

PROVIDENCE CHURCH

Glorifying God by knowing, living and proclaiming His truth in the world

The Weapons of Our Warfare

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John 17:1-5

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Please turn with me in your Bibles to the 17th chapter of the Gospel of John. We've come to our second message from this prayer that is most often called '*The High Priestly Prayer*' of the Lord Jesus. It is called that because in a sense, or in the truest sense, He is fulfilling the role of the High Priest. The High Priest would, on the Day of Atonement, pray, and then make an offering. So Jesus is praying and He is about to make an offering on the cross.

This morning the title of our message is 'The Weapons of Our Warfare' because what is about to happen is a great battle, and Jesus is praying in preparation for the battle. The eve of the crucifixion. Remember this is the night before He is to be crucified. In fact, He has just finished hours in the upper room with His disciples, and then walking along the way from the upper room toward Gethsemane. Here He is praying right before He leaves the city of Jerusalem and makes His way over the Kidron Valley to the garden. He will pray there for some time, and then the arrest will happen. Judas will show up and then all the rapid series of events that will culminate in the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory.

So He stands on the eve of this great battle, and when you think about it, we've seen this imagery of warfare, we've talked about it. We saw when He is telling them again and again that, "You're going to be persecuted. They are going to hate you." We titled a series of messages in John 15, 'The World at War' because they are at war with us. And in the last verse of John 16, I titled that message 'War and Peace' because He basically is telling us how to have peace in the midst of warfare, and how we are to pursue that. Then in John 17, I see again, just this sense of the urgency of the battle, and how are we to wage the war? So I borrowed the words 'The Weapons of Our Warfare' from 2 Corinthians 10, where the apostle Paul writes in Verse 3-5, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. They are not of the flesh, but they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, but they are not fleshly, they are spiritual weapons, divinely powerful weapons." We see Jesus, basically share with us what two of these weapons are in the first five verses of John 17, what two of the weapons that we ought to be using in our day, because we in many respects, as I was sharing earlier before the Scripture reading, we feel the sense that the tensions are mounting.

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Don't you have that sense as you look at the culture? I mean, we see it is going to be harder and harder for Christians to speak the truth, and just simply share with others the good news. I mean, to talk to someone who is homosexual, and to call them to the Scripture, and to understand that, and to me this is our message to any unbeliever, "Don't follow your heart." According to the Bible, the most ridiculous and destructive thing you can do is follow your heart. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9. "Out of the heart flow every kind of immorality," Jesus says in Mark 7. Adultery, murder, all of these things flow from within, out of the heart, because sin has produced such malignancy in the soul. But you can't follow your heart, and so the question before every person who lives is: Will you follow your heart, or will you repent and follow Christ? So it doesn't really matter what you want to do. Whether you want to pursue this particular sinful lifestyle, or this particular sinful lifestyle, if you want to follow your heart, you will follow your heart to destruction. But if you will repent and follow Christ you will find life.

So we say that to anyone, no matter what their particular sin disposition is. But we realize that as the days get darker, that you can lose your job for doing that. Ask the fire chief in Atlanta. You can lose your business, whether you have a pizza place, or a flower shop, or a photography shop, you can lose your business, and all of your wealth because you choose to honor your spiritual convictions, and speak the truth, and say, "I can't participate in what you are doing." And this is all under the guise of freedom, because freedom has been distorted today. Freedom for people in America is sexual freedom, and sexual freedom trumps religious freedom, and sexual freedom is really a misnomer for sexual bondage. So we don't speak from some kind of moral high ground in the sense that we don't believe that we are superior to anyone else. If we follow our own hearts, we will follow our own hearts to destruction, but we have found a better way, and it is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news of what God has done in Christ. So when we proclaim that, we proclaim it to whoever, but now we understand that the costs are becoming greater. That the deception, the darkness that is over the world is greater.

I mean, isn't it amazing how dark it is spiritually? I heard someone comment the other day on television that it took like 48 hours for more than 100,000 signatures to go to the White House on a petition to punish that dentist in Minnesota who killed Cecil the Lion. And yet, there is no outrage about what Planned Parenthood is doing, the government-funded Planned Parenthood. Isn't that astonishing? That is a depraved mind when you think that, you get all indignant about what is happening to an animal, but you don't get indignant about what is happening to

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human beings who are made in the image of God. So it is symptomatic. I mean, you see it, and we feel grieved, don't we? And angry, and there is a sense of righteous indignation. What are people thinking? We need to be careful, and cautious, and watching our own hearts, and not condemning from pride, but praying out to God, crying out to God for light, and realizing that but for the grace of God we would be right there, just as blind, just as foolish. And so we cling to the hope of the Gospel, and we proclaim the Gospel.

