

John 17:1-10

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; **glorify Your Son**, that the **Son may glorify You**, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life." This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them."

As we move into Chapter 17, we find that Jesus finished what would be one of His most important discourses with the disciples (**Chapters 13-16**) and He now lifts His eyes to heaven and begins to pray. This section of John is often referred to as the great "priestly prayer" and has always been treated with great reverence and so shall we treat this amazing passage.

It is interesting that, in all the stories that John conveys to us, He never was big on giving us details of Jesus' personal gestures; but here He makes sure we understand that Jesus looked to up to heaven as He addressed His Father. I cannot help but think that this was an expression of submission to His Father in alignment with **John 14:28** where He said: "the Father is greater than I." I believe He wanted the disciples to know that in everything He always yields to the Father.

You might be thinking that it is strange that Jesus, God in the flesh, prays to God the Father. Does not God the Father know everything anyway and so why does Jesus even need to vocalize this prayer. You need to understand that prayer is not just some time we set aside to inform God of our needs and to make our requests known. After all, God knows everything; He even knows what we are going to say even before there is a word on our tongue (**Psalm 139:2**). Thus, prayer cannot be just about us telling God what we want. In fact, it is so much more than that; prayer is to be a time where we connect with God from deep within our souls and seek the comfort of His presence and the warmth of knowing that He is there and He truly cares about the details of our life.

Jesus said, "the **hour** has come;" and indeed it had. Judas and the temple guards were likely beginning to make their way to the garden. This means that Jesus, in the flesh of His humanity, will soon face the most difficult ordeal imaginable; so He first buries Himself under the protective wings of the Father and draws strength from this most precious of relationships.

The idea of this **hour** is pretty remarkable. Imagine, before time this **hour** was planned. It was a mystery to mankind and even a mystery to the angelic beings; but the meaning, purpose, and consequence of this **hour** was fully known to the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They even communicated it in the *Psalms* and the book of *Isaiah*, as God does nothing without first revealing it to His servants the prophets (**Amos 3:7**); but it was not understood. In fact, Paul tells us that if any of the rulers of that age (and I believe He is speaking of spiritual as well as human rulers) had understood the eternal consequences of this *hour* they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (**1 Corinthians 2:7**). This *hour* would change all things in the heavens and on earth—nothing would ever be the same.

Now tonight we are not going to cover the whole passage, but Jesus prayer breaks down into three sections with the first being an expression of His relationship with the Father, next His relationship with the 11 disciples, and finally His relationship with us and all true believers. I believe He does this to reiterate that He always first sets the example and He expects us to follow (just like He expected the disciples to follow and pave the way for us to follow). Understand that our relationship with the Father is to emulate Jesus' relationship with the Father. So we need to pay close attention to the manner in which Jesus describes to us this relationship so we can learn what our practical and even emotional relationship with the Father is to look like.

With regard to this relationship, it is fascinating that bringing glory to one another is strongly emphasized not just in this prayer but clearly in everything the Father and the Son do; it is what they are about. The Father glorifies the Son and the Son glorifies the Father. The Father glorified or honored the Son before the entire world by giving Him majesty or rule over all flesh, by giving Him tasks to complete while He was here on this earth, and by giving Him a chosen group of followers that He (the Father) personally watched over.

The Son in turn glorified the Father by manifesting the Father's name to His followers, by keeping them in His name, by guarding them, by giving each of those followers eternal life that they might personally know and experience the Father, and by accomplishing all of the tasks which the Father assigned to the Son.

In this first statement: "Father, the hour has come; **glorify Your Son**, that the **Son may glorify You**, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life," Jesus describes the various ways the Father gave Him glory.

First, the Father made Jesus the head and ruler over all of creation (***Colossians 1:15***) and next to Him stands no equal. The Father gave Him all power and no one, absolutely no one, can resist His will or His purposes. He has been given complete authority in heaven and on the earth (***Matthew 11:27; 28:18; Isaiah 41:4; 43:13; 46:10; Lamentations 3:37; Proverbs 21:30; Ecclesiastes 7:13***).

