observations? Firstly, having claimed that John uses δόξα primarily to discuss the revelation of God's character, we must note that a complementary yet distinctive meaning is present here. The meaning is closer to 'praise' or 'honour' through much of this section. We will explore the connection between these meanings throughout the rest of our study.

Secondly, John shows that Jesus possesses a strange, unexpected δόξα. Readers have already been conditioned to expect manifestations of Jesus' δόξα. However, as this idea is explored, it becomes clear not only that this is very different to the praise which comes from men, but that Jesus deliberately eschews such δόξα.¹⁰³ As 2:11 has suggested, Jesus' δόξα goes unseen by many; it is visible only to the eyes of faith, and contradicts normal human expectations. However, the precise nature of this unexpected δόξα will only be fully revealed as the Gospel unfolds.

Thirdly, the notion of δόξα draws out the unique relationship between the Father and the Son, a relationship best described as 'divine mutual glorification'. The Son is not driven by self-glorification, 'but [by] obedience to the one who sent him'.¹⁰⁴ This is the 'single-eyed vision' that

¹⁰² For the Father as the judge within John's Gospel, cf. 8:16.

¹⁰³ cf. 2:24-25.

¹⁰⁴ Ridderbos, *John*, 320.

drove Jesus in everything.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, the Father's goal is to glorify the Son. This is a stunning reality, given the Old Testament's insistence that Yahweh staunchly refuses to give his glory to another (Isa 42:8; 48:11). Jesus' opponents were right to claim that he was making himself equal with God (5:17-18), but were wrong to think this would tarnish God's glory. On the contrary, God's glory is enhanced and truly revealed, 'not compromised or diminished when divine honours crown the head of the Son'.¹⁰⁶

John 11: If you believe, you will see...

Even on the simplest analysis, the raising of Lazarus from the dead is one of the most astonishing events of all time.¹⁰⁷ But John's description invests it with even more significance, giving it a profound theological meaning and portraying it as the climactic sign which reveals God's δόξα.

We have already noted that John brackets all seven signs together as manifestations of δόξα by describing both the first and last signs in these terms.¹⁰⁸ The notion is even clearer within this climactic sign, where the incident begins and ends with δόξα language (11:4, 40). Thus whatever else may be said about this event, it is first and foremost a revelation of τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

But how does this episode reveal God's δόξα? We have already observed that Jesus does not parade his δόξα in naked displays of power that automatically convince all and sundry. Something more than the ability to raise a man from the grave is at stake.¹⁰⁹

One crucial feature is the further exposition of the connection between Father and Son. Ὑπὲρ τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ does not mean God is the recipient of honour and praise, but that God *reveals* himself in this incident.¹¹⁰ God's δόξα is revealed specifically through the Son, who takes the

¹⁰⁵ Carson, *John*, 264.

¹⁰⁶ Carson, *John*, 255.

¹⁰⁷ This, of course, acknowledges and accepts the historicity of the event. For more, cf. Morris, *John*, 532-36.

¹⁰⁸ cf. Morris, *Jesus is the Christ*, 12-13; Brown, *John*, 436.

¹⁰⁹ Carson, *John*, 406, and Köstenberger, *John*, 327, have both rightly noted that the illness does not occur *in order* for God to be glorified, but rather that the illness presents an *occasion* for God to be glorified.

¹¹⁰ David Earl Holwerda, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in the Gospel of John: A critique of Rudolf Bultmann's present eschatology* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1959), 5; contra Lindars, *John*, 387; cf. Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2.322; Barrett, *St John*, 324: 'here as elsewhere the glory of God is not his praise, but his activity.'

initiative and maintains control throughout. In all the signs that the Son performs, God's self-disclosure has been on display for those with eyes to see.

Simultaneously, Jesus is glorified as it becomes clear that the Father is at work in him.¹¹¹ Jesus has explained that, just as he seeks the Father's δόξα (7:18), so the Father seeks Jesus' δόξα (8:50, 54). The raising of Lazarus shows 'divine mutual glorification' in practice. While this may involve 'honour' and 'praise', the key concept is revelation: Jesus is seen to act with the full imprimatur, power and character of God.

On one level, then, δόξα is revealed in the defeat of death, which shows the promises of 11:23-26 to be true. It is a 'practical demonstration' that Jesus truly is the resurrection and the life.¹¹² It shows that Jesus is 'empowered by God' to raise the dead, and so serves as a sign of his ability to give believers 'the true life which survives death'.¹¹³ "[I]f, as Martha confessed, Jesus the Messiah is the resurrection and the life, then even in the face of this death he is to be trusted, for he will do nothing other than that which displays the glory of God."¹¹⁴

However, a deeper level of meaning is also present, as the episode points to Jesus' own resurrection. Most directly, the miracle occasions Jesus' death and resurrection (11:46-53), which – as John will soon explain – is his true glorification.¹¹⁵ But a more profound, symbolic connection is also established. The raising of Lazarus 'serves as the antitype of Jesus' own resurrection in the narrative',¹¹⁶ as his impending death casts its shadow more powerfully over the story. Moreover, Jesus' statements about glory find their ultimate meaning "in the glorifying of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus and the glorifying of the Son through God's exalting him to the right hand."¹¹⁷ In this way, the revelation of 11:23-26 becomes actualised and is most fully demonstrated.

¹¹¹ Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 5.

¹¹² Lindars, *John*, 400.

¹¹³ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2.338.

¹¹⁴ Carson, *John*, 418.

¹¹⁵ See discussion of 12:23 below.

¹¹⁶ Köstenberger, *John*, 322.

¹¹⁷ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 187-88.

This link is confirmed by John's description of Jesus' resurrection, where certain details recall Lazarus' reappearance (11:44; 20:5-7).¹¹⁸ Thus, while Lazarus' resurrection shows us God's δόξα in itself, its main importance is proleptic; John uses it to begin drawing readers forward to the final, complete revelation of δόξα in Jesus' death and resurrection.

Lastly, we should observe how Jesus' explanatory words further develop the connection between δόξα and believing, established at 2:11. Immediately before Lazarus is raised, Jesus tells Martha ἐὰν πιστεύσῃς ὄψῃ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ (11:40). He thus focuses not on the miracle itself, but on its revelatory significance. Jesus 'has not come to make faith into miracle faith', but to reveal God's true character – his δόξα – to those who believe.¹¹⁹

Hence, while signs can produce a basic, superficial faith (2:23-24), Jesus calls Martha 'to a deeper level of faith', the very faith that lies at the heart of John's Gospel – seeing Jesus' δόξα and believing that he is the Christ (20:30-31).¹²⁰ Even this stunning display of δόξα does not quell all unbelief; on the contrary, seeing δόξα *requires* belief, as the events of 11:45-46 make all too clear.¹²¹

John 12:23: The hour has come

Following the last sign, opposition to Jesus culminates with the decision to kill both him and Lazarus (11:53; 12:10), demonstrating the complete failure of Jesus' opponents to see his δόξα. John also records Jesus being anointed by Mary, which symbolically prepares the way for his death (12:1-8, especially v. 7).¹²² He then enters Jerusalem where, despite an initial welcome (12:12-19), fierce opposition awaits. In this context, 12:20f represents a climactic scene in the whole Gospel,

¹¹⁸ This link is seen in the use of σουδάριον (11:44, 20:7). Moreover, Lazarus must be unbound, while Jesus' burial cloths were left behind, suggesting he was never truly bound by the grave.

¹¹⁹ Ridderbos, *John*, 404.

¹²⁰ cf. Keener, *John*, 848.

¹²¹ Barrett, *St John*, 335, is right to say that 'here [in 11:40] faith is made a condition of seeing the glory of God'. However, he overstates the case by claiming that 'in 2:11 faith is the result of seeing the glory of Christ'. 2:11 shows a close relationship between the two, but does not specifically establish a direct causal link, unlike 11:40, where the conjunction ἐὰν plus the subjunctive πιστεύσῃς establishes a clear link between faith (cause) and seeing glory (result). Jesus' statement to Martha is, in effect, a first-class condition.