Now we realize that as we do that, in darker and darker times, that the conflict becomes more obvious, but the conflict has really always been there. I mean, to preach the Gospel to someone in the south 30 or 40 years ago, the Bible Belt, right? Where everybody was a Christian culturally, and still a lot of them are, sort of the people that grew up around here anyway. Right? But in reality, for someone to get saved in 1975 was still an act of divine power and deliverance. You can go to church on your own, but you can't get saved apart from the outpouring of the power of God through the work of Christ. In that sense, nothing has changed. That is what needs to happen today. It is just a little clearer who needs it now, and that is good, but we come to circumstances on a daily basis that could discourage us, and that Satan would use, and our flesh would use, to tempt us to withdraw.

The question is: How do you respond? What do you do when you look at the cultural malaise, or when you look at the political, or the global crisis of radical Islam? What is a Christian to do against that? Well there are a number of things that we can do about cultural issues. We can vote. Yes, we can, and we should. We can talk with people, and reason with people at some level, and we should, but we should realize that the most powerful thing we can do is use the spiritual weapons that Jesus uses. And so, what we ought to do when we are getting indignant about the darkness is do what Christ did about it. We're going to see this in the passage that basically He calls us to do two things. We are going to see two powerful weapons that any child of God should, can use in the warfare that is before us. Let's read John 17:1-5.

John 17:1-5 ~ 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, 2 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. 3 This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work

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which You have given Me to do. 5 Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Let's pray together.

Our Father, we ask that You would pour out Your Spirit upon us, and give us the grace of His illuminating work. That He would take the word of God that He has inspired and illuminate it in our minds, in our hearts, and to help us see, and to understand wonderful things from Your word. That You might grant us the grace of an ever-deepening repentance, and an ever-deepening trust, in such a wonderful and glorious Savior. We pray these things in His name, Amen.

The two most powerful things that the Christian can do as he encounters the enemy, remember Jesus is just about to encounter the ruler of the world. He said in John 14:31, "Let us get up from here, the ruler of the world is coming." So they are on the way to meet, the battle lines are being drawn, and just literally in moments, or within a couple of hours, Judas will betray Him with a kiss, and that series of events will happen where He becomes an offering for our sins. So what does He do on the eve of battle? What does He do? He does two things, or He gives us principles, two things that we should do that can make the biggest difference in the world today. The two things are: We need to *Pray to the Father* and we need to *Glorify the Son*. That is the outline. *Pray to the Father and Glorify the Son*.

1) Pray to the Father:

This is the way we wage warfare. This is the nuclear option. Voting, talking to people, fine, it is like a rifle shot, it is okay. You know, snipers are important in battle, and we should be about that as well. I'm not saying neglect that. Don't neglect that, but by no means should we neglect the nuclear power that we have. To pray to the Father and to glorify Christ—*this* is where the battle is won. This is how Jesus wages the war. What does Jesus do? He's just delivered the Farewell Discourse, He has washed their feet, He has instituted the Lord's Supper, He has taught them, He has warned them, He has encouraged them. Satan is coming, but He stops to pray. He prays. Here the eternal Son of God, now the Son of Man, prays. He calls upon His Father, and the question that this poses to us is: How much, you see what is going on in the world, how much do you pray? How often do you pray? How much time do you spend in prayer? How much time do you spend learning about what is going on in reading or listening? Not saying you can't do that, but how much time do you spend doing that? And how much time do you

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spend praying? How much time do you spend in political activism versus how much time to you spend praying? Don't neglect the one, but certainly don't neglect the latter.

We are to pray, God has made clear. Jesus said, "Man ought always to pray and not to faint." Always to pray. You find that adverb '*always*' occurring a lot with prayer, a prepositional phrase, '*pray at all times*', '*praying always*'. Ephesians 6:19, we are to always be praying. Or 1 Thessalonians 5, I think it is Verse 23, it is roughly, it is about there anyway, '*pray without ceasing*'. That is, pray and don't stop. That is what the Christian life is to be. It is to be, ideally, unending prayer. I mean, you have seasons of prayer where you get alone and you pray, but the goal is that you would get up from the time of uninterrupted, undistracted communion with God, and you would continue to commune with God all through the day.

