

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Jesus Prays for His Glory, Part 1

Scripture: John 17:1-2

Code: 1564

John 17, I'll read as you follow, verses 1 through 5. Beginning in verse 1:

"These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

May God bless this rich passage to our hearts.

Father, indeed we are thankful for the birth of our Christ, blessed One of God. Father, we just want, right now, to ... to really concentrate on Him. We would ask that the Spirit of God would take over our hearts and minds and our thoughts, that we might be able to see Christ and Him lifted up and glorified. Lord, we realize that it is ... it is only by Christ that we are what we are. We owe everything to Him. We pray, Lord, that as we study the Word of God together for a few moments that somehow we would really be able to concentrate on these profound and deep truths. Father, I pray that what is said and what is energized by Your Spirit may, indeed, find fertile ground and bear fruit. I commit this time of study to You. In Christ's name. Amen.

If you have your Bibles, turn to John chapter 17 and we continue our study. The Apostle Paul said -- God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of Christ. Sir John Baring wrote: In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the rex of time, all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.

The cross has always been, and still is, glorious to believers. From the Apostle Paul to us, to all those who will know Christ throughout the church age and until He comes again, the cross will always be glorious. And I think that in recognizing this we have to recognize also that with all of the pain and with all of the anguish and with all of the suffering and sin bearing that Christ went through at the cross, it was also to Him glory. And as well as to Him it was glory to the Father also. So to all that know God and to God Himself and His Son the cross is the most glorious thing that has ever happened in man's history. It is glory. And we're going to learn about that this morning, or at least we're going to begin to see the lesson of the glory of the cross.

Now let's back up for just a moment to verse 33 of chapter 16 so we can get a running start on 17. Jesus has just closed out what has been called the table talks. Gathered with His eleven disciples, Judas having been dismissed, from chapter 14 through 16 Jesus unfolded to them promises, all really hinging on the one promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. And then He makes a classic, climactic great statement in verse 33, He says this: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Now that's a statement in anticipation. And frequently, in the Greek idiom, the past tense is used to express a future inevitability. When someone wanted to say something that was so positive it couldn't be changed, he would often frequently use the past tense to express the impossibility of it ever not happening. And so when Jesus says -- I have overcome the world; He is securing, before the fact, the victory of the cross. Do you see? He is saying this in anticipation.

Now we saw the same thing in Ephesians chapter 2 where the Apostle Paul talked about the believer already seated ... seated in heavenly places. Well, it's so secure it can be spoken of as if it had already happened. And so the same thing is here. So Jesus says -- I have overcome the world. Well, at this point it's pretty obvious that if you look at the facts from a human standpoint He has anything but done that. They are about to nail Him to a cross ... the world is. The prince of this world, Satan, is about to give his best shot. And certainly in view of this statement without the cross, it would be a lie, it would be a joke. But you see, in anticipation He secures His victory before the fact by saying -- I have overcome the world.

Now that's the kind of confidence that every believer can have, isn't it? That's what John said when he said about the Christian, you know, 'our faith overcomes the world, in I John 5. What is that that overcomes the world, even ... what? ... our faith. And although it hasn't happened yet it's so secure we can speak of it as if it has already taken place. So Jesus Christ has announced a climactic victory over the system, over Satan and the whole force of the world.

Now, in order for that to be not just an announcement but a fact, He realizes that it has to be done by the omnipotent power of God. So immediately after the announcement He ... as soon as He's done with that, the very next words, goes straight to prayer to the Father... in order that what has been announced may really happen in the energy of God's power.

Now you say -- Well, why did Jesus need the power of God? Well, didn't He have it already? Yes He did, but the point is this, in the humiliation of Christ He was subject in all things to the Father. Right? He humbled Himself and became ... what's the next word? ... obedient, you see. And He said -- "My will is to do the will of the Father." He subjected Himself to the power, to the will and the direction of the Father. And there was never any disagreement. But from a human analogy, this is what He did in His humiliation. And so having announced the victory He recognizes that that victory, like everything else in His humiliation, in His subjection as a man, and He was not subject to the Father prior to His incarnation nor is He since His incarnation, only for that 33 year period did He subject Himself and

restrict the use of His attributes, but during that time He recognized the Father's power working in Him and so thus having made that announcement He acknowledges that God is the power behind making it happen. And He acknowledges that in the prayer that He begins in chapter 17. So that what He says is not just an announcement but it's a reality, He prays to God who alone can make it happen.