¹²² cf. Stibbe, *John*, 135.

providing the conclusion to Jesus' public ministry.¹²³ It is therefore important to pay close attention to this section, particularly to its numerous δόξα references.

12:23 has been called 'the text on which the whole of the ensuing discourse is hung'.¹²⁴ After hearing that some Greeks wish to see him, Jesus tells his disciples ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα ἵνα δοξασθῆ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

To grasp the significance of Jesus' statement, we must understand the importance of ἡ ὥρα within the Gospel. On three separate occasions, we are told that Jesus' hour had not yet come (2:4; 7:30; 8:20), drawing us forward to a pivotal moment somewhere in his future. Now, in 12:23, that moment arrives. It is therefore crucial that Jesus chooses to describe this as ἡ ὥρα ἵνα δοξασθῆ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, making glorification central to this long-awaited moment in the story.

It is also worth noting Jesus' use of the expression 'Son of Man' in this context.¹²⁵ The expression occurs 13 times in the Gospel – almost always as Jesus' self-designation – and is used directly alongside δοξάζω here and in 13:31. Outside the New Testament, the expression usually referred to divine splendour (cf. Dan 7:13-14), but the Synoptic Gospels often connect it with suffering.¹²⁶ John dramatically brings the two concepts together, drawing readers to Isaiah's Suffering Servant and showing that true δόξα is seen in the cross.¹²⁷

Moreover, 'Son of Man' is elsewhere used alongside two other important Johannine terms: ἀναβαίνω-καταβαίνω and ὑψόω.¹²⁸ Δόξα is thus fused together with these words, further illuminating its meaning. The Son of Man is lifted up, bringing life to all who believe in him (3:14-15).¹²⁹ This same Son of Man promises that his followers will see 'greater things' than miraculous insights –

¹²³ Brown, *John*, 469.

¹²⁴ Lindars, *John*, 427.

¹²⁵ For a full discussion of the Son of Man in John, see Schnackenburg, *St John*, 1.529-542.

¹²⁶ eg: Matt 17:12, 22-23; 20:18-19, 28; 26:2, 45; Mark 8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33, 45; Luke 9:22, 44; 18:31-33.

¹²⁷ eg: Isa 49:3; cf. Köstenberger, *John*, 422; Barrett, *St John*, 375.

¹²⁸ ἀναβαίνω-καταβαίνω: 1:51; 3:13; 6:62. ὑψόω: 3:14; 8:28; 12:34.

¹²⁹ The verb ὑψόω, 'lift up', occurs five times in John: 3:14 (x2); 8:28; 12:32, 34 – each time being connected to Jesus' crucifixion. For a detailed comparison of δοξάζω and ὑψόω in John, see M. C. de Boer, *Johannine Perspectives on the death of Jesus* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 17; Kampen: Pharos, 1996), 176ff; cf. discussion of 12:38-41 below.

namely, angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man (1:50-51). Hence, we should see these three concepts being closely and deliberately connected by John.¹³⁰ The hour of the Son's lifting up and ascent is the hour in which life is given through the 'greater things' – namely, the Son's God-glorifying death and resurrection.

Perhaps most importantly, this is John's clearest explanation thus far that Jesus' death is his true moment of glorification. It is not that Jesus is glorified *despite* the cross, or that Jesus' subsequent glorification casts its light upon the cross.¹³¹ Jesus is most fully revealed, or glorified, *through* and *in* the cross.¹³² This is confirmed by the metaphor Jesus employs in 12:24. Moreover, the entire pericope – particularly Jesus' soul being troubled (12:27) and John's interpretive comment (12:33) – show that Jesus' death is on view. So, while resurrection and ascension are included as part of glorification (as we will see elsewhere), Jesus' claim presents a stark reality: his glorification is not only his restoration to eternal δόξα with the Father (17:5), but also his death itself. "Thus John's *theologia crucis* is a *theologia gloriae*."¹³³ While all of Jesus' life reveals his δόξα, anyone wishing to see his supreme δόξα must look to the cross.

John provides certain clues to explain why Jesus' death is considered glorious. Firstly, it is a death that bears much fruit and through which Jesus draws all people to himself (12:24, 32). In his death he judges the world and casts out the ruler of the world (12:31). It demonstrates Jesus' unswerving obedience to his Father and his single-minded determination to seek his Father's δόξα, despite being deeply troubled by his impending death (12:27-28). Jesus also begins to hint at the true path of δόξα for his followers. Just as he resolutely seeks to make God known and bring him praise, so his disciples 'must follow the same pattern of glorifying God' (12:25-26) and reject the δόξα that comes from men.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ cf. Schnackenburg, *St John*, 1.530.

¹³¹ contra William Loader, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Structure and Issues* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1989), 110-11.

¹³² Köstenberger, *John*, 375.

¹³³ Andreas Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A biblical theology of mission* (New Studies in Biblical Theology; Leicester: Apollos, 2001), 208.

¹³⁴ Keener, *John*, 872; see discussion on chapters 5-8 above.

John's application of δόξα language also shows that Jesus' death is in fact God's greatest victory. Jesus remains in control throughout, locating the hour of his glorification not in the plot of his enemies, but in the approach of the Greeks – a key moment in redemptive history.¹³⁵ Jesus' words prevent us from seeing the impending crucifixion as merely a tragic, grisly execution. Instead, he forces readers to 'take the high view and the far perspective' of the cross.¹³⁶

When Jesus prays πάτερ, δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα (12:28), this not only demonstrates his steadfast obedience to his Father and his longing for the Father's δόξα (7:18), but also offers further insight into the Father-Son relationship. Having identified ἡ ὥρα as the time for the *Son of Man* to be glorified, Jesus' prayer indicates that this is the very thing that will glorify the *Father*. Specifically, God is glorified in the Son's obedience.¹³⁷

In response, the Father – heard directly here for the only time in John's Gospel – says ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω. The aorist ἐδόξασα looks back over the entire incarnate life of Jesus (1:14), while the future δοξάσω provides the substantial response to Jesus' prayer, looking forward to his approaching death, resurrection and exaltation.¹³⁸ "Just as the Father glorified himself in Jesus' descent as the Son of man, so from now on he will make him known and vindicate him as his Son before the eyes of the world."¹³⁹

12:28 is thus an effective summary of how John uses δοξάζω to achieve his purposes. "In the term 'glorify' John has created a linguistic instrument which brings under a particular concept the whole of Jesus' saving work, as it continues and is completed in the action of Christ with God through the Spirit, in the disciples."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ On the redemptive-historical significance of the approach of the Greeks in 12:20f, cf. Morris, *John*, 590-92; Ridderbos, *John*, 426-30.

¹³⁶ Burrige, *Four Gospels*, 142.

¹³⁷ cf. Ridderbos, *John*, 435.

¹³⁸ cf. Salier, *Sēmeia*, 123; Köstenberger, *John*, 382. It is much less likely that ἐδόξασα refers to Jesus' life and impending death, as some commentators have suggested (cf. Brown, *John*, 476-77). As Carson, *John*, 441 n. 2, notes, "[t]hat would mean that the agony of Jesus' petition in v. 28a is rather summarily dismissed by a proleptic statement."

¹³⁹ Ridderbos, *John*, 437.

¹⁴⁰ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2.402.

