

PRELIMS. It is said that nothing **focuses the mind** more than the prospect of death! That is so true! However, for the Lord Jesus Christ I am sure He had **perfect understanding** of the **priorities** of life and the **meaning** of death, but in His humanity there would be elements which would crystallise in His mind. What a **privilege** to have here an account of His prayer just before He died! His death was the most significant death the world was ever to witness. **Thank You Lord!**

The most precious moments any person can have are the last few minutes before he dies with His family. Here we have Jesus Christ, no criminal, but **accused** and **condemned** as one, speaking to His Father in heaven making known His deepest thoughts and concerns. Note what He calls this whole experience!! **A glorification! glorify Your Son** [1]. Absolutely amazing! And also, He is not praying for Himself - He is praying for those for whom He is dying. *I am praying for them...for those whom You have given Me* [9] And then He says this truly **amazing** thing *I am glorified in them* [10b]!?!?!

It is such a **selfless** prayer! Jesus is about to die as an **innocent!** If there was ever an **injustice** it was the death of Jesus Christ! Yet, He seems to be **more** concerned for **others** than Himself! There is not the slightest hint of a **complaint!** Not once does He ask to be set free and delivered from the **cruelty** of men - yet He **could** have called for **1,000s of angels!** In fact, in a few hours time He has to rebuke His colleague and friend Peter, for trying to **defend** Him from His captors *Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and He will at once send Me more than twelve legions of angels?* [Mat 26:53] (Legion= 3,000-6,000 men in the Roman Army!!)

**APP** To **think** of this, is surely to behold something of the **Glory of Christ!** How **could** He be so **agreeable** to such awful treatment? **Only** because He was **God** as well as man! Only because He had the **Spirit without measure** [3:34] Xns have the Spirit with a limited measure! Christ had it in abundance because He **constantly** walked with the Father! (And if you/I walked with God more often, we too would have more of the Spirit of Jesus in our heart and in our lives!)

Now in this marvellous prayer, Jesus the Son of God is making known His **wishes** to His Father! He is **asking** His Father for certain things! Things that He **desires**! *Father, I DESIRE....* I think we might have here, Jesus' **greatest desire**! And look at what it is....

Jesus has just been speaking of the **great love** that the Father has to those *whom You have given Me* and how that love to them is as great as the love which the Father has to the Son 'You have **loved them even as You loved Me** [23] What a **privilege** - imagine - the Creator of the universe **loves sinners** (albeit repentant) **as much** as He loves His own Son who never failed or let Him down in thought/word/deed - the love of God and of Christ is truly amazing! This is **glorious**!

Do you know what Jesus is saying here? He is saying God loves us as much as He loves Christ!! **Wow!** He is saying that **ADOPTING love** is as great as natural love in a family! And so it is! But adopting love between a **Holy God** and **sinful creatures** is **FAR DIFFERENT and FAR GREATER** than adopting love between, and among, sinful humans! There is no real comparison! Equality among 'equals' is not like equality among 'non-equals'! And yet, this great God of the Xns loves **sinful** people with the **same love** that He loves His **Perfect Sinless Son!** This is the **glory of Christ!**

Now note what He says: the **desire** of Christ is that these very sinners (who have been chosen by God), **may be with Me where I AM.** This has always puzzled me 'where I AM'? I like the way **The Message** puts it: *Father, I want those You gave Me, To be with Me, right where I am, SO they can see My glory, the splendor You gave Me* [17:24] Right at the **Cross** where the glory of Christ is seen at it's **highest/greatest!** X is asking that His disciples may **see** the greatest event in all history - the event that changed the world! Jesus is saying 'I want them, My disciples, to see Me on the Cross, so that they will know that **You LOVED Me**'!! And it was real love, love that had its **root before the foundation of the world** [24] It **wasn't a fickle**, capricious, changeable, temperamental, flighty love, but a solid love!

