

The Lord's Prayer

John

By Richard Caldwell, Jr.

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: John 17:1-5

Preached on: April 13, 2008

Founders Baptist Church

24724 Aldine Westfield

Spring TX 77373

Website: wwwFOUNDERSBAPTIST.org

Online Sermons: www.SERMONAUDIO.com/smbconline

Well, amen. Thank you, brother Michael.

We are thankful for God's grace, are we not? Let us never forget that that grace is come to us in the person and through the work of his Son the Lord Jesus Christ. That is how our sins were paid for. That is how we will be in heaven one day due to his work.

I want to ask you, please, to turn this morning to John chapter 17 and this morning we are going to read verses one through five.

Can everyone hear me all right out there? In the back does it sound ok? I feel a little weak up here, but sometimes what I hear is not what you hear, so... And, Mark you are the best judge of that.

John chapter 17 is where we are. Verse one is where we will begin reading.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."¹

Let's ask the Lord's blessing on our time in these verses this morning.

Lord, it is a joy to gather around your Word now and our prayer is that you by your Spirit, by the ministry and the working of the blessed Holy Spirit, that, Lord, you would speak to our minds instructing us, changing us, washing us as we are exposed to your truth. We rely upon you for this, Lord. We joyfully confess that all human effort apart from the divine working is fruitless. And so, Lord, we ask you to be at work in this time of

¹ John 17:1-5.

preaching for the glory of your name and for the good of your people and we ask you this in Jesus' name. Amen.

This morning we have come to the greatest prayer ever recorded. It is a detailed account of the intercession that Jesus offered on behalf, not only of his immediate followers, but also on behalf of all of his future followers. Just prior to his betrayal, his arrest and his crucifixion.

This is an amazing opportunity for us. It is an inspired preservation of the prayer life of the Son of God.

Martin Luther said of this prayer, “This is truly beyond measure a warm and hearty prayer. He opens the depths of his heart both in reference to us and to his Father and he pours it all out. It sounds so honest, so simple. It is so deep, so rich, so wide. No one can fathom it.”

It is a prayer that has had great effect through the history of the Church. Just one example of that is the case of John Knox. We are told that he had this prayer read to him every day during his final sickness and in the closing moments of his life he testified that these verses continued to be a great comfort and a source of great strength for his conflict.

If you are like me, you have read of the Lord Jesus spending entire nights alone in prayer with his Father. I thought to myself what it would have been like to have listened to that, to have been there, to have heard that. I wonder what those prayers might have been like. Well, we get a chance to read and study one right here in John chapter 17.

The prayer is easily outlined. Let me give you the outline we are going to follow with our study. In verses one through five Jesus prays concerning himself. Then in verses six through 19 he prays for his immediate followers. And then in verses 20 through 26 he prays for his Church universal, not only praying for his immediate followers, his disciples, but praying for those who would come to believe in him through their word. And so verses one through five he prays for himself, six through 19 he prays for his immediate followers, 20 through 26 he prays for his Church universal.

This morning we are going to begin by focusing on the first five verses. Now we have gone through John 17 together a few years ago. We didn't study it in the context of a study through the gospel of John. So this is our second time through John 17 and this time I am going to handle it a little bit different. The first time we went through it I sort of dealt with themes.

For example, I know in verses one through five we dealt with the subject of glory because Jesus speaks of a glory that he left behind when he came to earth, but yet he also speaks—and a glory, by the way, that is going to be restored to him. And then as he prays he looks forward to the time when he is going to ascend back to the right hand of the Father and his glory will be restored to him. And he also spoke of glorifying his

Father here on the earth. And so we talked about the glory that Jesus did not lay aside and yet the glory that he did lay aside and it was restored to him. And so that is kind of how we walked through the prayer the first time. We dealt with it in terms of a theme, the doctrines.

This morning and throughout our study this time what I want to do is just walk through it verse by verse and sort of let the verse unfold itself as we just walk through it verse by verse and take note of what we learn. And so I want to do that beginning this morning in verses one through five. And where I want us to begin is verse one and in the first verse we find the occasion for this prayer. He tells us the setting for it.