This is an amazing truth if you think about it. Absolutely no one, no matter how powerful, how rich, how political, or even how evil, can do anything absent Jesus' assent. This should give you an enormous amount of freedom, confidence, and security knowing that nothing that happens in your life can occur if it were not for God's purposes and His working on your behalf. I know this is hard to swallow especially when you think of all the horrific and terrible people and circumstances you have had to deal with in your life; but know that it has all been managed and allowed by your personal Gatekeeper. Further, He allowed it for the good purpose of conforming you into His own image (***Romans 8:28-30***).

Second, the Father has granted Jesus the authority to give eternal life to whomever He chooses (***John 10:28***); which by the way He gives only to those the

Father sends to Him since Jesus lives only to do the will of the Father and not do His own will (*John 6:37-40*). Jesus is the door and He is the only way to the Father and it is only in Jesus' hands that life-eternal lies. There is no way around Him; you can only go through Him to receive this life. Therefore, all of humanity, whether they know it or not, is indelibly dependent upon Jesus' willingness to grant them life, for without His favor and intention they are destined for eternal damnation.

These two truths reveal how much the Father has glorified the Son before all of creation. The Father has ensured that Jesus is the fulcrum point of everything. So Jesus now asks the Father to do it again—to glorify Him once again in a similar manner so He can give glory back to the Father. But what could be similar considering Jesus has power over all flesh and is the very source of eternal life? In this *hour* the Son of God will become sin and become the only source of eternal forgiveness.

Imagine if you can that Jesus is about to take on His person every sin of all of humanity: the sin of every person that ever lived and ever would live. It would soon all be His. This idea is really unfathomable. We can barely survive dealing with the weight of our own sins; but imagine the sin of everyone from Adam and Eve to the last human that will ever be born. Every atrocity, every evil, every act of brutality, hate and selfishness would soon be His.

So you might be wondering how that is glory. Well it is glory because Jesus was the only one who was worthy to do such a deed. The blood of animals never was able to remove the sin of humanity. It merely covered the sin so that God would not have to bring immediate judgment. And no mere man could ever even come close to achieving the perfection and holiness of God in order to be a sufficient

sacrifice. But Jesus, the perfect Son of God was worthy to give up His life, to shed His blood, and to take away all the sin of the world. He became sin, He conquered sin, and He removed sin forever (***2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 10:1-18***).

Jesus' work on the cross was glorious and this glory will echo throughout all eternity. In fact, the scars that He bears in His resurrected body will forever remind us of the glory that is His. In the book of Revelation, John gives us a small glimpse of the honor and praise that will be lavished upon the Son.

Revelation 5:9-12

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

Further, Jesus' sacrificial act would in return glorify the Father as Jesus does everything that the Father asks Him to do and leaves nothing undone no matter what the cost. I have said it over and over during our study in the gospel of John that Jesus only did what His Father told Him to do, only said what His Father told Him to say, and only went where His Father told Him to go—even to the cross.

And, in so doing, He greatly glorified the Father by demonstrating to all of creation who is greater. The Son always yielded to the will of the Father. This was how He lived and this is why He died.

This truth has powerful implications for how our life with Jesus is to be lived. He set the example, the pathway we are to walk. He accomplished all that the Father gave Him to do and we are to emulate the pattern He set. We are to live only and exclusively for the will of God and like Jesus only say what our Father tells us to say, only do what our Father tells us to do, and only go where He tells us to go. This is true Christianity; everything else is some mish mash of religion where we try and live our will but work really hard to guise it as His will.

What about you? Are you accomplishing all that the Father has appointed for you or are you still too fixated on your will for your life that you are not even sure what He has asked of you? Are you living to bring glory to yourself or to the Father? Please understand that when you follow your own will for your life (whether it is a result of purposeful choice, negligence, neglect, or just having received bad teaching) you fail to give glory to the Father and you foolishly exalt yourself. This is so wrong! Remember, the lessons from ***John Chapter 14*** and ***15***; the Father is glorified when you cling to Him for your very life and follow only His will and obey only His voice; and, thereby, be a vessel through which He will produce much fruit.