Now, to me and to many others who study the Word of God, this is the most thrilling prayer by far that's ever recorded in the Bible. It has no match. Because in this prayer, and that is the whole of 17, it's ... it's absolutely loaded, it's fantastic it's so deep and rich. And we'll be here for a long time, so relax. Not today a long time but, you know, week after week. And in this 17th chapter, the veil is drawn back, you see. And we are admitted into the Holy of Holies and we get in on ... prostontheon face to face communion between the Father and the Son, inter-Trinitarian stuff, you know. We get right down to God and Christ in communion. We approach with our hand in Christ's, the very throne of God. We enter into the inner chamber of the trinity, the sanctuary; the secret place of the most high is open to us. And we must put off our shoes because the ground we stand on is holy ground, and we must attune our ears and listen with humility and eagerness and reverence, for this is the holiest ground perhaps in all of the Bible.

This magnificent prayer is so rich; it is so deep that no one can really fathom it. And yet it is spoken in words that are simple, that are not complex at all, that are simple as simple can be. And this is the way with Jesus, stating infinite, divine, incomprehensible mysteries in simple terms, so that although we can't plumb the depths we can get a taste of the glory, if not all of it.

Melanchthon, one of the great reformers, lectured on this particular chapter, the last lecture of his life, and he said this: "There is no voice which has ever been heard, neither in heaven or in earth, more exalted, more holy, more fruitful or more sublime than the prayer offered up by the Son of God Himself in this chapter."

And the words, as I say, are plain yet majestic, simple yet mysterious. This, just perhaps, may be the greatest chapter in the Bible. So as you study it, study it with reverence. Study it with a sense of the awe that should be in your heart as you are taken into the very inner chamber of the communion of the Trinity. It's fantastic.

Now in this chapter, let's get the background in our minds, Jesus is a few hours before the cross, just hours now. And He is looking to the cross but in this particular chapter He sight... He doesn't see the suffering of the cross, He sees beyond the suffering to the glory. Now remember how many times we've emphasized this? How many times Jesus tried to communicate this principle to His disciples by saying -- Guys, why don't you look pass the problems to what's going to happen when it's all over with. Remember the illustration He gave about the woman having a baby? How that what is pain and sorrow and anguish turns out to be joy in the birth? And the principle is looked pass the pain and pass the suffering to the glory. And Jesus perfectly illustrates it right here. He looks to the cross not with

fear and not with sorrow but with hope. And the Bible even says in the book of Hebrews that He approached the cross and did 'it for the joy that was set before Him. Remember that one? Not joy in suffering but joy in what suffering would accomplish, you see. He looked pass the pain and saw the glory.

Now, I ... just another statement that's very important. This is a transitional chapter. I say that because it is the ... really the ... marks the end of Christ's earthly ministry. This is kind of wrapping it up just before He dies. It marks the end of His earthly ministry, at the same time it begins His mediator's ministry. This chapter is the end of His earthly ministry and the beginning of His intercession for the saints. Now, you know, that He ever liveth to do ... what? ... to make intercession for us. He's right now seated ... where? ... at the right hand of the Father. And what's He doing? Interceding on our behalf. This is His mediatorial work. He is constantly interceding for the believer right now, before the throne of God. That new ministry began when the ministry on earth ended. When He went to heaven He began that mediatorial ministry. But here you have a little sneak preview. Here's the wrap-up on His earthly ministry and the beginning of His mediatorship.

And you say -- Well, how do you know that? Well, throughout this chapter we'll see that He begins to pray for us. And one of the most exciting things about this chapter is that it's hard to believe, friends, but did you know that in this chapter Jesus actually prays for me? And if you're a Christian He prays for you.

You say not by name. No. Not by ... He knew your name, no sense in putting everybody's name in there. Right? But He prays for you. He prays for all of those who will ever come to know Him. And He knew what their names would be. And so, this is the beginning of His intercessory work, and it's ... and He lets the disciples in on it. He speaks it out loud. You know, He could have spoken this prayer silently and accomplished the same thing but He didn't. He said it loudly in order that they might, number one, get a glimpse of the glory of communion between the Son and the Father; numbertwo, that they might understand a little bit about His mediatorial work. We wouldn't really know what the intercession was all about unless we really got a grab on this chapter. And so, it's a fantastic chapter. And it's Jesus in prayer. It's been called the -- high priestly prayer. It's Jesus in prayer to God the Father. And His entire prayer is recorded for us in this chapter.