“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven...”²

And so we are told that his prayer immediately followed the great discourse that we have been studying in the previous chapters of the upper room discourse, Jesus preparing his men for this betrayal at the hands of Judas that they did not see coming, preparing them for his arrest, preparing him for the mock trials that were about to take place, preparing them for his crucifixion, preparing them even beyond that for his going away after his resurrection. And so this prayer is offered immediately following this time of teaching, instruction and preparation that he had spent with his disciples.

We are also told not only does it follow that, but it immediately precedes the betrayal itself, chapter 18 verse one, following the prayer it says, “When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place...”³ and on it goes.

And so this prayer is stationed following the great discourse and just before the great disloyalty. It is at a strategic place, isn't it, as Jesus pauses to intercede for his disciples.

The second thing I want us to take note of as we think about this is the purpose for this prayer, not only the occasion for it, but the purpose for it. Why is Jesus praying this? The first thing we note is that it is intercession. I mean, it is what it appears to be. He is interceding for them and he is praying for us.

Verse 20.

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.”⁴

And so this is what it appears to be. This is intercession, Jesus interceding on behalf of his immediate followers, interceding on behalf of us as he looks down through the

² John 17:1.

³ John 18:1-2.

⁴ John 17:20.

ages ahead to come and he says, “There will be believers who will come to see who I am through the word of these and I am praying for them also.”

But not only is this intercession, this is also instruction. This prayer was intended to be instruction. There is a reason why Jesus offered this prayer in the hearing of his disciples. I mean, somebody had to hear this in order to record it. In fact, we know they heard it and saw it because not only is there the record of what he prayed, but notice how it begins in verse one:

“When Jesus had spoken these words...”⁵ What does it say? “He lifted up his eyes to heaven.”⁶

That speaks of an eye witness account, doesn't it? They saw him. They not only heard. Not only were able to record the words, but they witnessed this prayer. They see him lift his eyes up to heaven and they hear as he intercedes on their behalf. This was a publicly offered prayer. This was something Jesus offered in the midst of his followers.

Why did he do that? Why did he pull aside by himself?

Well, because this was not only meant to be intercession, this was meant to be instruction and instruction not only for them to address the immediate circumstances, but also instruction for us. Here we are 2000 years later. We are still studying it. And so this is instruction that not only addresses immediate circumstances. This is instruction that addresses the future.

What do we learn about in this prayer? Well, we learn about Christ himself.

One of the great things taught in this prayer is the identity, the self view of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we will begin to see that in a moment. So this teaches us about Christ himself.

This prayer also reveals God's relationship, not only to his Son, but to his Son's followers, to these men and to future believers. What is God's relationship to us? How does God view us? How does he take care of us? What does he have in store for us? It is dealt with in this prayer.

One of the great lessons taught in this prayer has to do with salvation itself. This prayer is an unbelievable unfolding of some amazing truths concerning what salvation is and where it was planned and when it was planned and how it was carried out and what its ultimate end is. This prayer is a great lesson concerning the sovereignty of God in salvation. If anyone ever doubted the truths of unconditional election and predestination they would only have to come to John 17 to be convinced of its truthfulness because it is here.

⁵ John 17:1.

⁶ Ibid.

This prayer also instructs concerning the future well being of these men. This comforts. This strengthens. If, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ you ever wonder whether or not you are safe, whether or not the Lord takes note of who you are and where you are and the circumstances that you are facing and whether or not he has it all under control, John chapter 17 should comfort you and strengthen you.

It is no accident that John Knox wanted this prayer read to him in his dying days. There is a good reason for it. John 17 is a prayer of great comfort and strength for the believer.

So the occasion for this prayer just following the great discourse just prior to the great disloyalty; the purpose for the prayer, intercession and instruction.

What is the focus of the prayer life of Jesus here in John 17? What is the focus of this prayer? It could be described in two terms. The first and overarching focus of the prayer is the glory of God. This is where Jesus begins.

“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come...”⁷ And what is the first thing on his mind? “...glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.”⁸

And that is the theme that runs throughout the prayer. The focus of the prayer is the glory of God, the glory of the Son of God, but the glory of the Son of God in order that God might be glorified, God the Father, the glory of God. But not only the glory of God, but you also note throughout the prayer there is a secondary focus and that is the good of his people. Christ is concerned with the good of his people. Christ is concerned with the safety and the well being of his followers.

