

Life in His Name – Part 41
Jesus Prays for Glory - John 17:1-5
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Jan. 7th, 2024

Intro:

- This morning, we have the privilege of returning to the Gospel of John and listening to the prayer Jesus prays for Himself, His disciples, and all who would believe in Jesus, which includes us. What would Jesus pray? What was most on His heart?
- Jesus had been speaking with His disciples as a closed group right before He was to be turned over to the authorities to be crucified. John slows down His telling of the life of Jesus and records what happened and what was said, including this incredible prayer, in chapter seventeen.
- We are only going to look at the first part of this prayer this morning as we read and hopefully understand the theological and personal implications of what Jesus prayed for Himself. This prayer unlocks the door that helps us understand the primary purpose of creation, and let me give you a hint: it has to do with glory. So, this morning, I am going to endeavor to help us understand what glory is, how it works, and why it matters.
- So please open up your Bibles to John chapter seventeen, and we will read these five verses. Then, we will come back and talk them through.

John 17:1-5 NIV

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

- In this passage, “glory” and “glorify” are used five times. So, we have to understand what “glory” is and how something is “glorified.”

The Nature of Glory

- Glory means “praise, honor, admiration, esteem, extoll, exalt,” and we do this when we praise, honor, and admire something. We talk about what is good or praiseworthy about it. For example, book reviews, movie reviews, talking about a sports play, or an amazing sight or feature. We do this all the time to what we hold as precious or of great value, and we give the thing or person “glory.” The glory of something is the goodness of something.
- This was certainly the case when Moses asked God to show him His glory. This request was made after the people made an idol while Moses was on the mountain with God and receiving the Ten Commandments. God wanted to destroy all the Israelites and start again with Moses, and Moses convinced God not to do so based on God’s reputation in the nations (this is why Moses was considered to be a very humble man – he was more concerned about God’s reputation than his own).
- When Moses asked God to “show him His glory,” God responded this way:

Ex 33:19 NIV

And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

- The glory of God is the goodness of God. We give Him glory by knowing Him, and in knowing Him, we praise Him or glorify Him because of His goodness. How do we know God? Through His acts, through His self-disclosure, and through His promises. We glorify God because of who He is, what He does, and what He will do. The more you know God, the more you glorify Him because of His goodness.
- God’s primary purpose in creating everything is to display His glory in His goodness. Jonathan Edwards, the great theologian and pastor, also came to this conclusion.

“That one phrase, the glory of God”—says Jonathan Edwards—includes “all that is ever spoken of in Scripture as an ultimate end of God’s works.”

This might be Edwards’s most memorable, and often quoted, summary of his Dissertation Concerning the End for Which God Created the World. In the final section, he argues that God’s supreme end in creation is one (not many), and that this one end is best captured as the glory of God—that is, the “true external expression of God’s internal glory and fullness.” God made the world, and rules all of history, to display his own glory.

So, many of us, gladly persuaded by the biblical refrain, speak reverently of “the God-centeredness of God.” (<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/did-jesus-pursue-his-own-glory>)

- The best thing that God can ever give us is Himself. And the best thing that we can do is to know God. That is why Jesus came, so we can know the Father. He saved us from our sins to know the extent of His love for us. He performed miracles so that we can know His goodness. He taught us so we can know His ways. The end result of God’s work is not your salvation, it is His glory—which will cause us to be in right relationship with Him because we love Him and esteem Him and praise Him and give Him glory for His goodness. Jesus came so that we can see God and know His goodness, and in doing so, glorify Him by our knowledge of and relationship to Him.

2 Cor 4:6 NIV

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.

Heb 1:3 NIV

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

- This is why, when it came to “the hour” that Jesus was to demonstrate the extent of the heart and love of God, He prayed, **“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you” (John 17:1b).**

The Prayer for Glory

- His did not pray for strength. He did not pray for endurance. He prayed the one central thing, the reason He came—to bring glory to the Father. He prayed that the Father would glorify the Son, so that the Son could glorify the Father. “Father through this final act of love and sacrifice, let my glory shine forth in the full extent of my goodness, so that I can show your goodness and glorify you.”
- This is a profound prayer. This is an incredible prayer for understanding the heart and goodness of God. You probably have never prayed this way, and I have not either, but I am starting to after thoroughly examining this passage. The prayer goes like this, **“bring to the light what is of You that is in me so that You will be glorified.”** Let your goodness shine through me so people will praise you. Let what is in me of you shine so that people will give you glory. This is a good prayer, and a right prayer with the end focus being on the glory of God and God using us so people can see His goodness and know Him and give Him praise.
- Then Jesus goes on to describe what He has been doing and what is His purpose in coming to earth as a man.

The Work of Glory

John 17:2-4

For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

- Jesus has authority over all people, and He uses this authority to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. And those who believe in Him do so because they know the goodness of God, the only true God, through Jesus. Jesus’s mission was to bring the Father's glory to earth, and He did so by finishing the work that He was given to do.
- The work Jesus was given to do was to display God’s goodness. He did so by not giving into sin and by functioning outside of sin. He was perfect and perfectly displayed the goodness of God by what He said, did, and promised. The fullest and final culmination of His life was to lay it down to satisfy the righteousness and justice that is in God by displaying the love, grace, and mercy of God. Jesus did this through His life and death so that He could grant eternal life.
- The final request that Jesus prays for Himself is that the Father would glorify the Son with the glory He had before the world began.

The Rest of Glory

John 17:5 NIV

And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

- In this prayer, Jesus says that He was before the world was. His goodness and His glory were always in perfect union and joy with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus was praying that when He fully returned to the presence of the Father, He would return to the same place in the full goodness and glory of the Father. Which the Father was happy to do. This is the story of Jesus, which the Apostle Paul tells in Philippians chapter two:

Phil 2:5-11 ESV

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- This is the story of Jesus. This is His mission, and He now lives in full glory in the full presence of the Father. We live to be like Him so that we can also glorify God and bring praise and glory to Him. We know Him and live to be like Him and make Him known so that others will know God and the extent of His goodness and hold onto the promise that He will make all things new and right and good. We will enjoy Him and His goodness for all eternity.

Conclusion

- I hope and pray that you can and have grown to understand the goodness of God through the life of Jesus the Son. I pray that you have come to know Him better and have put your trust in Jesus, and that you trust His promises and His life and have committed to knowing Him and following Him. I hope you have grown in your admiration of Him and that you will cling to Him above all things and honor Him above all things. I pray that He would be the most precious thing to you in all creation and that you would give yourself to Him and look to know Him more and more and become more and more like Him.
- If you have not committed yourself to Jesus and received the goodness of God through the love of Christ, do so today. We would be honored to walk with you in baptism as you publicly declare your faith and allegiance to Christ.
- If you are already a believer in Christ, I want to encourage you to pray that God will bring glory to Himself through your life by displaying His goodness in and through your life. I pray you then continue to do the work God has given you to do, to aim to show His goodness in this life through your life so people will give Him praise and honor and glory for who He is.

Benediction

Eph 1:17-19a ESV

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe.