

Read Exodus 3:11-14 - Pray

Intro - Open to John 17:6-10

If you reflect upon the power of the wealthy and political leaders around the world you realize that their conversations hold probably too much sway. They gather at summits and conferences to address the world's problems. They talk to death everything from the environment, to treaties, to war negotiations. There have been many meetings between Ukrainian and Russian diplomats since the invasion began and those meetings carry lives at stake within their words and phrases.

Yet no conversation on this earth matches the eternal weight of prayer. Better yet, prayer as we will read this morning between God the Father and God the Son. No conversation is filled with such perfection of purpose and agreement and consequence as these words before us. Jesus came to do the Father's will, he came to die according to the Father's will, he will rise again according to the Father's will. They have communicated from eternity past and now in the span of time their communication takes the form of prayer.

The perfect prayer begins with the glory in the cross. Verses 1-5 showcase the perfect and pleasing sacrifice of Christ and the glory of God revealed in the sacrifice of the God-Man. As Jesus turns his attention in verse 6, he goes from his passion to his pupils. He steps into his priestly role, his intercessory role, to speak to his Father for the disciples. To declare in prayer to God that as the cross will glorify himself in their salvation, the disciples will now glorify him in their transformed lives. Lives very different from the world, as we will discuss more fully next week.

The Name of God the Father is the focus here in these 5 verses. The Name Revealed to them, and then the name Revered in them.

Revelation and Reverence, both facets of Christ's work on earth. So let's dive in to Jesus' prayer about his work in the lives of the disciples. A work we see the fruit of in the lives in their disciples, and now in us.

One – Power of the Name Revealed

Read John 17:6-8

⁶ “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your

word.” ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸ For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

His prayer for them starts with Jesus telling his Father, the work you gave me, to reveal your name to the disciples, is complete. This connects back to verse 4 which says that Jesus accomplished the work the Father gave him to do. This work is revealing the name of God. The revelation of God's name is in 3 facets. **God's nature, God's elect, and God's words.**

a) **Nature of God.** Now a name, especially God's name, is discussed in Scripture to reveal all of who he is. His character, attributes, his nature. Young King David, God's faithful champion in the Old Testament knew God's name because he knew his nature. When he faces Goliath, which I read almost every night in Jude's bedroom, says (in children's bible paraphrase) “you come to me with a sword and a spear but I come in the NAME of the Lord”. I come to you in God's sovereign authority and of divine power to defend His people. Much greater than a sword or spear, is the divine power that guarantees victory with a pebble.

The Name of God, as God the Father has revealed it is YHWH. This is why we read Exodus 3, where God reassures Moses that he is not just some God. He is the I Am. The Lord's name is so sacred that Jews do not use it. Either then or now. They will write it in abbreviated form but will not pronounce it. Jesus had no such fear. He spoke the name and revealed the name and claimed it as his name. John 8:58 “**before Abraham was, I am**”

He claimed to be God in the flesh. He taught his nature as one with the Father. Jesus didn't just go around introducing himself. “Hello my name is Jesus and that is the name of God.” No, he taught and lived and rebuked according to and with God the Father's character, attributes and divine nature. For Jesus to act is to act like God. For God to act is to act like Jesus did. Colossians 2:9 says that in Jesus, “**all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form**”.

His work to reveal the Father's nature as sovereign over evil and death was completed with his death and resurrection. But this revelation was not received or even intended for all.

It says in the second half of verse six, that he manifested or revealed the Father's name "to the people whom you gave me out of world. Yours they were and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word." He revealed **God's elect** and gave them to Jesus.

- b) Now this possessive language is something the world, and the modern man and woman bristle at. We think "we are no possession" to be given or taken. In our expressive individualistic age, no one can even make a claim that you are wrong. Much less make a claim to your whole self! But notice the alternative, Christ says, God gave Jesus the disciples (and we will stick to the disciples here but verse 20 extends this to us) out of the world. The reality is, they were in the world before God plucked them out. To be in the world is to be among the unsaved, those who are dead in their sins, under the illusion of life but certainly dead. But God the Father elected them to give to Christ.

The disciples were the Father's and were given to Christ. Then you see that they have, past tense, "kept your word". He is affirming to the Father that their faith, given to them by God by their divine election, is confirmed in obedience. Those who are kept by God in obedience to his words can be confident that God elected them from the beginning. Those who do not keep his word, should not have any such confidence. This is the reason that we practice church discipline and warn our brothers when they stray into sin. How will we know they are of the elect, that they have been saved, unless they persevere to the end? Revelation 3:11 **Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.** Galatians 6:9 **And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.**

Now the term election, or predestination, has become a dirty word for some Christians. It is a concept that was not a part of my Christian vocabulary growing up. Somehow, God's work in salvation was just the sacrifice part. My work in salvation was my faith part. I got credit for being smart enough to see that I needed Christ to pay for my sins.