What he does, in effect, is he says, “I am leaving, Father, and now I put them into your hand. I put them into your care.”

Verse 11.

I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.⁹

I am saying these things and I am praying these things that these, my men, your men might have the fullness of joy that I give them in their hearts. I have guarded them. I have kept them safe, but now I am leaving and I entrust them to you.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ John 17:11-13.

And, of course, we know that the Father would answer this prayer in the giving of the promised Holy Spirit who is now with us and in us. We have not be left as orphans, have we? We have another παρακλητος (par-ak'-lay-tos), don't we? We have another helper. We have someone who is with us wherever we are, Christ in us the hope of glory, Christ in us in the person and the work of the Holy Spirit.

And so the focus of this prayer is the glory of God and the good, the safety and the well being of his people which brings us to the fourth thing we consider: the occasion for the prayer, the purpose for the prayer, the focus of the prayer and then, fourth, the lessons that we gather from the first section of this prayer in verses one through five.

What do we learn from these first five verses?

The first thing that stands out as we begin to walk through these verses is we learn about the relationship that Jesus had to God, Jesus' relationship to God. Jesus of Nazareth, a man. Now we know him to be the God man. We know him to be the second person of the triune God. But as we just walked through these verses, this is a great place where we are taught that. I mean if you didn't know who Jesus is and you begin to walk through this prayer, it becomes plain. It emerges who he is.

What do we learn here about the relationship of this man Jesus to God?

The first thing that stands out is the relationship is one of a Father to a Son.

Verse one.

“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.”¹⁰

The relationship is one of Father to Son. And it is instructive to see how Jesus viewed his Father. Not only Father, he is the Father of Jesus and we are going to learn in a unique way, in a way unlike his relationship to us as Father. We are his sons and daughters because of redemption. We are his sons and daughters because of salvation. But Jesus Christ is the Son of God from all eternity, the eternal Son of God. There has never been a time when Jesus was not the Son to the Father.

And so it is instructive to see how Jesus viewed his Father.

He not only refers to him as Father in verse one, but when you go down further you see that he saw him as holy Father, verse 11.

“And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name.”¹¹

¹⁰ John 17:1.

¹¹ John 17:11.

He sees God as the one who is holy, the one who is to be revered, respected, loved and in that context, worshipped.

“Holy Father.”

And then down in verse 25 he says this.

“O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.”¹²

He is the Father to the Son. He is seen by the Son as holy and he is seen by the Son as righteous, one who does right, one who is to be absolutely trusted.

One of the things that you see in the prayer life of the Son of God is that he absolutely trusted his Father. He trusted him every step of the way, believed him, obeyed him, submitted to him, trusted him. The relationship as a Father to a Son.

The second thing we notice is that it is a unique relationship that predates the world. He says in verse two:

Since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you [when?] before the world existed.¹³

The unique relationship that predates the world.

Several elements of this unique relationship. One, he has a unique authority, doesn't he? We walk through it in order, verse two.

“Since you have given him authority over all flesh...”¹⁴

Now just stop and let that sink in for a moment.

Is there anybody here this morning that it could be said of you, right, and we have people here who have varying levels of authority. You have authority, maybe, in your home. You have authority, maybe, at your work. Maybe even you hold some office in the government as you have a larger authority.

¹² John 17:25.

¹³ John 17:2-5.

¹⁴ John 17:2.

But is there anybody here this morning that it could be said of you that you have been given authority over all humanity, right, over all flesh, over every single human being? That is the authority that has been given to this man, to this Son.

Verse two, “Since you [the Father] have given him [the Son] authority over all flesh...”¹⁵

He possesses a unique authority over all human beings.

By the way, not just over saved human beings, but even over lost human beings. He has authority over all flesh.