I want to return to the statement in ***verse 3***: “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” This gift of eternal life which Jesus grants to us is about our being in relationship with the entirety of the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the one ***true***

God. This statement draws a hard line of contrast between the one *true* God and all the other gods, mysticism, or spiritual philosophies for life that men tend to follow. Jesus stated it quite elegantly before when He said: "I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me" (*John 14:6*). The scripture is quite clear: no one goes to heaven unless they know the Father and only Jesus can make the introduction.

Please don't miss the fact that eternal life is not about streets of gold and angels with harps; it is about the deepest form of intimacy you could ever imagine. The word used for "know" is the same word that is used in the Bible to refer to sex between a husband and wife, as in Adam knew his wife. Eternal life is about the most amazing relationship you could ever "not-imagine." I say that because our brains are too limited to even conceive of the glorious rapture that will be experienced in our union with Jesus.

1 Corinthians 2:9

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."

Eternal life is about every moment of our existence experiencing safety, security, stability, comfort, confidence, completion, and the sheer joy of being known and thoroughly loved. It is about knowing God in the same way that you are known—fully and completely. Now we see things a bit cloudy as if we are looking in a dim mirror and our knowledge of God is so limited by our flesh. But

then we shall see Him face to face without any distraction or hindrance and it will be beautiful (**1 Corinthians 13:12**).

And guess what? If you have believed, you have eternal life now (**John 5:24; 6:47**). And although our experience of this truth is limited because of these bodies of flesh, we still find out further on in this prayer that Jesus wants us to start experiencing our unity with Him now. In fact, when you start to understand and accept that your life here on earth is about knowing Jesus, experiencing Jesus, and being loved by Jesus, you will find that so much more of the Bible begins to make complete sense. Being in relationship with God is what the whole book is about.

It is interesting but **John 17:3** is the only time in all the gospels where Jesus refers to Himself in this compound form as “Jesus Christ.” This name and accompanying title is significant in what they communicate to us about our experiencing eternal life. First of all Jesus is a transliteration of the Hebrew name Joshua which means “Jehovah is Salvation.” And Christ, just so there is no confusion, is not Jesus’ last name; in fact, it is not really a name at all but a title.

Christos or Christ comes from the Hebrew “maashiyahc” where we also get the notion of Messiah. In the Old Testament this word was applied to Kings (**1 Samuel 24:6, 10**); to the priests (**Leviticus 4:5, 16**); and to the prophets (**1 Kings 19:16**) and prophetically to the promised Messiah, as only He would hold all three offices: King, Priest and Prophet (**Deuteronomy 18:15; Zechariah 6:13**). So looking at it together, eternal life is about knowing Jesus who is our salvation, and eternal life is understanding how He is our King—the ruler over our lives, our Priest—the

one who intercedes for us with the Father, and our Prophet—the one who speaks to us the words of the Father.

He is also the Father's apostle, or the one who has been *sent* to be the full and complete provision for our lives. And since He is the only one who has been *sent* to fulfill these roles on our behalf, Jesus Christ is it; we must know Him.

John 17:4-5

I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Although Jesus still had the cross to endure, He speaks with His Father in a manner which transcends time and which speaks of His completed work. This should not seem strange to us because when we pray we go before the throne of God (***Hebrews 4:16***) which exists outside of time where the Father sees the beginning to the end; thus, the completed work of Christ was a foregone conclusion. I also want you to notice that Jesus makes the point of saying that what He accomplished was the work that the Father had assigned to Him—nothing more and nothing less. He lived His life by appointment and all appointments were fulfilled.