Now, let me add this thought. It's obvious that Jesus was in constant communion with the Father. Now think of this, but don't think too hard about it because it's impossible to conceive of, God is the Father, Christ is the Son, they're separate yet they are one. Right? So in a sense, now hang on to your hat for a minute, in a sense, there never was any break in communion or ... or the life, the essence of divine life was constantly a flow back and forth between the two. Right? There's no such thing as the Son being cut off from the Father except for one split second, and that was at the time when He bore sin on the cross and then the Father turned His back, as He was bearing sin. But all throughout His ministry the flow of life, the transmission of the principle that whatever principle it is

that governs divine essence, never stopped flowing. So that in that sense Jesus was always in communion with the Father, unceasing communion.

Now let me add this thought, that that in a sense is true of a Christian, isn't it? Does He constantly impart life to us? Why sure. Does He constantly, I John 1:9, keep on, keep on forgiving us? Sure. There's never a break in the flow of life, either from the Father to the Son or from the Father to the believer, you see. Now in a ... in a greater sense than with us, the Father and the Son were in constant communion. Can you imagine the communion, the intricacies of the Trinitarian communion that went on all the time? But on top of that, watch this one, even though that was unceasing, there still were specific times in the life of Christ when He went to prayer, you see. And again, you see, this is the mystery of His humanity, isn't it?

You say well, if He was in a constant flow of agreement with God what's there to pray for? I mean, He knows everything God's going to do. Right? He knows the mind of God. He has the mind of God. What's to pray? In His humiliation, first of all, He prayed because He had acknowledged subjection. Secondly, to teach us how to pray, I think. To show us how important it was for us to communicate with the Father. If it was important for Him to communicate in a specific way to the Father, it's even a million times more important that we do.

All right, so Jesus was in unceasing communion with the Father and yet at the same time He had specific times of specific prayer for specific things. For example, when He was baptized, He was in prayer, Luke 3:21 tells us. When He began His public ministry, Mark tells us in chapter 1, He, first of all, rose up a great while before day and went out and departed into a solitary place and there He prayed, as He began His public ministry ... specific prayer. On the eve of selecting the twelve apostles, it tells us in Luke chapter 6, that He went out into a mountain to pray and He prayed there all night, talking to the Father about specifics ... the selecting of the twelve. It was while He was in prayer, Luke 9 tells us, He was transfigured. The Bible also tells us He even died with a prayer on His lips. Remember the prayer? "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit."

And so, Jesus had specific times for specific prayer, even though there was never a break in the flow of communion. And I think, maybe we can make this analogous to what Paul says in I Thessalonians where he says -- Pray without ... what? ... ceasing. That doesn't mean going around mumbling and grumbling all the time and ... that means let the flow be constant, see, of communion, the sensitivity to His presence. But then at the same time, Peter says -- Pray specifically -- when he says, I Peter, "Watch and pray," see ... about issues and needs, etc. And so the flow of communion needs to be constant, the constant awareness of His presence in communion with Him. There is still that time for specifics. And Jesus graphically illustrates that to us.

But, in all of the prayers of the New Testament, except John 17, as we study the prayers of Jesus, we learn very little about what He said to the Father. In most all of them it doesn't even tell us what He

prayed, you know, it just says -- He prayed. And that's it. I praise God for chapter 17, this is the only one we've got that really opens the door and lets us find out what He said to the Father. And He must have prayed frequently because the Bible tells us that He had no home, no place to lay His head, and when everybody else went home, in John 7, John 8 says He went to the Mount of Olives. Why? That was ... that was His home. Everybody went to their house and He crossed the little Kidron, up the hill and up to the Mount of Olives and spent the night with the Father. He was always in a constant flow of prayer and yet specifics as well. And so, in this chapter we see the specifics of His prayer to the Father and glorious it is beyond expression.

Now I'd like for you to just divide the chapter into three parts, and we'll consider a little bit of part one. The chapter falls into three phases, the prayer is directed into three ways. First of all, the first five verses, He prays for Himself ... prays for Himself. In verses 6 to 19 He prays for the Apostles. In verses 20 to 26 He prays for all believers. Himself, 1 to 5; 6 to 19, the Apostles; 20 to 26, all believers, the church that shall come.

Now we can introduce this particular chapter very well, by just considering the principles in verse 1 ... chapter 17, verse 1. "These words spoke Jesus," and that, of course, has reference to everything He said in chapter 14, 15 and 16 ... "These words spoke Jesus, and" there's the break, "and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may also glorify Thee." Having said all of these things, having spoken three chapters worth to the Apostles, He now lifts His eyes and prays. Now this is a tremendous thing to realize because Jesus is going to ask the Father, now watch this one, just a simple thing. He's going, first of all, to acknowledge to the Father all the things that are the Father's will and then He's just going to say -- Father, let it happen. His prayer is really a confirmation of God's will. His prayer is kind of like -- Father, we've got it all planned, laid out from eternity past, now let's get at it. It's that kind of a prayer. And so, He prays to the Father on the ground of what He knows is the Father's will. But isn't it wonderful that in His subjection and His humiliation He acknowledges that it has to be the Father's power to operate all of this? And so He says -- Father, this is what You planned, this is what we've waited for, now let's do it. See. Let's get at it.