He also has a unique responsibility, verse two. He says that he has given him authority over all flesh to this end, “...to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.”¹⁶

Again, think about us sitting here this morning. Is there anybody in this place that it could be said of us that you have been given a responsibility by the Father to give people eternal life? No. This is something unique. This is something that belongs only to him. He has this responsibility to give eternal life. He has the authority. You see, the authority is necessary to the responsibility. He has the authority to give eternal life. Here is the responsibility, end of verse two, “...to all whom you have given him.”¹⁷

He doesn't give eternal life to all. That is universalism. He gives eternal life to all those who have been given to him that as the Father has given to the Son a people to whom the Son has the responsibility to give and the authority to give eternal life. Do you see that? God the Father has given to God the Son the authority over all humanity that he might give eternal life to those in the midst of humanity, all humanity in the midst of all humanity to those people who have been given by the Father to the Son.

There was a people given by the Father to the Son before the world ever existed to whom the Son will give eternal life. Do you know what that is called? That is called election, unconditional election.

He has unique authority in order that he might carry out a unique responsibility. He also has a unique identity, verse three points this out.

“And this is eternal life.”¹⁸

I mean, what are you giving them Jesus? You have this authority and this responsibility to give eternal life to all those who have been given to you, what are you giving them? What is eternal life?

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ John 17:3.

And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.¹⁹

A unique identity.

He is one with God.

Do you note the definition of eternal life? It is not just...

First of all, notice what it is. It is knowing the only true God. There is only one true God according to Jesus. Either you believe him or you don't. You trust in him or you don't. But according to Jesus there is only one true God. And eternal life is when you are brought into a relationship, not knowing about God. That is not eternal life, not doing thing sin in the name of the true God. That is not eternal life. Not simply engaged in religion that stands for the one true God. That is not eternal life. Eternal life is when you know him, when you have been brought into fellowship, when you have been—because we know the rest of the story from the New Testament—when your sins have been forgiven so that you have been reconciled to the one true and living God. That is eternal life. To know him.

But notice what Jesus says. It is not just knowing the Father, is it? He says in verse three, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”²⁰

You see, it is not just knowing the Father. It is knowing the Father and the Son.

You talk about an astounding claim in this prayer. Jesus claims in verse three that you don't have eternal life if you don't know him. If you don't know the Son, you don't know the Father, because to know the one true and living God is to know also Jesus Christ. It is to know the Son.

So this speaks of his unique identity. He is one with God. To know the one true and living God is to know Christ Jesus.

He also tells us here that he has been sent by God.

“The only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”²¹

Jesus was sent in a unique way in a unique sense. For example you can read in the early part of the gospel of John, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John,”²² right? John the Baptist. He was sent by God, but he was sent by God from the

¹⁹ John 17:3-4.

²⁰ John 17:3.

²¹ Ibid.

²² John 1:6.

standpoint of one who never had an existence prior to his conception and then birth into this world. John the Baptist's existence began when he was conceived in his mother's womb. He didn't have a prior existence. And then he was sent as a man.

“There was a man sent from God.”²³

He was sent as just a man, a messenger, a way preparer. That is how John the Baptist was sent.

But Jesus existing from all eternity, having a relationship with all his Father from all eternity possessing a glory from all eternity was sent from heaven. He was sent from heaven to earth in order to accomplish a unique mission that we will talk about in a moment. But he is sent by God in a unique way.

Verse four.

“I glorified you [where?] on earth.”²⁴

Where is he going to return to? He is going to return to heaven.

“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence.”²⁵

Where is that at? Heaven.

“...with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”²⁶

So he is sent from heaven to earth. That speaks of his unique identity, one with God. To know the Father you have to know the Son. And he is sent by God. And yet he is also submitted to God. I mean, who gives him this authority? He says the Father does verse two.

“You have given him authority over all flesh.”²⁷

Verse four.

“I glorified you on earth.”²⁸

Even when he speaks of glory there is an order here, isn't there? When he speaks of glory, verse one, “Glorify your Son.”

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ John 17:4.

²⁵ John 17:5.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ John 17:2.

²⁸ John 17:4.

It is proper that the Son be glorified, right? But notice what he adds.

“... that the Son may glorify you.”²⁹

The Son’s desire is to glorify the Father. The Father glorifies the Son.