John 12:41: Isaiah saw his glory

With Jesus' announcement ἡ ὥρα (12:23), the pace of the story slows dramatically as John draws readers into this hour, such that Culpepper calls 12:37-50 a 'rhetorical brake' in the narrative.¹⁴¹ Again, δόξα becomes a key category at this critical juncture, as John offers a theological account of the rampant unbelief that has flown in the face of Jesus' δόξα throughout chapters 1-12. To do so, John turns to Isaiah, and makes the startling claim that this Old Testament prophet saw Jesus' δόξα (12:41).¹⁴²

What can we learn from this enigmatic statement? For one thing, both quotations (Isa 53:1 [12:38] and 6:10 [12:40]) support John's unfolding theology of δόξα, emphasising that God's δόξα is surprising and unexpected, and is only seen through believing eyes (12:40). "[T]hose who rejected Jesus have failed to see the revelation of 'the arm of the Lord' in his signs."¹⁴³ Alongside 12:43, failing to see God's δόξα is fundamentally 'a problem of allegiance'.¹⁴⁴ That is why Jesus' signs brought relatively few to belief (cf. 5:44).¹⁴⁵ John's desire is that his readers – like Isaiah, but unlike many others past and present – will see Jesus' δόξα and believe (20:30-31).

Moreover, by selecting these particular quotes and interpreting them in terms of Isaiah seeing *Jesus'* δόξα, John brings us very close to the heart of his christological message. By applying Isaiah 6 to Jesus, John reaffirms that Jesus is the revelation of the unique identity of God. Given the context of Isaiah 6:1-10, Jesus is identified as 'the embodiment of God's glory, the visible manifestation of his presence'.¹⁴⁶ But again, more than simply a visual manifestation is on view. For Isaiah, as for John, seeing God's δόξα meant seeing his character. This is the only possible explanation for identifying the Suffering Servant's ministry (Isa 53) as a manifestation of δόξα.

¹⁴¹ R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 71.

¹⁴² It is almost certain that αὐτοῦ in 12:41 refers to Jesus. cf. Köstenberger, *John*, 391; Brown, *John*, 484; Ridderbos, *John*, 445; Morris, *John*, 538.

¹⁴³ Catrin H. Williams, 'Isaiah in John's Gospel', in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; London: T & T Clark, 2005), 108.

¹⁴⁴ Salier, *Sēmeia*, 127.

¹⁴⁵ cf. Brown, *John*, 487.

¹⁴⁶ Williams, *Isaiah*, 111. The emphasis on δόξα is even stronger in both the LXX and the Targum of Isaiah.

Even more importantly, John portrays Jesus as a partaker of the divine nature. Richard Bauckham’s enormously important work on monotheism and Jesus’ identity draws heavily on John’s ‘theologically potent’ interpretation of Isaiah.¹⁴⁷ Bauckham argues that the application of staunchly monotheistic texts (like Isaiah 6) to Jesus constituted a ‘novel but appropriate’ way of speaking about God,¹⁴⁸ showing Jesus to be ‘the way in which the unique God demonstrates his unique divinity to the world.’¹⁴⁹ “The story of Jesus is not a mere illustration of the divine identity; Jesus himself and his story are intrinsic to the divine identity.”¹⁵⁰ In Isaiah 6, the prophet sees the very glory of God himself. Yet this very glory is revealed in the incarnate life of Jesus. These facts ‘belong to the Christological core of John’s Gospel’.¹⁵¹

Equally important in understanding John 12:41 is the use of Isaiah 53. Commentators often emphasise the reference to Isaiah 6 at the expense of Isaiah 53. However, John insists that Isaiah said *both* these things (ταῦτα) because he saw Jesus’ δόξα.¹⁵²

How should we understand 12:38 as an expression of Jesus’ δόξα? To begin, this passage deepens the connection between δοξάζω and ὑψόω already established in 12:20-36, now reinforced through the presence of both ideas in Isaiah 6.¹⁵³ Moreover, Isaiah 52:13 (LXX) explicitly links these words.¹⁵⁴ For John, ‘lifting up’ is much more than a physical description of Jesus’ crucifixion. It is ‘a Christological statement of Jesus’ dignity and a soteriological promise.’¹⁵⁵ As the Son of Man who has descended from heaven, Jesus will be lifted up in his death and resurrection, giving life to those who believe.¹⁵⁶ Understanding these connections allows us to further grasp the extent to

¹⁴⁷ Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998), 64.

¹⁴⁸ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 74.

¹⁴⁹ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 54.

¹⁵⁰ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 71.

¹⁵¹ Williams, *Isaiah*, 116.

¹⁵² For the use of ταῦτα to refer to a series of preceding statements, see 6:59; 8:30; 13:21; 14:25. cf. Williams, *Isaiah*, 112 n. 31.

¹⁵³ Δόξα: Isa 6:3 (LXX); ὑψόω: Isa 6:1 (LXX).

¹⁵⁴ Isa 52:13 (LXX): ἰδοὺ συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα. John’s quotation of Isa 53:1 is almost certainly intended to refer to the entire passage (52:13–53:12). cf. Paul Miller, “‘They Saw His Glory and Spoke of Him’”: The Gospel of John and the Old Testament’, in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 132: “John is such a skilled exegete that he can use a mere fragment of biblical texts as a kind of exegetical magnet, attracting whole clusters of other texts and themes to it.”

¹⁵⁵ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2.400.

¹⁵⁶ 3:14-15; 8:28; 12:34.

which δόξα permeates the Gospel. When John speaks of the Son of Man being lifted up and drawing all people to himself, undertones of the Son's glorification are also present.

Even more profoundly, John 12:38-41 confirms that Jesus' δόξα involved his rejection, suffering and death, as depicted in Isaiah 52-53. Bauckham's analysis is once again particularly insightful. He shows that, though John remained convinced that Jesus was 'the earthly manifestation of who God is',¹⁵⁷ this same Jesus was depicted as the Isaianic Servant who 'is exalted and glorified in and through his humiliation and suffering.'¹⁵⁸ "God's identity is not simply revealed but *enacted* in the event of salvation for the world which the service and self-humiliation of the Son accomplishes."¹⁵⁹

To rightly grasp John's reading of Isaiah, we must therefore understand the wonderful paradox created by John's 'unparalleled linking of the two quotations'.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, we can tentatively suggest that Isaiah himself saw this connection, as his vision and understanding of Yahweh unfolded throughout his ministry. Now, John applies this link to Jesus. The God of Isaiah 6 is the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52-53, and Jesus is glorified chiefly by way of the cross. If John's reading of Isaiah 6 describes 'the supreme greatness of Christ', his interpretation of Isaiah 53 highlights 'the cross as the supreme illustration of His greatness.'¹⁶¹ Yes, God is holy and ineffable in his δόξα; but his real δόξα is revealed in his willingness to accept humiliation, suffering, and rejection so that life may be given to his people.

Hence, Isaiah foresaw what only a select few within John's Gospel could see, and what so many others failed to see: the direct connection between the δόξα of God and the δόξα of Jesus – a δόξα which continually defied the expectations and preferences of sinful humanity. John's point is that Isaiah could speak as he did because he knew only too well that such δόξα would meet with rejection. Most importantly, he foresaw that this δόξα would be most fully seen in Jesus' death.

¹⁵⁷ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 66.

¹⁵⁸ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 64.

¹⁵⁹ Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 68 (emphasis added).

¹⁶⁰ Williams, *Isaiah*, 108.

¹⁶¹ Morris, *John*, 605.

John 13-21: The glory of the cross

Having reported some two-and-a-half years of activity in 12 chapters, John's next seven chapters cover barely 24 hours. The narrative grinds to a halt as Jesus withdraws from the crowds and prepares the disciples for his long-expected departure from the world (13:1). By recording Jesus' discourse at length (13:31–17:26), John aims to 'freeze the time of the hour in order to explain what the hour will mean before the events of the hour play themselves out in full'.¹⁶² Ideas used at this point will therefore assume great significance in our understanding of those events, and of Jesus' whole life and ministry.