But the '*where I AM*' also refers to the **future blessedness** of heaven where X and His people **will be!** X wants His people to be in heaven

with Him to see Him in **all** His glory as **crowned** King of the World! There is a glory there, in heaven that we **cannot see** on earth - even with **faith** - faith is actually a **weak** way (albeit the **only** way) we can see the glory of God on this earth. In heaven we will be walking by **sight** and it is **only then** that we will get somewhere near seeing all the glory of God and Jesus Christ. It is **God** that has **given** Jesus this glory - it is the **glory that You have given Me** [24] and X's prayer is that His people would **fully behold** His glory in the heavenly state where they will see Him, not by faith, but by **SIGHT!**

Now note that it is **for OUR sakes** that He desires all this! It is **not** simply so that we will say 'What a wonderful Saviour Christ is', but as John Owen says it is so 'that the beholding of His glory might **bring encouragement, strength, satisfaction and blessedness** to His **disciples**'! Owen uses the illustration of **Joseph** who told his brothers to tell their father of all his 'glory in Egypt', he did not do this to **boast** of his own glory but because he knew how happy and satisfied his father would be when he knew in what a glorious position his son was'! **APP** So X wants **you/I** to see His glory so that **WE** will be **filled with joy and happiness!** Jesus is going to the Cross for **our** happiness - for **our** complete joy! Seeking the good of others is a Xn virtue! John wrote his First Epistle **so that OUR joy may be complete!** [1John 1:4] Xns serve others!

So Jesus wanted His disciples to see His glory while they were **on earth** as well as in all its fullness in heaven! But the Bible teaches that we will never see the glory of X in heaven **unless** we see it first on earth! If we are **spiritually blind** down here below, we will be spiritually blind in the world to come. So, it is **vital** that we **behold** the **glory** of X **now** in **this life!** **APP** Friends, if Jesus Christ is this morning to you as a *a root out of dry ground; He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him* then something needs to happen to your **vision!** You need to have your eyes **opened!** You need *the eyes of your hearts* to be **enlightened** [Ep1:18] You are spiritually blind! **APP** If you can **think** of the marvelous things the Bible reveals to us about Jesus X and **not** be **affected** in your hearts by it, you have **big problems!**

Here is an important **test!** Are you **satisfied** with simply being **saved** and **forgiven**? Is that all you **care about**? Well, true Xns want something **more** - they want Christ to be **honoured/loved/exalted**? They care about the **Cause** of Christ in the world, they want **His Name** to be **magnified**! They want Jesus to be **glorified**!

Have you **confessed** this sin of being **too selfish** and not really caring about the good name of the Lord Jesus? As long as you are saved, is that all that concerns you - if so then I would be very worried! If you don't care all that much what state the Church is in; what state your own soul is in, then examine yourself? If you have confessed that sin, good! But we need to focus more on the Person of Christ and not just what He has done for us. You need to seek **His mind/attitude/aspirations!** *Let this **mind** be in you which was in **X Jesus*** [Phi2:5]

We need to have **purser minds**, and minds that are **regulated** by the **principles** of Scripture. We need to listen Peter who said we must be ***PREPARING our minds for action*** [1Pet 1:13] **prepared** for serving the Lord each day. We need to **equip** ourselves suitably to be His servants, as Peter says ***arm yourselves with the same way of thinking*** [1Pet 4:1] ie, the same way as Jesus thought. Paul said, yes even when he was **struggling** with sin, *I myself **serve the law of God with my mind*** [Rom 7:25] And he says that *to set the **mind on the Spirit** (of **Jesus Christ**) is **life and peace*** [Rom 8:6].

Friends, the Person of Christ as revealed in Scripture should **fascinate** us! He is so **unique**, so **beautiful**, so **merciful**, that only **blind** people could miss His **majestic, singular, incomparability!** There is just no one like Him. Isn't it wonderful that the Son of God's greatest **desire** is to have **YOU** in His kingdom for ever? Isn't it amazing that He was **willing** to undergo all that suffering and die for the world, so that the world could be saved from its wickedness?

Or is the Bible all **nonsense**? Is there no evidence for what the Bible says about Jesus? That is a very strong assertion which does not stand the test of history! **More evidence** for Jesus than for Julius Caesar! **All types of scholars**, historians, academics, scientists, philosophers, etc, have **confirmed** His existence! **Surrender** to Him!