Jesus then speaks of the glory that He possessed before time, before the world was made, and He states that He longs to return to this relational condition. Literally: "Glorify me beside Thine own self." He wanted to return to His rightful

place of authority on the throne which is at the right hand of His Dad's throne (**Hebrews 1:3; 8:1**). This should bring to mind **John 1:1** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Imagine, Jesus, for lack of a better word, condescended Himself by taking on the form of man. I know that "condescending" is still not a strong enough word to capture what Jesus did when He became a man, which is why Paul said that He emptied or abased Himself (**Philippians 2:7**). Nevertheless, we do know that His glory was innate and not something of which He could dispossess Himself but only subdue for our sake. He gave us a little glimpse of it on the Mount of Transfiguration where His face shone like the sun and His garments became as white as light (**Matthew 17:3**).

But in obedience to His Father, Jesus willingly and continually humbled Himself and with self-restraint walked among normal people as a normal man and for the better part of His life doing normal stuff. Have you ever thought about whether or not Jesus felt like an alien or something? All of that power and all of that glory was cloaked and contained in a frail and weak body of flesh. And now He asks His Father to remove the veil, to remove the trappings of flesh so that His glory might once again be made fully manifest.

I don't think I have told anyone here this but every once in a while I have this strange sense of what it will be like to be in my spiritual body. Sometimes I feel like I could burst out and fly to heaven. Once God even gave me a full body experience of that and the vision and experience was unreal. I know that one day I will be stripped of this weak flesh and I will be like Jesus and my body will be full of power. I will share His glory and even rule with Him on this earth (**1 Corinthians**

15). Usually those sensations I have are always brief and fade away as fast as they come, but I love the way Jesus has given me a small twinge of my true-self. It's pretty cool!

Next, Jesus talks to His Dad about the disciples.

John 17:6-8

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.

In the Bible, "names" often refer to a person's base "nature," as names were given to reveal something special about the nature of the person or their destiny. In so many ways a person's name seems to have been prophetic of the life they would lead. For example, Jacob was a deceiver and tricked his brother out of his birth right and his name means heel catcher, or one who will trip you up and take your place. The name Samuel, God is exalted, describes the passion of the prophet's life. David means favored or beloved and truly He was one upon whom God showed great favor. Even the name Jesus, as we pointed out reveals that He is the Savior.

So when Jesus says I have manifested your name, He is saying that His very life has revealed the **true nature** of God to the disciples. In how He lived, the words He taught, the deeds He performed, and in what He did not do, He set about to destroy all the wrong belief and misconceptions the disciples had about the true nature of God. Having grown up under the Law they simply did not understand their abject helplessness and the overwhelming mercy, grace, compassion, and love of God. They did not know that it all had to be Him and not them—100% Him and 0% them. Jesus opened to them God’s heart so that they could understand and most importantly receive the love of God. Besides, they needed to know the truth as they were soon going to be the ones to take this truth to the entire world.

John 17:6 says: “they were Yours and You gave them to Me.” This is consistent with **Ephesians 1:4**, **Revelation 13:8** and **17:8** which reveals that God chose us, and His disciples, before He even laid the foundations of the earth. Before time, we were chosen to be His. We were born in this world, but throughout our lives the Lord literally moved time and space and people and circumstances to ensure that those of us who were chosen actually chose to believe.

A lot of people struggle with this concept especially because the Bible also makes it clear that each man is accountable for the choice they make; and they are! But understand that even the ability for us to make that choice came from Him (100% Him and 0% us). So the disciples, although a part of the world’s system, belonged to the Father and in accordance with His pre-ordained will He preserved them until the time that He would give them to Jesus.

When Jesus says: “*they have kept Your word*” I cannot help but think that He is referring to Himself. In other words, they did not walk away from me, they did not leave me; rather, they believed that I came from You; that I am in deed the Messiah, and that everything I have and everything I am comes directly from You.