The ideas of glory and glorification are highly prominent in chapters 13-17, and Jesus interprets much of what will happen (in chapters 18-20) through these categories. The verb *δοξάζω* is of particular importance, occurring 13 times, while the noun *δόξα* appears three times. There is a particular concentration of the vocabulary in 13:31-32 and 17:1-5, where it introduces both the main section of the 'farewell discourse' (13:31–16:33) and Jesus' prayer to his Father (17:1-26).¹⁶³

John 13:31-32: The Son of Man glorified

As Judas departs to betray Jesus, and with the events leading to his death decisively set in motion, Jesus employs the idea of glorification to reassure his disciples that all is not lost. Humanly-speaking, their fledgling movement may have seemed defeated, but Jesus' theological explanation places the events of that evening within a radically new framework, even striking a note of triumph.

Having already noted the importance of Jesus connecting 'Son of Man' with glorification, several other key ideas are on view here. As in 12:23, Jesus again uses *δοξάζω* to refer primarily to his crucifixion.¹⁶⁴ But for the first time, Jesus begins to speak of this glorification as already

¹⁶² Gail R. O'Day, "I Have Overcome the World" (John 16:33): Narrative Time in John 13–17. *Semeia* 53 (1991): 159.

¹⁶³ On 13:31 as the start of the farewell discourse, see Carson, *John*, 476-482.

¹⁶⁴ The parallels with 12:23, as well as the context of both 13:18-30 and 13:33-38 (especially vv. 36-38) make it clear that Jesus' death is primarily on view here.

accomplished. The aorist ἐδοξάσθη (13:31 [x2], 32) depicts events ‘from the vantage point of fulfilment’.¹⁶⁵ Jesus has no doubt that these events will take place, and that they will reveal God.

Moloney and Carson identify εὐθὺς as referring to the hastening and the certainty of the cross.¹⁶⁶ Schnackenburg helpfully classifies the future δοξάσει as a ‘logical future’ rather than a temporal marker: just as the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him, so also God *will* glorify the Son of Man in himself.¹⁶⁷ Perhaps most incisive is Morris’s observation that ‘Jesus is expressing three certainties’: God is glorified in Jesus’ passion; God will glorify Jesus in himself; God will do this without delay.¹⁶⁸

While notions of exaltation or honour are present, the key concept is again revelation. As the whole Gospel thus far has shown, God’s character is revealed in the life of Jesus. Now it becomes clear that ‘the greatest moment of divine self-disclosure, the greatest moment of displayed glory, was in the shame of the cross.’¹⁶⁹ Loader claims that the cross is simply the first step in Jesus’ return to his eternal glory with the Father, but that it should not be ‘confused with’ glorification itself.¹⁷⁰ However, John presents a picture in which the whole process of glorification – the cross, as well as the resurrection – displays both the Son’s divine nature and his unswerving obedience to the Father’s plan. The Father, meanwhile, is glorified by the actions of the Son, as these actions reveal his salvific love for the world.¹⁷¹

Perhaps the most important idea is that of ‘divine mutual glorification’ between Father and Son. We have already observed how Father and Son glorify one another throughout Jesus’ life and ministry. But here, the same relationship is intensified during ἡ ὥρα, the culminating moment in Jesus’ ministry. “There is a permanent mutual glorification of Father and Son which continues

¹⁶⁵ Schnackenburg, *St John*, 3.50.

¹⁶⁶ Francis J. Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 24; Carson, *John*, 483.

¹⁶⁷ ie: in God (ἐν αὐτῷ); Schnackenburg, *St John*, 3.50. Schnackenburg’s suggestion is supported by the presence of the subordinate conjunction εἰ at the start of v. 32.

¹⁶⁸ Morris, *John*, 631-32.

¹⁶⁹ Carson, *John*, 482.

¹⁷⁰ Loader, *Christology*, 115.

¹⁷¹ cf. Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 14.

throughout ... this climax of Jesus' saving activity."¹⁷² The Father-Son relationship involves an unparalleled intimacy, connection and desire that one another be revealed and praised in all things.

John 14-16: Glory in the farewell discourse

Having introduced the farewell discourse by focusing on glorification, Jesus uses the term sporadically throughout chapters 14-16. In 14:13, he tells the disciples that he will do whatever they ask in his name, ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ πατήρ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ. Again, the ideas of divine mutual glorification and the Son as the 'embodiment of God' are both present.¹⁷³ But an important new dimension is now raised, with the role of believers in God's glorification being introduced.

Jesus says that believers will perform 'greater works' than those he performed, but this will only happen as they ask in his name (14:12-13a). The Son does not depart and leave believers with the responsibility to glorify God in their works. Rather, just as all the events of Jesus' life showed God's δόξα, so he will continue to glorify the Father through works done by believers. 'Greater works' include living lives of love and thus showing themselves to be his disciples (13:35), and (as we will see below) the continuation of Jesus' mission to make God known in the world (cf. 17:10f, 21-23).

But these remain *Jesus'* works. He bears ultimate responsibility for them, and they are performed through his power as he answers prayer from his position of heavenly δόξα (cf. 17:5). Indeed, Jesus himself says that he will do these works (τοῦτο ποιήσω). His purpose is still that the Father be glorified, but a new method emerges once the Son returns to the Father. Thus Jesus depicts an intimate relationship between himself and believers.

This relationship is further expounded when Jesus says ἐδοξάσθη ὁ πατήρ μου, ἵνα καρπὸν πολλὸν φέρητε καὶ γένησθε ἔμοι μαθηταί (15:8). John has already hinted that believers can glorify

¹⁷² Schnackenburg, *St John*, 2.403.

¹⁷³ cf. W. Robert Cook, 'The "Glory" Motif in the Johannine Corpus', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27/3 (1984): 296.

God. In 9:24, the Jews challenge the man born blind, Δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ. The irony of that encounter is that the man does so through his testimony, while the Jews – Jesus’ Ἰδαί (1:11) – tragically fail to do so.

Here, Jesus emphasises that the only way to bear fruit is to abide in him, the true vine, and to seek his enabling (15:1-7). In fact this intimate, personal connection not only makes it possible for believers to make God known. It is the very thing that glorifies God.¹⁷⁴ In drawing a people to himself who hear his voice and remain in him,¹⁷⁵ the Son reveals the Father’s salvific power and love, and so glorifies him.

Several theories as to what this ‘fruit’ entails and how it glorifies the Father have been proposed. For example, Keener notes that this is no ‘mystical experience’, but a ‘relational encounter’ defined by ἀγάπη in 15:9-10.¹⁷⁶ The disciples thus ‘bear much fruit through laying down their lives in love as Jesus did.’¹⁷⁷ Köstenberger and O’Brien emphasise that believers glorify God by continuing Jesus’ redemptive mission in the world after his departure – a mission intended to make God’s δόξα known.¹⁷⁸ Perhaps most importantly, Schnackenburg suggests that Jesus’ central role in this process – as the vine who makes fruit-bearing possible – is the very thing which glorifies the Father.¹⁷⁹ These complementary views express the profound relationships on view. In sum, Christians are reminded that their ‘obedient faith-union with Christ’ is central to Jesus’ plans for bringing δόξα to the Father.¹⁸⁰

Another important idea throughout the farewell discourse is the promised coming of the Spirit.¹⁸¹ Amid the Spirit’s many roles described in these chapters, 16:14 tells us that he will glorify Jesus,

¹⁷⁴ The ἵνα clause of 15:8b is best understood as appositional, as is typical of ἵνα clauses in John: ‘By this is my Father glorified, *namely*, that you bear much fruit...’ cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 475-6.

¹⁷⁵ cf. 10:1-18; 12:32.

¹⁷⁶ cf. 13:35.

¹⁷⁷ Keener, *John*, 1003.

¹⁷⁸ Köstenberger and O’Brien, *Salvation*, 207-8.

¹⁷⁹ cf. 13:31-32.

¹⁸⁰ Carson, *John*, 518.