One day all things, the Bible tells us, will all add up to Jesus. Jesus will be at the head of the list of all the things that have ever been made and all the things that have ever been done. But then the Bible says the Son is going to take all that has been submitted to him and he is going to submit it back to the Father. This is something you see throughout Scripture. You see submission even in the godhead. The Son submitted to the Father, the Spirit submitted to the Father and the Son that God in all things might be glorified as God.

So though he is one with God, he is submitted to the Father.

Verse four.

“...having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.”³⁰

There is a work that was assigned to the Son by the Father that the Son completed as the perfect Son.

Something else you see about his unique identity. He is one with God. He is sent by God. He is submitted to God. He is also... he was also promised by God. He is one who came and in his coming there was a promise kept. You see this in the way that Jesus refers to himself in verse three.

“And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus [Messiah].”³¹

Do you see that? Jesus Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah. That speaks of the Old Testament promises that were fulfilled in the coming and in the work of the Lord Jesus.

So he has a unique authority over all flesh. He has unique responsibility to give eternal life to the people who have been given to him. He has a unique identity. He is one with God, sent by God, submitted to God, promised by God, the Messiah.

And then verse four tells us of a unique mission. He came with a unique mission.

“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.”³²

²⁹ John 17:1.

³⁰ John 17:4.

³¹ John 17:3.

³² John 17:4.

What was his work? His work was not just to live a life that we might all model after, right, that we might all sort of try to emulate. That wasn't his work.

Did the Son of God come from heaven to earth just to show us how to live a good life? His work was not just to declare something, just to come and tell us all that God loves us. He didn't come from heaven to earth just to say, "God loves you. Be at peace. You are all going to heaven." That wasn't his work.

What was his work? John the Baptist told us it, didn't he?

Behold, look.

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"³³

He came to live that he might die, that he might pay the sin debt for all those who will ever put their faith and trust in him as Lord and Savior. He came to die as the Lamb of God for the sins of his people, this people.

And, by the way, beloved, whether you agree or disagree, at least you need to see clearly why not only do we believe in total depravity and unconditional election and irresistible grace and the perseverance of the saints. Here is also why we believe in particular redemption, that when Jesus Christ died on the cross he was dying for the elect of God, because, recognize that he came to accomplish a work, right, in obedience to the Father and on whose behalf would this work be accomplished? For whom was the Son of God doing this work? On behalf of these people to whom he would give eternal life, on behalf of these people who were given to him by the Father. The Father gave the Son a people. The Son of God came to the earth representing that people. Live for that people and die for that people and was raised of that people and therefore that people will be in heaven. He did everything necessary to save. He accomplished the work that was given him by the Father in order that those people might be given eternal life.

That was his work, to provide eternal life and that required his death and was on behalf of this people that were given to him by the Father.

To have the Father choose a particular people to have the Father give that people to the Son, to have the Holy Spirit after his life, death and resurrection apply that work to that particular people, right? I mean, if you talk about effectual calling, if you talk about that calling that doesn't just happen in the ears, it happens in the heart. If you talk about regeneration, if you talk about new birth, who is the author of that? The Holy Spirit. Right?

If you have the Father choosing a particular people, giving the particular people to the Son, the Son coming to accomplish a work on behalf of that particular people, the Spirit of God applying the work to that particular people. Then you have the Son of God dying a vague death for everybody. It would be the only part of the entire work of redemption

³³ John 1:29.

that was universal, because everything else if you are honest with Scripture is particular. And I don't believe that the Son of God's death was out of step with anything else in the work of redemption. It was particular, too.

And do you know what? All of it is grace. What did this people do to be chosen by the Father, given to the Son, called by the Spirit? What did this people do to merit that, to deserve that?

Answer? Nothing.

What distinguishes the child of God who has now been redeemed? What distinguishes them by nature from men and women who are not redeemed? Nothing.

We were blind. We were dead in our trespasses and sins. We were the enemies of God by nature. We were engaged in wicked deeds. We were all deserving of hell. And if God had given us all what we deserve, we would have perished. And God by his grace set his love on us before the world ever existed, knew us before we were ever born and sent his Son to this earth to save us from our sins. That is grace.

Someone might ask, "How do I know if I am a part of that people? How do I know if the Father chose me? How do I know if he gave me to the Son?"