When good things happen you thank Him. You know, you are eating a good lunch, I shouldn't be talking about this at this time, but I've already opened that can of worms. You are eating a good lunch, and you are enjoying and, "This is wonderful." Well, praise God for it. Thank Him. Tell Him, "Thank You Lord for making vine-ripe tomatoes and the blessing that comes when you put it with bacon. Thank You for that. Thank You for giving us taste buds that enjoy that. Thank You for the bounty of Your goodness. Thank You for the joy it is to talk with a Christian brother or sister across the table, eating, and enjoying fellowship. Thank You that You made us for this kind of thing, table fellowship." So we take the smallest things, whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. You turned it into worship.

When bad things happen, that we think are bad, we worship God by giving thanks in them. "Lord, thank You that this event has happened. I wasn't planning on this trial that has just happened. The car breaking down, or the air conditioner breaking in July or August. I wasn't planning on that. I would have rather this not happened, but thank You that You aren't surprised. Thank You that You are going to use this in some way for Your glory." So you turn it into prayer and worship. We're supposed to live that way. Pray! So what are you doing about things in the world if you are not praying? What are you doing about the condition of this world if you are not praying? The answer is: Not enough. I think really, not much. But if you are praying, you are doing incredible things because the fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much! And one of the things that God is doing I think in this world is He is calling us to pray. Don't you think about it more? How bad things are? It makes me want to pray. When things are good, it is hard to remember

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to pray, isn't it? But when things are bad, "What is going to happen with our kids, and our grandkids, if this continues, if the Lord doesn't come back.?" Pray! How much are you praying? *Pray to the Father*, and the second point we're going to spend most of our time on this morning because we talked a lot about praying last time, is *Glorify the Son*.

2) Glorify the Son:

A) What Does Jesus Pray for First?:

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father,... He prayed. ***...the hour has come;***... Here is His request. He makes the request. ***...glorify Your Son,***... What does He pray for first in this High Priestly Prayer? He prays for His own glory. Now we can't pray that way. We don't say, "Father, glorify my name," or "Glorify me," because we are not worthy of glory like that. In fact, this is one of the clear demonstrations of Jesus' deity. I've talked about how the Jehovah's Witnesses read this book, and they can't find His deity, and it is all over the place. It is right here. "Glorify Me," that's what He says in Verse 1, ***...glorify Your Son,***... And look at Verse 5, He repeats the same for emphasis, ***Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself,***... He prays it twice. When you put that in context of the Old Testament, Verses like Isaiah 42:8, or 48:11. Isaiah, where He says, "I am the Lord," literally, "I am Yahweh," literally, to use their pronunciation, "I am Jehovah. That is My name. My glory I will not give to another." Here the Father is giving glory to Jesus. Why? Because Jesus is Jehovah. He prays for His own glory.

Now it is important for us to understand what glory is. It is an elusive term. It is one of those words we use often, but we need to continually remind ourselves what the real meaning of this word is. Glory, is first of all not an attribute of God like holiness or righteousness. It is not a characteristic of God's essential nature like His goodness, or His love, or His omnipresence, or His omnipotence. Glory is not an attribute, it is not a part of who He is in Himself. Glory is *'the effect, or impact of one of the attributes of God being made known'*. When His holiness is revealed, the revelation of it is glory. Do you see what I'm saying? It is not strictly speaking who He is, it is the collision of who He is into the world. That is glory. The New Testament word for it, and this is one of those examples where so often when you are doing a really effective correct word study, you look at a New Testament word, the Greek word, but you really need to go back to the Old Testament roots for so many of the words because the New Testament authors are using the Greek word, but they are thinking about the Hebrew word and concept from the Old Testament.

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You see? And so the Greek word, this is an example where this is especially true, the Hebrew word for 'glory', the idea that develops in the Old Testament. First of all, the root itself means 'to be weighty, or to be heavy', 'קָבֹד *kabowd*' is the 'glory'. And so you think about that, its normal usage it could mean 'to be heavy, to be weighty, to be burdened down'. So you extrapolate from that literal meaning, the figurative meaning, 'impressive', 'a weighty person', 'the impression that someone makes that is glorious, is heavy'. "That is an impressive person." Well, God's glory is His weightiness, His heaviness, His impressiveness, it is the impact that He makes when He is made known. That is glory.