¹⁸¹ cf. 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-11, 13-15.

taking what is his and declaring it to the disciples. By discussing the Spirit, Jesus offers an insight into the trinitarian life of God, and how divine mutual glorification operates within these relationships. For one thing, the Spirit is linked closely to Jesus, just as the rest of the Gospel links Jesus to the Father. But while Father and Son glorify one another – so much so that ‘it seems that the glory of the one equals the glory of the other’¹⁸² – the Spirit glorifies the Son, and thereby the Father, but not himself. Further, neither Father nor Son glorifies the Spirit.

Further, by examining 7:39 and 12:16 – both of which were linked with Jesus’ glorification – it becomes clear that a central aspect of the Spirit’s role is revelation. The Spirit glorifies Jesus by revealing him, leading disciples to the truth about him, taking what is his and making it known (ἀναγγέλλω). This is not simply the truth of Jesus’ teaching, but ‘of the mission and being of Christ which the Spirit declares to the world’.¹⁸³ Hence Knox concludes, “[i]t is the work of the Spirit to reveal the Father and the Son to the Christian.”¹⁸⁴

The Spirit’s role in relation to glory also provides us with a window into John’s realised eschatology. The Synoptic Gospels typically see Jesus’ δόξα as being present in his coming at the Last Day.¹⁸⁵ But for John, there is δόξα in every aspect of the Son’s earthly life. Moreover, the Son continues to be present in his δόξα now, through the Spirit’s ministry. “The Spirit, by realising the eschatological functions of Christ, gives him this glory by anticipation.”¹⁸⁶ There is a sense in which the complete revelation of the Son is possible now, by the work of the Spirit.

John 17: ‘Glorify your Son’

As the hour of his glorification draws ever nearer, Jesus concludes his instructions to the disciples and addresses his Father (John 17). The prayer not only provides a fitting end to the farewell discourse by recapitulating many of its themes, but is in some ways ‘a summary of the entire Fourth

¹⁸² Cook, “‘Glory’ Motif”, 294.

¹⁸³ Barrett, *St John*, 409.

¹⁸⁴ D. Broughton Knox, ‘The baptism and fullness of the Spirit’, in *Selected Works Volume 1: The Doctrine of God* (ed. Tony Payne; Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2000), 284.

¹⁸⁵ Matt 16:27; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31; Mark 8:38; 13:26; Luke 9:26; 21:27.

¹⁸⁶ Barrett, *St John*, 409.

Gospel to this point'.¹⁸⁷ Several key ideas are gathered together – not least the Son's δόξα, and his glorification through death and exaltation, which in turn glorifies the Father.

Jesus bases the first section of his prayer around δόξα. In fact, this chapter features the highest concentration of δόξα-δοξάζω in the Gospel. We will begin by examining the cluster of references in 17:1-5, before analysing 17:10-24.

Jesus begins his prayer by reiterating that ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα.¹⁸⁸ His prayer is therefore a request that God's long-awaited purposes be fulfilled: δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ. We have already discussed the idea of 'divine mutual glorification', which surfaces again here. But several other key points arise from this verse.

Firstly, to grasp the meaning of Jesus' request, we must briefly explore the connection with 17:2.¹⁸⁹ Here, Jesus calls on a decision made by his Father to grant him authority over all people because of his obedient suffering, death and resurrection. Importantly, these are prerogatives belonging to God alone, now exercised by the Son, so the Father may be revealed and eternal life granted to his people.¹⁹⁰

This context elucidates the meaning of Jesus' prayer (17:1). Jesus is asking to be brought to the cross, where he will carry out the Father's plan and bestow eternal life. In turn, the Father is revealed and exalted (in the Son) as those entrusted to the Son receive life. The Father is thus revealed as 'the architect of the divine plan' of redemption, carried out by the Son.¹⁹¹ What's more, Jesus links glorification with the idea of receiving life – the very goal of John's Gospel (20:30-31). To see God's δόξα and to receive eternal life are parallel events.¹⁹²

Jesus' petition, then, is a request for God to hasten the cross, where the Son's δόξα will be manifested. This observation helps us to grasp the relationship between δόξα and δοξάζω in the

¹⁸⁷ Carson, *John*, 551.

¹⁸⁸ cf. 12:23, 27; 13:1.

¹⁸⁹ 17:2 begins with the subordinate conjunction καθὼς ('even as'), logically connecting it to 17:1.

¹⁹⁰ Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor*, 109.

¹⁹¹ Dumbrell, *John*, 140.

¹⁹² cf. Carson, *John*, 564.

Fourth Gospel. If, as we have argued, δόξαζω is predominantly connected with the idea of revelation, then the glorification of the Son reveals God's δόξα – that is, his character and attributes. Without denying that there is any sense in which the Son *attains* a new δόξα by obediently fulfilling the task given to him by the Father,¹⁹³ John's emphasis is on the Son's δόξα being truly *revealed* in his death, whereby he saves his people.

Jesus' request also shows that glorification is not restricted to his death, but involves a complex of events encompassing his death, resurrection and exaltation. The gift of eternal life relies on the completion of all these events.¹⁹⁴ Hence, the combination of these events 'constitutes an aspect of the single glorification of Jesus.'¹⁹⁵

Jesus reintroduces glory in 17:4 when he tells the Father – and reveals to his disciples – ἐγώ σε ἐδόξασα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Specifically, the Son manifests the δόξα of the Father through the faithful completion of the work given him by the Father, demonstrating his obedience in all things, even unto death. While Jesus is clearly one with God, he is also one with man, 'in submission, dependence and obedience [to God].'¹⁹⁶ This will become the model for how the disciples glorify God as they continue Jesus' mission (cf. 17:18; 20:21).

Jesus' statement looks back over all he has done to this point, presenting the actions of his earthly life as manifestations of God's δόξα. However, it is likely that ἐδόξασα also includes a proleptic reference to his approaching death. The contrast (καὶ νῦν, 17:5) is not between completed works and impending cross-work. Rather, it is between the δόξα that Jesus brought to his Father on earth, and his request for future, heavenly δόξα. This is most clearly indicated by the use of τελειώσας, which appears again at the crucifixion.¹⁹⁷ Thus, Jesus' death is yet again presented as the real moment of God's glorification.

¹⁹³ cf. Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 4.

¹⁹⁴ cf. Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 15-16; Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 176.

¹⁹⁵ Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 17.

¹⁹⁶ Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 34.

¹⁹⁷ 19:28; cf. 19:30.

This statement gives way to petition, as Jesus asks the Father to glorify him with τῆ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί (17:5). Jesus' prayer, deliberately spoken in the hearing of his disciples, offers a rare glimpse into this pre-existent, eternal δόξα – the status and position he shared with the Father in eternity past. He now asks to be returned to the fullness of this position. This glorification does not entail some kind of 'deification' or change, as though the incarnate Jesus was less than God. The Son always possessed δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός. "Jesus is not becoming God but returning to the glory he shared with the Father before creation."¹⁹⁸ So then, his petition is that he be returned to that δόξα, through his death, resurrection and ascension. Here, then, is further evidence that Jesus pictures his death, resurrection and exaltation as together constituting the one hour of his δόξα.

At the same time, this δόξα in no way contradicts the reality of Jesus' glorious death. Those who argue this way do violence to the rest of chapter 17 – not to mention John's entire narrative.¹⁹⁹ John's point is that the pre-existent Son manifests God by submitting to the shame of the cross. "The glory of the cross is of a piece with the pre-existent glory of Jesus."²⁰⁰ We will observe more of how this prayer elucidates Jesus' earthly δόξα below (cf. 17:24).

After praying for himself and his glorification (17:1-5), Jesus then prays for his disciples (17:6-19), before praying for all who will believe (17:20-26). Within this section, there are three more important references to δόξα-δοξάζω that demand our attention.