And what is interesting about that question is that the New Testament never tells us to ask it. You are in the wrong place when you begin to think that way. What the New Testament tells us to do is to obey the gospel. And what does the gospel tell us?

"Repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."

We don't know who the elect of God are, do we, before they actually are manifested through repentance and faith. So we go out and we just preach the gospel to every creature and declare God's good news, that there is a way for sinners to be reconciled to holy God, that God has done everything necessary for anybody who wants to be saved to be saved.

The way is open for reconciliation with God.

Now, do you want to be saved? Do you want your sins to be forgiven? Do you want to be reconciled to God? Do you want to have eternal life?

The way is open to you. And if you don't want to be saved, why would you ever complain about being non elect anyway? If you want to be saved, then repent of your sins and trust in Jesus and he won't throw you away. He won't throw you away.

It is amazing thing that men who don't want Jesus would complain that he didn't choose them to want him. Do you follow what I just said? You don't want him, but you are going to complain because you weren't chosen to want him?

No. The Bible doesn't say, "Question whether or not you are chosen." The Bible says, "Repent of your sins and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ."

But now after you have trusted in him, you must bow low, realizing that you didn't trust in him because you were smarter than somebody else. You didn't trust in him because you were better than somebody else. You trusted in him because of the gracious choice of God. Salvation belongs to the Lord.

A unique authority, a unique responsibility, a unique identity, a unique mission which leads to the fifth thing you see in these first five verses and that is a unique glory.

"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son."³⁴

If you have got a pencil or a pen and you don't marking in your Bible, just notice how many times the subject of glory is dealt with in these first five verses. Just circle those words.

The hour has come; glorify your Son that he Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.³⁵

Glory is on his mind, isn't it? Unique glory. It is unique with respect to the Father. The glory that the Son has is a glory that he had with the Father before time. This is the glory that he had. This is the glory that he in some respect—I am going to talk about this in a moment—laid aside. This is the glory that is going to be given to him again.

The glory that he had on earth, that he says here, "I glorified you on earth,"³⁶ that glory is spoken of in verse six.

"I have manifested your name."³⁷

This is the glory of the Son of God. He manifests the name of God. He makes the unseen God known in a way unlike anyone else.

There is a sense in which a believer today can glorify God, that is we can make his way known. But no one has ever made the Father's name known like Jesus made the Father's

³⁴ John 17:1.

³⁵ John 17:1-5.

³⁶ John 17:4.

³⁷ John 17:6.

name known, because Jesus was able to say to his disciples, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. If you have seen me, you have seen God.”

That is unique, isn't it? There is no one here this morning who can say that, but Jesus could say that.

Hebrews chapter one verse three says this.

“He,” speaking of Jesus, “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”³⁸

That is the glory of God's Son, the radiance of his glory, the shining forth of God's glory, the one in whom the glory of God is seen and he is the exact imprint of his nature. Or, using the language that John uses in chapter one, “In the beginning was [the λογος (log'-os) the Word,”³⁹ the expression of God. “...and the Word was with God, and the Word [what does it say?] was God.”⁴⁰

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his [what?] glory.”⁴¹

We saw his glory, unique glory with respect to the Father. To see the Son was to see the Father. Unique glory with respect to the past. It is an eternal glory.

Verse five.

“Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”⁴²

Now here is where we get into different kinds of glory. The word “glory,” δόξα (dox'-ah), the word glory was used at times to refer to, for example here.

“I have manifested your name.”⁴³

The glory of God is the sum total of his attributes. The glory of God is who he is, his name, his character, his nature. That is one way that the word glory is used. Listen.

When Jesus came to earth he did not lay aside that glory. He was as much God on earth as he was in heaven. He has taken to himself a sinless human nature and he has not laid that aside, by the way. He is now the God man for the rest of eternity and he is as much

³⁸ Hebrews 1:3.

³⁹ John 1:1.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ John 1:14.

⁴² John 17:5.

⁴³ John 17:6.

God though now he is also man, as he was God before he took to himself that sinless human nature, real human nature.

So he didn't lay aside that glory. All the fullness of the godhead dwells in him bodily. That is what the Bible says. He didn't lay aside that glory.