In fact, 45 times in the Old Testament 'glory' could be defined as '*the visible manifestation of the presence of God*'. That is, God is present, and His presence is made visible. The reality is we know God is present everywhere, but His glory is when His presence is made visible to us. You see this particularly, it says it 45 times, but some of the places it coalesces around. It is like Exodus 40 when the tabernacle is completed. Remember the tabernacle is the tent of meeting where man will now meet with God through the sacrificial system, the Holy of Holies, and the Holy Place set up inside this tent in the courts of the tabernacle. After Moses finished all the work, we read at the end of Exodus 40, when everything was done, then the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle was so powerful that Moses could not go near the tabernacle. You see that? That is glory. God's presence is made visibly known with impact. That is what glory is.

You see it again in 1 Kings at the completion of the temple, when Solomon completes the temple. Now the tabernacle has become the temple. It is not a portable tent, God is in a house, a permanent dwelling. What happens when all the work is done? The glory of the Lord filled the house of God. The people could see it. So when Jesus is saying, "Glorify Me," what He is saying is, "Make visible to the world, make visible to others the reality of who I am." That is what it means to glorify Christ. It means to make visible the reality of who He is because the reality of who He is is hidden from our eyes. And particularly, you think about the man Christ Jesus, the God-Man, if you had seen Him walking with His parents as a little boy, you might have thought, "There is a cute little boy," or, "That boy seems especially obedient," but you wouldn't have thought that much about it. He is just a little boy, He's just a Jewish boy, and you might have noticed that He looked like a Galilean, or He talked like a Galilean, had an accent like a Galilean. I don't know what kind of accents they had, but He would have had that accent. But you

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wouldn't have known the essence of who He really was, but you have glimpses of glory in His life.

Like when He is 12 years old, and He is left in Jerusalem, remember? His parents leave, the caravan that has gone down for the feast has returned, and somehow, Jesus, they lost track of Him. You know, that is something that can happen when you've got a whole bunch of adults, with a whole bunch of kids, and you are kind of mutually caring for everybody else's kids. They think, "Well, somebody else, yeah, Jesus must be with them," and they get a ways away from town, and they realize, it's time to bed down that night, "Where is Jesus? He is not here." So they go back to Jerusalem, and they find Him reasoning with the priests in the temple. Here they are, He is surrounded by a group of learned scholars, and this 12-year-old boy is talking with them in such a way that they are mesmerized. That is astonishing, that is a glimpse of glory. He is not an ordinary boy. There is something more about Him.

So when He says, "Glorify thou Me," in Verse 5, He is saying, "Father, make visible the invisible reality of who I am. Set it on display. Make My character, and My attributes known visibly. Show the world My holiness. Show the world My love. Show the world My power, My wisdom, that I have as God." In fact, the second point, *Glorify the Son*, let me gather this second major point under four sub-points, which really these four points are the rest of the message. I just gave you the first one without telling you what it was. *What does Jesus pray for first?* is the first question. There are four questions. *What does He pray for first?* He prays for His own glory.

B) Why Does He pray for His own Glory?

The second question, we come to now is: *Why does He pray for His own glory?* He gives us the answer in Verse 1, ... "***Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,...***" He says, "Glorify Me, show My glory to the world so that I can show Your glory to the world." Do you see that? "Make the invisible reality of who I am visible so that I can make the invisible reality of who You are visible." That is what He is saying, that the Father's glory, and the Son's glory, are bound up together. This is exactly what Jesus has been saying throughout His ministry, and this is what John has been telling us since the beginning of His Gospel. Turn back to John 1:18. Well, first of all, look at Verse 14.

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John 1:14 ~ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw (beheld) His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John uses that word *dwelt*. Literally it means *pitched His tent*. The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. He's using that word intentionally to say, "Listen, when Jesus came, what happened was God's glory was tabernacled in human flesh." The tabernacle and the temple were replaced. Jesus was the temple. That's why Jesus in John 2, what does He says when He cleanses the temple and they get all mad about it? They say, "Why are You doing this? What sign will You show us to show us You have the ability to do this?" He says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I'll raise it." And they didn't realize He was talking about the temple of His body. He was saying, "This temple is obsolete. The real temple is right here. This temple has passed out of usefulness. Now I am the temple." So in John 1:18, though, what He says is:

John 1:18 ~ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

John is telling us, "Listen, no one has seen the essence of the attributes of God truly, visually ever. There are little glimpses almost in the Old Testament, but no one's really seen the essential nature of God. But the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. Literally, He has exegeted Him, that when Jesus came, His purpose was to exegete who God is. The Greek word is actually the word exegesis, to lead out the meaning. He's led out who God is. He's put on display who God is. That's why Jesus came is to show you and me the Father. He was in the bosom of the Father, and He has come to explain Him. Do you want to know what God is like? Look at Christ. That's the message.