As he prays for those whom the Father has given him out of the world, Jesus states that he is glorified ἐν αὐτοῖς (17:10). Here, ἐν is best understood instrumentally: Jesus is glorified *through* the lives of his disciples.²⁰¹ Similarly to 15:8, believers glorify Jesus by fruitful lives in which they love

¹⁹⁸ Keener, *John*, 1055.

¹⁹⁹ Loader, *Christology*, 110-11, overstates the case when he argues that Jesus' statement in 17:5 is primarily what John means by δόξα; in so arguing, he neglects the clear Johannine idea of the cross as glorification. Moreover, Bultmann, *John*, 496 claims – typically yet incorrectly – that the language is mythological and 'accords fully with the thought-form of the Gnostic myth'. Lindars, *John*, 520 (cf. 36-42), has demonstrated that the expression 'has its roots in Jewish tradition'.

²⁰⁰ Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 173.

²⁰¹ See the translations by Carson, *John*, 561 and Köstenberger, *John*, 493; cf. Barrett, *St John*, 423.

one another (13:35) and continue Jesus' mission. But 17:10 carries its own nuances. While δεδόξασμαι may allude to glorification that has already taken place, its main emphasis is proleptic, indicating that Jesus will be glorified in the future. This is supported by Jesus' statements in 14:13 and 15:8, and the forward-looking emphasis of 17:11-12: Jesus points forward to 'the glory yet to come, but which was certain'.²⁰²

Moreover, as the context shows, Jesus' disciples will glorify him in several ways: by receiving the words Jesus gave them and believing he was sent from the Father (17:8); being one just as Father and Son are one (17:11); not being 'of the world' (17:14-16); and being sanctified in the truth (17:17-19). More broadly, the disciples' are charged to continue revealing Jesus' δόξα – to make him known in the world. So, while a crucial part of the answer to Jesus' prayer (17:1-5) comes as the Father hastens the cross, the complete answer to this prayer lies beyond the events of the cross, and involves Jesus' people. That is, God will answer Jesus' prayer through the character and witness of Jesus' disciples. In this way, believers are given a central position in the whole area of glorification. We will further examine the nature of this position in our concluding chapter.

As the prayer continues, Jesus outlines several benefits that he gives his followers.²⁰³ These benefits culminate as Jesus describes his gift to believers in the highest possible terms: τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς (17:22). John has already shown that certain people, seeing with the eyes of faith, perceived Jesus' δόξα. But something more is involved here; Jesus actually *gives* his δόξα, so that in some sense believers share in it.²⁰⁴ But what is the δόξα that believers share, and what is the purpose of this gift?

Jesus does not claim to pass on his eternal δόξα, but rather 'the glory that [he] was awarded in order to carry out his earthly mission'.²⁰⁵ The δόξα the Father *gave* him – not his eternal δόξα – is involved (cf. 17:5). Jesus promises that he will bring his disciples into the loving, unified circle of

²⁰² Morris, *John*, 726 n. 34; cf. Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 185.

²⁰³ 17:12, 14, 18, 19.

²⁰⁴ Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 194.

²⁰⁵ Köstenberger, *John*, 498; cf. Ridderbos, *John*, 563.

δόξα that characterises the Father-Son relationship.²⁰⁶ “Taken into the life of the triune God, its love and unity, believers are made part of God’s redemptive mission in the world: endowed with the Spirit, they are to proclaim the gospel of redemption and forgiveness in Jesus’ name (20:21-23). Thus Jesus will be glorified in his disciples.”²⁰⁷ Hence, as they continue his mission, Jesus makes it possible for his followers to partake of the glory that has been the distinguishing feature of his own ministry.

This δόξα is then the basis for perfected unity among believers (17:23).²⁰⁸ Moreover, the context (17:20) suggests that this is true of all disciples – not just those present in the Upper Room. As Father and Son indwell one another, Jesus indwells believers so they experience God’s presence in a way that unites them.²⁰⁹

Hence, while John says much about believers glorifying God, a stunning parallel truth emerges: God shares his δόξα with his people. The δόξα that Father and Son share is now shared with human beings. But this δόξα is not just an end in itself; it is given so that Jesus’ followers might use it as he does: to glorify the Father by being perfectly one, and by allowing the world to see God’s love for them – in short, by making God known. Like Jesus, believers become ‘the sphere of divine activity’ (cf. 14:12, 23).²¹⁰

Moreover, sharing Jesus’ δόξα means believers must follow the way of the cross. “We have something of Jesus’ glory inasmuch as we, like him, are to endure the enmity of the world and walk as suffering servants.”²¹¹ John makes this abundantly clear by referring to the death of Peter, who glorified God by following in the footsteps of his Lord, setting a pattern of godly discipleship (21:19).

Finally, Jesus expresses his wish that his followers be with him where he is, to see the δόξα his Father gave him, ‘because you loved me before the foundation of the world’ (17:24). This verse is

²⁰⁶ cf. 17:21, 22b, 23.

²⁰⁷ Köstenberger and O’Brien, *Salvation*, 208.

²⁰⁸ Note especially the ἕνα, linking v. 22 and v. 23.

²⁰⁹ cf. 10:38; 14:10, 23; 17:21.

²¹⁰ Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 195.

²¹¹ Carson, *Jesus and his Friends*, 194.

reminiscent of 17:5, and we have discussed Jesus' eternal δόξα above. But 17:24 raises another important issue: if Jesus prays that his eternal δόξα be seen in the future, is his earthly δόξα in some way veiled or incomplete?

Bultmann rightly says 'the vision of the δόξα [in v. 24] is different from that of 1:14'. But his claim that the difference is seen in δόξα being 'freed from the veil of the σάρξ' is misleading and confusing.²¹² The point of 1:14 is that Jesus' δόξα is specifically seen *in* the σάρξ; the σάρξ is where God's δόξα is *unveiled*.

However, there is a sense in which a future revelation still remains. While Jesus' disciples truly saw his δόξα, this does not negate the possibility of a further revelation. Moreover, Jesus' earthly δόξα was seen by faith; he prays for a more direct, explicit vision when believers are 'with him'. "The glory of Christ that his followers will see is his glory as God, the glory he enjoyed before his mission because of the Father's love for him."²¹³ Though we glimpse Jesus' δόξα now through the Spirit, witnessing his full δόξα remains at the heart of the Christian's hope for the future. Only then will believers see the δόξα belonging to the Son from all eternity.²¹⁴

Thus, Jesus ends his time with the disciples by teaching them that his δόξα will be most vividly seen first in the cross, and subsequently in his return to his eternal position with the Father. What's more, not only will believers have a part to play in God's ongoing glorification, but they will be enabled to play that part by being drawn into the very life of the Godhead – a life defined by divine mutual glorification. Surely the disciples could have received no more encouraging message as they prepared for the long-awaited departure of their leader.

John 18-21: It is finished...

²¹² Bultmann, *John*, 519.

²¹³ Carson, *John*, 569-70.

²¹⁴ eg: 1 John 3:2; Rev 21:11, 23.

After saturating readers in δόξα throughout the farewell discourse, John omits the word-group completely in chapters 18-20. But the idea is far from absent. Käsemann's argument that Jesus' death proved 'problematical' for John, forcing the Evangelist to include it as a 'mere postscript', fails to grasp the depth at which that the Evangelist has woven together the cross and the notion of δόξα.²¹⁵ John has carefully trained his readers to see all that happens in chapters 18-20 as reveal most plainly Jesus' glory'.²¹⁶

Where, then, do we see δόξα within John's description of Jesus' death, resurrection and exaltation? In one sense, the theological interpretations given by Jesus himself – not to mention John – provide the real answer to this question. The historical details simply describe the precise way in which this glorification is played out. However, observing the details recorded by John further illuminates Jesus' δόξα – his divine character – in four particular ways.

