

Theology in a Suffering World

In this book, Christopher Southgate proposes a new way of understanding the glory of God in Christian theology, based on glory as sign. Working from the roots of the concept in the Hebrew Bible, *Theology in a Suffering World: Glory and Longing* shows that ‘glory’ is not necessarily about beauty or radiance, but is better understood as a sign of the unknowable depths of God. Southgate goes on to show how John and Paul transform the concept of glory in the light of the Cross. He then explores where glory may be discerned in the natural world, including in situations of pain and suffering. In turn, glory is explored in the poetry of R. S. Thomas and the writings of the Jewish mystic Etty Hillesum. Finally, the book considers what it might mean for Christians to be ‘transformed from one degree of glory to another’: that might mean becoming a sign of the great sign of God that is Christ, and conforming their longing to God’s longing for the Kingdom to come.

Christopher Southgate is Associate Professor in Interdisciplinary Theology at the University of Exeter. Trained originally as a biochemist, he is still involved in origin-of-life research and is known in the science–religion debate for his edited textbook and his monograph on suffering in evolution, *The Groaning of Creation* (2008). This book is a sequel to *Groaning*, but it also builds on Southgate’s career as a poet, in which he has won a Hawthornden Fellowship and published eight collections, and his experience as principal of a theological training scheme and as a spiritual director and retreat conductor.

Theology in a Suffering World

Glory and Longing

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	viii
<i>Bible Quotations</i>	ix
Introduction	i
1 Glory as Sign, and The Relation of Glory to Beauty and Wonder	17
2 Glory in the Scriptures	45
3 Glory in the Natural World	96
4 Glory in the Arts and in Mysticism	149
5 Glory in the Christian Journey	200
Conclusion	257
<i>Bibliography</i>	260
<i>Index</i>	276

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vii

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I take sole responsibility for the final content, its adventures, eccentricities, and errors.

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Abbreviations

- CD* Barth's *Church Dogmatics*
GL von Balthasar's *The Glory of the Lord*
MP von Balthasar's *Mysterium Paschale*
TD von Balthasar's *Theo-Drama*
TL von Balthasar's *Theo-Logic*

Full details are given in the Bibliography.

Bible Quotations

Quotations from the Bible are occasionally from the King James Bible (KJV). Unless otherwise attributed, all quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Quotations from the Septuagint (LXX) are from Sir L. C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint Version in Greek and English* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970).