This is what He's saying throughout His ministry. "The works that You see Me doing are the Father's." But the disciples are so slow to get it. Remember in John 14, when Philip says to Him in Verse 8, "Lord, show us the Father and that is enough for us." This is on the night before He is crucified. I mean, He's had all this time with them, and this is what Philip comes up with. And Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Everything I've been doing is showing you the Father." That's what He's saying.

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So when the Son is lifted up, what happens is the Father is lifted up. When the Son is seen clearly for who He is, the Father is seen clearly for who He is. Now, what the world needs, the reason the world is in such sad shape is the world is blind to the glory of God. The world can't see the glory of God. They have rejected the glory of God. That's what Romans 1 said. Though He's made it known in creation, He's made it known within them, rather than worship and give thanks, they turned aside and worshipped their idols. They've turned away from the glory of God, and here they are in their darkness. And what happens when you turn away from the glory of God and you start worshipping the creature, you do what Isaiah said. Whatever you worship, you become like it. So if you want to worship animals, you're going to become like animals.

But the reality is that in the darkness, what needs to happen is for people to see the glory of God. They need to see who God really is, because they're believing a lie. The god of this age has blinded their eyes (2 Corinthians 4:4). He is the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:1). He is their father the devil (John 8:44), and he's blinding them so that they don't really believe that God really is good. They don't believe that God really is holy. They don't believe that God really is loving. They don't believe that God really is wrathful in the true sense of the word, in the way it ought to be, because listen, wrath is a good thing. How would you like to live in a world where rapists, child molesters, and serial killers went unpunished. "Oh, hey it's not a big deal." You want evil stopped. A world where people like those folks in ISIS beheading hundreds and hundreds of people, killing children, they need to be punished. They need to be stopped. God is committed to that, because He is a God of wrath. I'm so glad He is.

Now, that creates a problem for us because we're sinners and we deserve His wrath. But the wonder of it is He's also a God of infinite mercy, compassion, and loving kindness, who delights. I love that picture in Exodus 34 where Moses wants to see His glory. Remember? "Show me Your glory. I want to see Your glory." He doesn't really get to see the glory. He gets to hear the glory, because he can't see it. But the Lord passes by and he sees some kind of sense of a back part of God's robe, and what he sees really is what he hears. The Lord proclaims His Name, and the Lord says, "The Lord, the Lord, (Yahweh, Yahweh), compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth." God is overflowing with lovingkindness and truth. And he goes on to say right after that, "...who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin..." Do you see what kind of God He is? And he goes on to say, "But He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished." If you will not turn to a God like

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that, you will experience the fullness of His punishment and His wrath. He will punish you forever if you will not come to Him, but He is a God who welcomes sinners. You don't have to clean yourself up to come to Him. Realize you can't clean yourself up, and go to Him. But see, people don't see that. They're in the dark. They don't see the glory of God. They don't see who God really is. What do they need more than anything else? What is the way that we fight the battle? We show them who God is. We tell them. We make known who God is. How do you make known who God is? How do you make known His character? You talk about Jesus. You get the focus on Jesus. You do what He said. You pray, and as you pray to the Father, when you look at the world, you pray, "Lord, make known the glory, Your glory, in the face of Christ, in my life and in the way I live, and in my words and the way I talk. Make known the glory of Christ." And then you set your heart to look for opportunities to point people to Jesus.

He prays for His Father's glory. What does He pray for? He prays for His own glory. Why does He pray for His own glory? So that He can glorify the Father. The third question is:

C) How is the Father's Glory and Jesus' Glory Made Known?

It's made known in the supernatural acts and character and deeds of Christ. And so you talk about Him and you talk about His life. He refers to this in a sense in Verse 2, when He says *even as*. Literally, that could say *just as*. He says:

John 17:1 ~ ..."Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, 2 even as (just as) You gave Him authority..."

He's kind of giving a reason to the Father to do what He's asking Him to do. He says, "Father, glorify Me that I may glorify You." That's one reason, but here's another reason. "Because it's the same thing You've been doing in Me."

John 17:2 ~ even as (just as) You gave Him (the Son of Man) authority..."

And then He has given eternal life. He's saying, "Look, You gave the Son of Man authority," and I think Verse 4 completes it.