Instead, as I matured in the faith I encountered passages of Scripture that made it clear that my salvation was not of my doing. Romans 9, Genesis 50:20, John 15:16 and here in Chapter 17. They all speak that those who are elected, before they knew Christ, God had selected the disciples and by extension all of those who have and will be saved, out of the world, and given then to Christ.

Wrestle with that. Come to terms with it, and enjoy the satisfaction that what God has done, cannot be undone. What we do, can certainly be undone.

- c) Now verse 7 and 8, Jesus prays about God's revelation of **God's words**. They know "that everything that you have given me (the Son) is from you (the Father) For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me."

It is important to track Jesus's authority here. Jesus' claim to authority on earth was never on his own status. He affirmed time and time again that his words were not his alone but far from being his, they came from the Father. This is drastically important for our understanding of God and our understanding of God's revelation. God is not just a vending machine of laws. He does not create and then just stand before you offering all the things you can and cannot do. He is revealing in his words, now most fully in Jesus, the fullness of his nature. It's not about law keeping, it is us realizing our law breaking will always continue until we trust in God through Christ.

Jesus' mission to reveal the words of God is not a mission to teach us more laws. If we needed more than 613 Old Testament laws, God would surely have given them. But instead, God reveals in Jesus his full nature, his words that he is much farther beyond law and has good news that he is both creator and savior.

So Jesus' prayer is communication with God but also confirmation to the disciples that what they believe, that Jesus is God in the flesh, fully in union with God, as pre-existent and sent from God, is affirmed yet again as the truth.

In the same way that we pray in our church services, where we have a leader come and approach God and pray aloud so the congregation can agree with the petitions and praise lifted in prayer. Jesus now comes to the Father, affirming the truths that he has been teaching them in Chapter 16. He affirms that he has come from the Father. He affirms that what he has taught is divine. He affirms that what he taught is the truth.

God's name is **revealed** and his name is also **revered**.

Two – Power of the Name Revered

Read John 17:9-10

⁹ I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

Jesus now affirms who his prayer is for. It is FOR those whom God has elected and given to Christ for teaching and salvation. He is praying for those who are his possession not just for a time but by his salvation, for all eternity. His reflexive words in verse 10, mine are yours, yours are mine, gives us further affirmation that there is no separating Father and Son. They share, they give, they co-own the disciples. What is the result?

Christ is glorified in the disciples. Glorified in all that he has just said. That they have kept God's word in obedience, that they have learned the truth, that they believe in the Gospel that God sent his son into the world to die for sinners.

Do you know believer that God's election of you means that you glorify God? Did you know further that this pleases God? What could please God more than we would be who he has paid a costly price for us to be? That we are not just absently offering sacrifices, we are actively offering our lives as Paul says in Rom. 12, "as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable (or pleasing) to God".

We see Jesus praying to the Father, pleased with the disciples God gave him, pleased with their lives prepared by his work, who will further be saved by his cross.

When I pray for someone, I want them to hear my joy for them in the way I speak about them to God. It is why I rarely will accept a request to pray for someone without doing so right there. I want you to hear how I will bring your request before the Lord. I want to pray scripture over you. I want you to enjoy the satisfaction of communion with God in prayer.

Jesus prays for his disciples, letting them hear that he is currently glorified in them. As they were, imperfect, about to betray him, about to abandon him. He receives glory from their rescue and transformation from coming out of the world, from the hand of God, into His.

The disciples revered his name then, but their obedience throughout their life with the power of the Holy Spirit meant that they would revere, glorify Jesus' name on earth and now in heaven. What a savior, what a joy, what a plan from eternity past!

Conclusion

The name of God is powerful is it not? It speaks to much more than syllables for reference to divine being. It speaks of all his terrifying depths. His perfect justice to judge even our inner thoughts rightly. His decisive power to move kings and direct nations. His will to raise up men out of the world and to leave some in it. He is beyond what could have been imagined but he has been revealed in flesh. And the disciples believed.

Turn to Acts chapter 4. Peter and John are brought before the high priest because they had healed a crippled man but in whose name? In the name of Jesus. And they were asked (to catch them in their blasphemy), verse 7:

⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹² And there is salvation in no one else, **for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**"

What do you know of God's name? His nature? Christ's prayer was prayed over the disciples in that moment but he extends it in verse 20 to all who will believe in Him through the words of the first disciples. Jesus prayed for you to believe that he came from the Father. That his words are true. That they are not just statements with no weight but they carry the very weight of the creator God. The name that keeps galaxies in motion, keeps you from dropping dead. Fear him, believe him.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Proverbs 9:10