First, Jesus remains firmly in control of events as his death moves inexorably closer. Having explained that he will lay down his own life (10:18; 15:13), Jesus demonstrates his authority in the circumstances surrounding his arrest and trial. He continues to direct events from the cross (19:26-30), even to the very last moment where he κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα. Moreover, as Jesus faces trial, John hints that the world is truly on trial.²¹⁷ Jesus' kingly δόξα is symbolically revealed in his 'coronation' (19:1-3), and he receives a burial fit only for a king.²¹⁸ The shame of crucifixion is thus transformed into the manifestation of δόξα through Jesus' control of events – a control that only God himself could possess.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ cf. Käsemann, *Testament*, 7. Leon Morris, 'The Jesus of Saint John', in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd* (ed. Robert A. Guelich; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 46, offers the only fitting retort to Käsemann: 'Some postscript!'

²¹⁶ cf. Keener, *John*, 1065.

²¹⁷ For a thorough study of the trial motif in John's Gospel – especially with respect to the world being 'on trial', see Andrew T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000).

²¹⁸ cf. George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Themes: John* (Dallas: Word, 1989), 104; Edwards, *Discovering John*, 74.

²¹⁹ For a thorough study of δόξα in the Johannine passion narrative, see Jerome H. Neyrey, 'Despising the Shame of the Cross: Honor and Shame in the Johannine Passion Narrative', *Semeia* 68 (1994): 113-137.

Second, Jesus' death is the clearest example of his obedience to the Father, and his determination to seek the Father's δόξα in all things.²²⁰ Throughout the Gospel, John has shown that splendour and honour from men are not to be sought. Despite the anguish he felt, Jesus endured the cross so the Father's name would be glorified (12:27-28).

Third, John masterfully assembles a picture in which the true, theological meaning of Jesus' death is displayed. Jesus is revealed as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (1:29) and gathers God's children from all nations (11:50-52).²²¹ Jesus' death brings eternal life to all who believe and abundant life to his sheep (3:14-15; 10:10), and casts out the ruler of the world (12:31). It bears much fruit and draws all people to himself (12:24, 32). In short, in his death Jesus accomplished 'the momentous work of salvation ... entrusted to him' (17:4; 19:30).²²² Because of all this, John does not see Jesus' death as shameful. Rather, it is the moment when God's gracious and loving character is most clearly seen – for which God is rightly praised and exalted.

Finally, John portrays Jesus' death as triumphant by viewing it retrospectively, in the light of the resurrection and ascension which form part of the hour of his glorification. The Gospel insists that this retrospective view is essential for properly understanding Jesus' life and death.²²³ For those whose eyes have been opened by the Spirit, Jesus' whole life – especially his death and resurrection – is seen as a manifestation of divine δόξα.

Thus, John leads readers to a profound theological truth at the heart of the Christian faith. Where humanity defines δόξα in worldly triumph and outward achievement, God himself defines it by his own humble service for his people. The δόξα of God, revealed in the incarnate life of Jesus, is most clearly displayed in Jesus' death – a sacrificial death which took away the sins of the world and made God known in all his grace and truth. Isaac Watts beautifully captured the essence of John's thought:

²²⁰ 7:18; 12:28; 13:31-32; 17:1.

²²¹ On Jesus as the Passover Lamb in John, see Edwards, *Discovering John*, 79; Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Themes*, 106.

²²² Köstenberger and O'Brien, *Salvation*, 208.

²²³ eg: 2:19-22; 7:37-39; 12:12-16.

But in the grace that rescued man
His brightest form of glory shines;
Here, on the cross, 'tis fairest drawn,
In precious blood, and crimson lines.²²⁴

²²⁴ From *The Wonders of the Cross*.

Conclusion: Following the way of glory

Based on frequency of usage, placement at key moments in the narrative, and interaction with other major Johannine themes, it is readily apparent that ‘glory’ plays a crucial part in John’s portrait of Jesus. Where most past studies have focused purely on linguistic and historical analysis, our aim has been to provide a distinctively narrative-theological approach to this issue, moving beyond attempts to simply define δόξα-δοξάζω. Instead, we have sought to understand ‘glory’ as it relates to John’s overall purposes, and to illuminate the Evangelist’s theological message through the lens of ‘glory’ by following the flow of his narrative.

Having thus surveyed the landscape of the Fourth Gospel, we will now conclude with some key theological observations.

Meaning

Clearly, δόξα and δοξάζω are difficult words to grasp. Ridderbos rightly states that their meaning is ‘hard to describe in a single word’,²²⁵ while Holwerda notes that ‘[i]t is impossible to draw a fine line of distinction between the various connotations of this term, for the one flows into the other’.²²⁶

In one sense, then, our analysis has brought us little closer to simple definitions. There is a powerful sense in which readers must remain content to feel the force of δόξα and δοξάζω in their broader contexts, rather than seeking a definition that will often fail to capture the Evangelist’s deeper theological meaning. This is why the studies by Pamment, Caird and Bratcher ultimately prove inadequate,²²⁷ and it is largely for this reason that we have approached the issue focusing on narrative, rather than linguistics.

That said, it is possible to outline two broad ways in which John uses δόξα and δοξάζω. Firstly, notions of ‘praise’, ‘honour’ or ‘exaltation’ are present in many cases. These definitions most

²²⁵ Ridderbos, *John*, 563.

²²⁶ Holwerda, *Holy Spirit*, 2.

²²⁷ cf. p. 11.

closely approximate the traditional biblical usage outlined in chapter 1. While such a definition is most common where unbelieving humanity is involved,²²⁸ this meaning carries over into several other occurrences of δόξα.²²⁹

However, the dominant note throughout the Gospel – and John’s most distinctive theological contribution – is to use δόξα and δοξάζω in the context of revelation. While this usage resists a simple definition, John’s meaning is something like ‘divine nature’ or ‘divine character’. To see God’s δόξα is to understand and experience the character and attributes of the true and living God, as manifested in the incarnate λόγος.²³⁰ When God (Father or Son) is glorified, his character is made known – and when his character is made known, God is glorified.²³¹ Thus the Evangelist’s main emphasis centres on revelation – the display of God’s divine attributes, seen in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Function and theological importance

While definitions are helpful, a broader perspective is needed to properly grasp the role of ‘glory’ within John’s narrative. Some brief comments on how John applies his definitions are therefore in order, before we conclude with some more general theological observations.

As our exegesis has shown, John invests δόξα with a richly theological meaning by drawing on Old Testament background, particularly Exodus 33-34 and God’s self-disclosure to Moses. He also portrays Jesus’ various signs as manifestations of the divine character. However, according to John, God’s δόξα is manifested most clearly and powerfully at the cross. John effectively removes the scandal of the cross – not by removing the cross, but by showing its true meaning and purpose. His theological explanation shows that Jesus’ (seemingly) shameful death was actually the moment of his greatest triumph, the moment when the sins of the world were taken away and eternal life given.

²²⁸ eg: 5:41, 44a; 7:18; 12:43a.

²²⁹ eg: 5:44b; 8:50, 54; 12:43b.

²³⁰ eg: 1:14; 2:11; 11:4, 40; 12:41; 17:24.

²³¹ eg: 8:54; 11:4; 12:23, 28; 13:31-32; 14:13; 15:8; 16:14; 17:1, 4-5, 10.

The apostle Paul makes a similar point in Philippians 2. Christ's acceptance of death on a cross was ultimately εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.²³² From John's perspective, Jesus' willingness to lay down his life reveals a sacrificial, humble attitude that is essential to God's character – πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

This is more than an apologetic for the cross; this is an intimate revelation of the nature of the God of the universe, who – though utterly transcendent and sovereign – did not count himself above lowly suffering and humility.

'Divine Mutual Glorification'

The concept of perichoresis, or the 'divine mutual indwelling' of the persons of the Trinity, is of enormous importance in modern evangelical theology. John's teaching on glory provides a vital insight into how this mutual indwelling should be understood: a dynamic, active, other-person centred relationship is revealed.