John 17:4 ~ I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

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All of Jesus' life and ministry was Him glorifying the Father, and He's saying, "Listen, that's what we've been doing. You have glorified Me, and in all of that, I have been glorifying You. You've been blessing Me with Your Spirit. You've been blessing Me with Your plan. I've been living a life of dependence, but You've been working in Me. The works that people have seen Me do, I've been saying are the works the Father is doing in Me. And now because this is the way that we've always planned it, this is Your plan, Father, so now at the supreme moment, do the same thing. Show Your glory in the event that's about to happen."

I mentioned earlier, you would have thought Jesus was just an ordinary man. Had you seen Him walk into Jerusalem with the twelve disciples, you would have thought He was an ordinary man. If you'd seen Him walking along the hills of Galilee, you would have thought He was an ordinary man, except that you would have seen people following after Him. That would have been your only clue. Looking at Him, though, you wouldn't have known. If you walked up physically, Isaiah tells us He has no stately form or majesty that we should be drawn to Him. There was nothing physical outward that would draw you to Him. That would have hidden His glory even more, but His natural, normal look, then what happened is you heard Him teach. He says, "You gave Him authority over all flesh," in Verse 2. Do you see that? I think He's basically saying, "One of the ways You've glorified Your Son already was You gave Him authority over all flesh." This was to show people that He was the Son of God, the authority the Father gave Him.

So like I said, you might see Him and you wouldn't know who He was, but when you heard Him teach, you heard Him tell a parable, you heard Him preach a sermon, what you would have said is what those who first heard Him on the sermon on the mount said. Remember? At the end of His sermon in Matthew 7, they said the people were marveling at His teaching. What were they marveling at? They were marveling that He taught as one having authority. "There's something about Him. He has authority." That's in Matthew 7.

In Matthew 8, He's on the boat with the disciples on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus falls asleep. He's not worried. He knows everything's on schedule. "Nothing's going to happen to Me." He falls asleep. The disciples are terrified because there's this storm that comes up. They wake Him up. "Lord, do You not care that we're perishing?" Jesus says, "Oh you of little faith. You think we can perish? Do you not know who I am?" He says, "Peace be still!" and immediately the winds stopped blowing and the waves that had been surging all around the boat, immediately are calmed. And what did they say? "What manner of man is this that

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even the wind and the waves obey Him?” What are they saying? “What kind of authority does this man have?”

Then in Matthew 9, we talked about this a couple of weeks ago, the paralytic lowered down through the roof. Jesus is going to heal him. The paralytic comes down and He says, “Take courage,” and then He doesn’t say, “Take up your pallet and walk. He says, “Your sins are forgiven you.” Jesus knew that was going to create quite a stir among the Pharisees, and they are immediately astir. They’re asking themselves in their hearts, “Who does He think He is? Only God forgives sins.” And Jesus says, “Hey guys, I want to tell you something,” because He knows their thoughts. He says, “Which is easier to say? ‘Take up your pallet and walk,’ or, ‘Your sins are forgiven?’” And basically in His language, they’re about the same just like ours. It’s a sentence. One is as good as another for ease of speech. “Why did I say your sins are forgiven? So that you might know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, that you might know who I really am, that I am God. Yeah, you’re right. Only God could forgive sins, and I just said your sins are forgiven you.” That’s what He said. That was glory.

So He says, “Listen, people have seen My glory. They’ve seen Your glory by seeing My glory and all the different miracles that have happened, the preaching that has happened, and now I’m asking You to show them My glory in the most supreme way.” That comes to the fourth question. We’re basically looking at glorify the Son by looking first at what Jesus prays for. Why does He pray for His own glory? How is the Father’s glory made known? And then finally:

D) Where is the Glory of God and of Christ Most Clearly Seen?

This is what He’s praying for.

John 17:1 ~ ...“Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,...

John 17:5 ~ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

He’s speaking in some sense of what’s going to happen in Heaven, but He’s speaking about the way that He gets there. And the way that He gets to Heaven is when He’s lifted up on the cross, and then He’s lifted up in the resurrection, and

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then He's lifted up in the exaltation. All three are the Father lifting Him up, and the cross is the beginning of that explosion of glory.

Where is the glory of God and of Christ most clearly seen? It is most clearly seen in the cross of Jesus Christ. It's most clearly seen in the Person of Christ, but it's most clearly seen at the moment of His death. That is the supreme revelation of the glory of Christ. That is the supreme revelation of the glory of God. So what does that mean? That means that you and I need to not just talk about Jesus, but we need to talk about the cross. We want to get people to the cross. Paul said, "We preach Christ and Him crucified."