There is another use of the word "glory" and it speaks of brilliance, light, radiance, something visible, something that can be manifested and that can be perceived physically, light. And when Jesus came from heaven to earth he... that glory was veiled. To see Jesus was to see someone who in terms of outward appearance was no different from any other man.

You would not have just seen him walking down a street and said, "Wow, look at that light shining forth from him. Look at the halo above his head."

No, when you saw him there was nothing from an external point of view that would have just made you say, "That is God." In fact—and this speaks of our sinfulness—even when Jesus performed deeds that were undeniably divine in terms of their source people still tried to insist he was just a man.

But in Matthew chapter 17 when you see the transfiguration of Jesus you see that brilliance unveiled for a moment, don't you?

Look over there with me for just a moment, if you would. And we are just about done. Matthew chapter 17 and look at verse one.

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish..."⁴⁴

I can't read this without thinking to myself: Have you ever said things you wish you could just gather back in?

"If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

⁴⁴ Matthew 17:1-4.

When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.⁴⁵

Oh, he has a unique glory with respect to the Father and he has unique glory with respect to the past, not just the sum total of the attributes of God in his person, but also that brilliant light that as the glory of God was his. And he was with the Father before he came to earth and was veiled when he took to himself frail humanity.

Look back in John chapter 17. But it is a glory, that aspect of glory, that brilliant light and radiance has now been restored to him in accordance with this prayer.

"Glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."⁴⁶

That has been done. That has been done.

In fact, as we walk through this prayer in the days to come we are going to see that it was the desire of Christ that his disciples be with him to see his glory as it is, a restored glory and yet a new glory because now he is the God man exalted forever. He is the first born among many brethren. That is a glory that he didn't have prior to his incarnation. That is something new.

Let me close this morning by asking you. Do you recognize that this is the Lord's prayer? You know, we talk about the model prayer and we speak of it as the Lord's Prayer. It is the Lord's Prayer.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name..."⁴⁷ et cetera.

That is the Lord's Prayer from the standpoint that Jesus gave it. But it is not the Lord's prayer from the standpoint that Jesus could have prayed it. And the reason why we know that wasn't the Lord's Prayer from the standpoint of Jesus praying it, is that prayer contains a confession of sin. And Jesus never committed any sin.

That wasn't his prayer to pray. That was a prayer that he gave us that we might learn to pray. In fact, that is not even a prayer to be repeated over and over again as many do. That is a model prayer from which we can learn what prayer is and how to conduct it.

This is the Lord's prayer. This is what he prayed. This is a prayer intended to comfort, to instruct and to prepare. May the Lord do that with us as we study it. This is a prayer that teaches us who Jesus is, where he has come from, who he is and what his attitude is toward what he has come to do. He is not reluctant when it comes to saving us. He is ready. He is not shying away from it. He is submitting to it. And he is not just looking

⁴⁵ Matthew 17:4-8.

⁴⁶ John 17:5.

⁴⁷ Matthew 6:9.

at the immediate. He is looking to all the fruit of it, all the results of it in the ages to come for those who will believe through their word. He has already seen his resurrection. He has already seen the Church age. He already knows what is coming and he is looking forward to all those who be gathered in, who will one day be with him and behold his glory in heaven.

Do you know this Jesus? Do you know him? And if you wish to know him, you can. Will you repent of your sins? Will you obey the gospel this morning? Will you turn from your sins and trust in God's Son?

And will every believer in this place recognize from where your salvation is come? It has come from God. It was planned before you were ever born, before the world ever existed. The Son of God stepped out of heaven and came to earth as your Redeemer, the head of a new race of humanity, a redeemed race. He represented you in his life, in his death and in his resurrection. So then we bow low and give him thanks that we are saved.

And all God's people would say amen.

Let's pray together.

Father, thank you for your glorious gospel and our glorious Savior. And may this Word, in accordance with your promise not return void. We know it will not. May the seeds that are planted be watered in the days to come and where seed has been planted already and has been watered, Lord, it would be our desire that even this morning there would be a harvest that some poor sinner in this place who recognizes their lost condition that this moment and this day believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for life. Bless it to our hearts we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.