Now don't miss the fact that the disciples had to “*come to know*” these truths and “*believe.*” They did not start off understanding the full ramifications of what it meant to follow Jesus and for years they really did not “believe” who He was; after all, God in the flesh was inconceivable. They had to learn and then they had to receive. Like us, their minds had to be renewed or transformed by the Word of God. They had to be willing to exchange all the wrong belief inherent in their religion for the truth they were taught by Jesus. Then they had to still choose to believe it—choose to let it become their reality. They had to be willing to walk away from their life-long pursuit of the Law and all their so called “righteous” deeds and begin a life-long pursuit of knowing and abiding with Christ, where all they are required to do is truly believe giving Jesus the room to do His own righteous acts in and through their lives.

It took the disciples 3-years of instruction and daily living with Jesus to get to the place where they finally could make the declaration we find in **John 16:30**, “Now we understand that you know everything and don't need anyone to tell you anything. From this we believe that you came from God.” It was 3-long years that must have seemed like 30, for even Jesus responded with a tone of incredulity: “Do you finally believe”? (**John 16:31**).

I know that some of you wish that you had already arrived or achieved a greater level of maturity than where you are right now. But don't be discouraged;

some things do take time. Remember, it is an exchange and some of you have a lot that you have to exchange. It could be years of religion, it could be years of being beholden to this world's system, years of being your own lord trying to protect and provide for yourself, or years of indulging your flesh as you sought some form of satisfaction. But all of it must go and all of it must be exchanged for the truth.

Therefore, you must first learn the truth and in so doing you will see the areas where the truth does not rule in your life; it will all become very apparent. This is why you need to be in the Word for it will reveal to you all that is hidden even from your own mind and emotions.

Hebrews 4:12-13

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

This is also why you should *intentionally* be in relationship with those that can help you learn and understand the truth. I talked about this a lot and still many of you are trying to forage the path on your own. Please reconsider. But even then you will still have to decide to believe the truth. No one can force you. And please don't allow yourself to be deceived by some pretense of religious "belief" where you give your faith lip service and perform certain religious deeds to ease the

conscience, but do not make the truth authoritative over your life. Besides, you will only be deceiving yourself; others will know what is really going on. It will all be clearly evident for your life will not manifest the **true nature** of God for your *old sinful nature* will still be calling the shots.

However, with each exchange you make, you will grow not just in the knowledge of God but in His wisdom and understanding and His **true nature** will be made manifest through you and everyone will know it. And the faster you are willing to make the exchange, the faster you choose to trust yourself to Jesus, the faster this will happen.

Before we move on, notice also that Jesus gave them the Words which the Father gave to Jesus. Over and over we see this relationship where the Father has given everything to the Son and the Son in turn gives it all to His chosen ones. This should help you understand that the amazing generosity, compassion, mercy, tenderness, and grace of Jesus were all expressions of His Father's heart. This is why Paul says that we are to know Him as our Daddy (**Romans 8:15**) for He is so wonderful to us. We are truly the privileged ones; yet, too many of us still do not know the Father in this way! Here is a perfect example of where we have to choose to believe and let the Word be authoritative over our lives. Talk to Him as Jesus talked to Him; He is your Dad too.

John 17:9-10

"I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.

In this great priestly prayer, Jesus does not pray for those who belong to the world, but only those that the Father has chosen out of the world. I know He desires the whole world to know Him and to be saved (**1Timothy 2:4; Titus 2:11; 2 Peter 3:9**), so I don't think He is making a point about the unsaved masses; rather, He is once again expressing His intimacy and deep affection toward those that the Father gave Him. They are Yours and they are Mine; and Father I desire for You to look after them and care for them in an extra special way because I have been glorified in them because after 3-long years they actually believe in Me—yea!

Well, we are going to stop right here and pick up again next week in verse 11. I encourage you this week to be meditating on this prayer, not only what we covered tonight, but the rest of the chapter. Let it start to minister to you and bless you. It expresses Jesus' heart towards us in such a unique and intimate way. I am excited to explore the rest of this prayer especially the part about our being "one" with God and "one" with each other. It is a powerful concept and I believe is something we must fully understand and know.

Let's Pray