Now think with me about how the cross is the supreme revelation of God's glory. I mentioned glory, remember, is just the impact of the unveiling of God's character. It's the impact of the unveiling of God's attributes. It's the impact of the unveiling of God's Person. That's glory. So what that's saying then is if the cross is the most glorious moment, the cross is the moment where the attributes of God are the most vividly and clearly displayed, and I would submit to you that every attribute of God is most on display in the cross. They reach their apex at Calvary. Think with me about this for a moment. The holiness and righteousness of God, where do you see that? You see glory of it in different places in the Bible. You see it certainly in the flood. You see the wrath of God, don't you? His determination to punish evil, you see it there. You see it at Sodom and Gomorrah. Yes, you see it there. You see it in the Babylonian captivity where He even exercises His wrath against His own people. Yes, you see it there, but where do you see the wrath of God most clearly? You see it at Calvary. That is where the wrath of God is on display, for the cross is judicial abandonment.

Remember I mentioned earlier from Romans 1, *gave them over*, that the Lord gives them over to the lusts of their heart, then He gives them over to unnatural lusts, literally against nature. It's against nature for women and women, for men and men. It's against nature. That's what He's saying. But He gives them over. He removes His hand, and that's what happens. He removes the hand that's restraining evil, God's common grace, and He lets man go his own way, so that man pursues what he really wants. God doesn't push him. No, He abandons them like that.

So the picture is like a fence. And you know, the animals are wanting to get the grass on the other side of the fence, and so they're pushing against the fence. "I want that." It's a cow or a horse, and they're reaching over it, and slowly over time they loosen the fence, and the fence breaks. Well, what this is saying is when that

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fence breaks, it's a judicial act of God. He gives them over. Three times it says that. It says that in Romans 1:24, Romans 1:26, and Romans 1:28. In Romans 8:32 that Ted read earlier, the same word is used. God did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. Delivered Him up is *gave Him up, gave Him over*. It's the same word. God did not spare His Son but delivered Him over. He delivered Him over to the wrath of God.

This is what the Gospel is. The Gospel is the work of Christ in propitiating our sins. Propitiation is an important word. It means that Jesus stood in the way of the wrath of God. This is how He saves. He took the wrath of God so that if you believe and have repented, you will not have to. He took your wrath. He took your punishment. It's penal substitutionary atonement of Christ. He was penalized. He was as a substitute for those who would believe. And so the wrath of God is seen most vividly in the cross. Think about it.

In Luke 22:53 when they come to arrest Him, Luke tells us that Jesus says to them, "Hey, I was with you every day in the temple courts. Why are you arresting Me now at night?"

Luke 22:53 ~ While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me;...

Why now?

Luke 22:53 ~ ... but this hour and the power of darkness are yours."

"I've been given over." This is the hour and the power of the darkness reigns. This is what's happening. This is why the Sanhedrin, men of dignity you would think, the most respected men in Jerusalem and Israel, after they had interviewed Christ and pronounced the sentence of death upon Him, the Scripture says in Matthew 26:67 that these men, these old men, spat in His face, beat Him with their fists, and others slapped Him, and they mocked Him, after they were beating Him apparently so ferociously that one blow would land so quick before another, they said, "If You're the Messiah, prophesy and tell me who hit You." How does that happen? That's abandonment. Their wickedness is not being restrained. The Father has pulled back His hand in allowing the full vent of evil to attack His Son. We see that with the scourging of the Romans, and then the Romans soldiers strip Him and make fun of Him, and beat Him again with their fists, mock Him, bow down before Him in mock worship. The crowd yells, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Give

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us Barabbas. Give us that wicked criminal. We don't want Jesus. Crucify Jesus." How can that happen? That's judicial abandonment.

The wrath of God is seen most vividly in that moment where not just the physical suffering of Christ, but remember it got dark in the middle of the day? It's completely dark, because God is testifying with that His abandonment of His Son, because God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Jesus cries out in the darkness, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" from Psalm 22:1 to verify for us that He's been abandoned. And in all of that, He's experiencing hell on the cross. And where do you see God's intention to punish sin, more vividly than that? What you see is that God, if He's going to save anybody, He's not going to do it by just pardoning them. He's so holy and He must punish evil so much, that to save you, He had to punish Christ in your place. That's His wrath.