We have suggested that the Father-Son relationship depicted by John is best described as 'divine mutual glorification'. Throughout the Gospel, Father and Son consistently seek to glorify one another – making the other known, exalting the other, and winning mutual praise and honour.²³³ The Son does not seek praise for himself, nor does he exploit his position to usurp his Father or display independent power. On the contrary, Jesus' concern is always for the Father's δόξα, and the Son reveals his δόξα only in ways that also reveal the Father.²³⁴ The Father seeks to glorify the Son, while also retaining a certain 'priority' in the relationship and in the economy of salvation.²³⁵

²³² Phil 2:5-11.

²³³ 7:18; 8:50, 54; 13:31-32; 14:13; 16:14; 17:1, 4-5. This is to mention nothing of numerous uses of the passive form of δοξάζω, which should generally be understood as a 'divine passive' in which God the Father glorifies God the Son; eg: 7:39; 11:4; 12:16, 23; 13:31.

²³⁴ cf. 5:30; 8:28; 14:7, 9; 15:24.

²³⁵ eg: in 1:14, Jesus possesses the δόξα as of the only Son *from* (παρὰ) the Father; cf. 14:28; 17:1-2, 24. However, this is no way undermines the unity and equality of Father and Son, which John's Gospel makes perfectly clear. cf. Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology and Worship* (Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2004), 399, 492-3.

The Spirit has a unique place in this glorifying process. In John's presentation, the Spirit never seeks glory for himself, and is never glorified by Father or Son. His role is to glorify, or reveal, the Son (16:14) which, in turn, glorifies the Father.²³⁶ Hence, this 'divine mutual glorification' does not operate equally in all directions, but is particularly seen in the Father-Son relationship.

As this brief description has shown, John's teaching on glory provides several profound insights into the life of the triune God. Ongoing debate on key issues such as the economic and immanent Trinity, or 'subordinationism', would therefore be well-served by careful, detailed study of δόξα-δοξάζω in John.

In all this, readers are reminded that God's ultimate concern – even in sending his Son to bring life to all who believe – is his own glory. God's desire is to manifest himself as he truly is and be praised and honoured accordingly. This takes place in Jesus' incarnation, and supremely in his death and resurrection, where the Father delights 'in the panorama of his own perfections reflected as a perfect image in his Son'.²³⁷

Sinful human beings – so prone to rejecting God and placing themselves at the centre of the universe – would do well to dwell on this reality. Christianity is not primarily about benefits received or enhanced self-esteem because 'God loves me'. Of course, self-worth is one of the many blessings of the 'abundant life' that Jesus offers (10:10), and God's concern for his name is never set against his loving acts of salvation and redemption. But above all, the Creator of the universe seeks his own δόξα. Such a desire is entirely appropriate for the one who made all things and gives life to men. True Christian living, then, means sharing God's priorities. "If the persons of the Godhead are concerned for one another's glory, believers too should share this concern."²³⁸

Moreover, God's δόξα does not depend on humanity. While God's people have a part to play (see below), the human verdict is not the decisive factor. God is 'self-glorifying'; he is perfectly capable

²³⁶ cf. 13:31-32; 14:13; 17:1.

²³⁷ John Piper, *Brothers, We are not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2003), 6.

²³⁸ Roger Nicole, *Our Sovereign Saviour: The Essence of the Reformed Faith* (Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 21.

of glorifying himself, as he did most unequivocally in the incarnate λόγος. God's eternal δόξα stands, no matter how many people fail to perceive it. The Johannine picture of δόξα is vital to understanding the independent, self-authenticating greatness of God.

The God who shares his glory with believers

John also uses δόξα to convey another stunning reality: just as God glorifies himself, so he draws a people to himself and shares his δόξα with them (17:22; cf. 12:26).

We have already noted God's insistence that he will not give his glory to another.²³⁹ So it cannot be that believers are 'deified' or made worthy of sharing God's praise and honour. What, then, is involved here?

As we will see more fully below, believers play a central part in making God known and glorifying him. Thus, part of sharing God's δόξα means believers are equipped to be part of his ongoing redemptive mission in the world. Just as the glorified Jesus made his Father known and exalted him, glorified believers are charged to continue their Lord's mission.

But this does not simply happen through preaching a set of detached, impersonal facts. God is revealed both in the message his people preach and in *who they are* – what they become in Christ, through the Spirit. Sharing God's δόξα drives the communal life of Jesus' people, enabling them to be one as Father and Son are one, thus making the truth about Jesus known to the world.²⁴⁰ Moreover, God does not simply impart information about himself; he shares his δόξα – his character – by sharing his very self in the person of the Son.

According to John, then, believers share in God's δόξα by being drawn into the life of the triune God. Christians are brought 'into unity with God – Father and Son – through the Spirit, so creating

²³⁹ Isa 48:11; cf. p. 32.

²⁴⁰ John 17:21-23; cf. 13:35; 15:8.

fellowship'.²⁴¹ They can share something of the intimate personal relationship enjoyed by Father and Son.

This idea of sharing God's δόξα thus contributes to a broader New Testament theme: the astonishingly intimate connection between Christ and his people. In John's words, Christians receive the right to become children of God (1:12), friends of Jesus (15:13-15), and those who know God in his Son (17:3). In sharing God's δόξα, they also share in the inner-life of God and are directly and ontologically changed by his work. God's self-revelation is transformational. It does not leave his people as they are, but changes them and unites them both to God himself and to one another.

Believers glorify God

Sharing God's glory and being brought into new life through Jesus' glorification, believers are now in a position from which they can play a part in glorifying God. By abiding in Jesus and relying on him (14:13; 15:7-8), Christians now continue Jesus' mission to make God known as they remain in the world (17:10-11). While Jesus retains final responsibility for these works (14:13), it is through his gathered people (11:52) that the prayer of 17:1 is fully answered beyond the events of the cross.

But how does this occur? In concluding, we will briefly comment on both the content and the manner of the Christian's role.

Regarding content, John's depiction of δόξα is a stark reminder that Christians preach an exclusive gospel that confronts all people, everywhere. Jesus challenges the world with absolute, enduring claims. Much more than just another religious leader, he came with all the δόξα of the true and living God, and left no room for alternate belief systems or routes to God (cf. 14:6). Amid the malaise and turmoil of a postmodern world searching for answers, John's Gospel calls Christians to

²⁴¹ Knox, 'Spirit', 285.

live as those who have witnessed and been transformed by Jesus' δόξα and are compelled to speak of him.

But John's Gospel also has much to say about the manner in which believers glorify God. As they seek to continue Jesus' mission and live according to what they have become, Christians must follow the way of the cross – the ultimate revelation of God's δόξα.

Jesus himself steadfastly refused to pursue the δόξα that comes from men, instead single-mindedly seeking to glorify his Father, though it meant walking a path of humility and shame. This is the God that Christians know and serve. It is unthinkable that, having been saved by such a glorious act of service, they would depart from that path.

Jesus' own descriptions emphasise that the loftiest majesty and the lowliest suffering can stand together in God's character.²⁴² John's appeal to Isaiah (12:38-41) reinforces this idea. Moreover, Peter glorified God, not by winning praise from men or building an outwardly-impressive ministry, but by laying down his life (21:19) – the very path of δόξα that Jesus himself walked.

Those who share Jesus' δόξα must be willing to share his suffering. There is no way of making God known that does not follow the way of our humble Saviour. There is no way to fulfil the task of glorifying God that seeks praise and recognition for ourselves. The incarnate God has shown that true glory means service, humility, suffering – born out of love for others, to win their salvation. The Christian's task is to follow the path of glory paved by the one who was himself the embodiment of divine glory.

²⁴² eg: 12:23, 28; 13:31-32; 17:1.

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