But where also do you see the meekness, and gentleness, and the lowliness of God more clearly? You say, "Well, I see the meekness, and gentleness, and lowliness of God when He comes down to Abraham." In Er of the Chaldeans, Abraham is a godless man and God shows His humility and meekness in going down to meet with him. Or you might say, "God came down to Moses in the land of Midian, and humbly revealed Himself to the sinner Moses."

Or you might say more correctly that you see the meekness, and gentleness, and lowliness of God in the manger in Bethlehem. What kind of God is it that would leave the glory of Heaven and become a baby? But you don't see the meekness and lowliness of God anywhere more clearly than on the cross at Calvary, because there you see the Lord of glory going all the way down, not just becoming a man. In Philippians, Paul tries to convey this mystery. He says, "He took upon Himself the form of a slave and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death..." And then he adds this: "...even the death of the cross," because there Jesus is made a curse. He is accursed by God. He is regarded as the lowest of the low. That's where God leaves the throne of glory and comes all the way down. Do you see the meekness and lowliness of God, and do you see the approachability of God? He's willing to do that. You can come to Him. No matter how filthy you are, you can come to Him. You see the meekness, and gentleness, and lowliness of God.

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Where do you see the love of God anymore than on the cross? You see God's love and His desire for relationship. You can see it in the garden. Here's God walking with men in the cool of the day. It's astonishing. Why would He want to care about Adam and Eve? He's the Lord of glory, but He does. You see His love, His desire for relationship. You see that even with sinners, He sets up His tent and pitches His tent among them in the tabernacle, which we talked about earlier. But nowhere do you see the love and compassion of God more, His desire for relationship with men more supremely, more on display, than on the cross. His willingness to sacrifice, you see the Father's sacrifice in giving His Son, how hard it was for the Father to give over His Son. But He does it because He wants to know and love you if you will repent and believe. The Lord Jesus Christ, where do you see His love most supremely? 1 John 3:16 says, "This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down His life for us." He lays down His life freely so that He can bring us back to God.

We could go on and on, but where do you see the wisdom of God? You see it in creation, but you don't see it anywhere more brilliantly and brightly than at Calvary. Where do you see the power of God? You see it in the works and miracles of Jesus, but you see it nowhere more on display than at the moment He dies. For at that moment, what has happened is—and this is the wisdom of God and the power of God, all these things converging. The wrath of God, the love of God, the gentleness of God, all converging in resplendent, brilliant glory, you see the power of God in that at that moment what has happened is the fulfillment of what He said way back in Genesis 3:15, "I will put enmity between your seed (He says to Satan), the serpent's seed and the woman's seed. You will bruise his heel and he will bruise your head." In the moment Jesus dies, His heel is bruised. The serpent has killed Him, but what has happened is in the serpent killing him, the Son of God has crushed the head of the serpent. He has radically defeated Satan and plundered his house. He's bound the strong man and made a public spectacle of him, according to Colossians 2. It's all happened in that moment.

So all of these things are on display in the cross, and so the question is what do we do in a world that is enveloped in increasing darkness? We pray and we proclaim Christ and Him crucified. And there's nothing that can stand against that. When you do that, you have unleashed the greatest power. I mean, the Gospel, Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God." The only thing in Scripture that's called the power of God is the Gospel. He's saying it's more powerful. It's more than a nuclear option. It is the power of God. So when you proclaim the Good News, you tell people to look at Jesus and you lift up the cross,

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what you are doing is proclaiming the power of God. When He is willing and when His electing grace is present, and it's His time, He will bring people from death to life, and He wants to do that in this day. I think He's going to be doing it to a lot of people who right now are rushing toward evil. A lot of people who are considering what gender they are and all this kind of nonsense, they're deceived, they're in the dark, they're running after wickedness, and they're going to see it does not satisfy, and we need to be ready to receive them, so that in years to come, we can be like the Corinthian church, where Paul says, "Remember where some of you were? You were fornicators. You were effeminate. You were homosexuals. You were adulterers, but you were washed. You were sanctified." That's the calling we have is to be servants of God. Let us be about His business.

Let's pray together...

Father, we thank You for the glory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We thank You that we have the promises of Your word, that You who are faithful and are faithful to Your promises, You're governing and ruling every detail of our lives. Every detail of the big movements of history are in Your hand, and that we can be still and know that You are God, that You will be exalted among the nations, and that You will be exalted in the earth. We don't have to fret. We don't have to worry. What we need to do is pray, lay ourselves down before You, and commit to lift up Christ, and then watch You, stand still and see the salvation of our God. Help us be faithful to that end. We pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

"Weapons of Our Warfare"

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