And I love the ... the princi ... there's so many principles latent in this chapter, but there's one that just jumped into my mind at this point, and I couldn't help but think about this, He took three chapters, isn't it interesting, three chapters to tell them all these tremendous truths ... comfort them and give them peace and all ... He just kept telling about joy and ... and the Holy Spirit would come and teach them all things and lead them into all truth and bring all things to their remembrance, and glorify Christ to them and ... and, oh, He went on and on and on about the promises that He'd come back and get them ... and all these things and repeated and repeated all the promises and all the wonderful things that are going to happen but right here He stops and says -- Father, I've made all these promises, but I need Your power to make them happen. See? It has to be in Your power. Because He subjected Himself to the power of the Father. Now do you see a principle there? The principle is simply this,

after we have done all we can to promote comfort, after we've done all we can to promote holiness, after we've done all we can to teach somebody, to instruct somebody, to counsel somebody, after its all been done and we've doled it out and we've given it out and we've taught the lesson, we've communicated the truth, it is then for us to pray. You see? Because all that truth without the energy of God doesn't make it, does it?

Calvin said this, "Doctrine has no power unless efficacy is imparted to it from above."

When you have taught, when you have counseled, when you have shared spiritual truth -- you should conclude with prayer commending your hearers to the Father's care and the power of the Spirit's instruction because when you've done it all, you've done nothing unless the Holy Spirit energize it. Right? You know, it's very easy to get into a situation where you think -- Well, all I got to do is teach the Word, you know, teach the Word, teach the Word, teach the Word. And that is not all you have to do. I mean, there are some people that you teach the Word to, teach the Word to and they don't ever get it, they don't ever get it. The soil's not really very fertile. You know, I always say they come with a thimble and they spill it on the way out. That ... there's just never any ... never anything happens, you know. It just kind of goes on and on and nothing changes. And thus the ministry, my own personal commitment to the ministry, is not just to teach it's to pray. It's to pray that God will energize doctrine and solid teaching in the life of the individual. You see. That's the twofold ministry of a teacher of the Word of God. And that was what was indicated in the sixth chapter of Acts and the fourth verse when, you know, the Apostles had been working with the church at Jerusalem, but they were getting hung in on having to do everything. And so they decided they'd choose out from among them men full of the Holy Spirit and get some deacons to do some deacing, and wait on tables and ... and you know, take care of the business affairs and do all of that kind of thing and then the Apostles said We will give ourselves, verse 4, continually to the ministry of the Word and ... what? ... prayer ... prayer. Those two go together. We can not only impart the truth, we must pray to God to energize it in the fertile soil in the life of the individual.

And I'll tell you, sometimes you can never be satisfied with just teaching the truth because you keep seeing these people that it really isn't affecting like it ought to and it drives you to your knees. And be assured, we pray for many of you and for all of you that God will make you fertile soil for the planting of the Word that it might bear fruit in your life.

All right. So, basically, Jesus then having stated all these things says -- Father, it's going to be through Your power that it's all going to come to pass ... energize this thing. Notice that He lifts up His eyes to heaven, we don't make a big issue about that but that was a very common Jewish posture for prayer, it acknowledges God's throne as being in heaven. And Christ does that. And I think, too, it was kind of the posture of a pure heart. You know, in order to lift up your eyes to heaven you'd have to feel that you had the right to enter His presence. And I ... I say that because I was reading, of course, as you have many times, in Luke 18 and I came across the publican, you know, and the Bible

says he wouldn't so much as lift his eyes toward heaven but smote upon his breast saying God, be merciful to me what? ... a sinner. See. And if there's sin between you and God that posture just isn't the one. But I think when somebody lifted his eyes it was the indication that he felt that he had access to the presence of God and so Christ in His purity and His holiness lifts His eyes to heaven. And certainly, that's where the throne of God is, isn't it? That's why we tell people heaven is up. That's the picture that we have of it.

And He said Father. And there's an endearing word -- abba-- just like -- daddy or pappa -- or some term of warmth and familiarity and closeness and He says -- Father. And, of course, Jesus acknowledged God as Father. He was Father in the sense of distinction in the trinity. He was Father in the sense that it was God who had formed a body. Doesn't the writer of Hebrews tell us that? He prepared a body and so it was God who beget Jesus. He had no human father. And in that sense He was a Father. And in the sense of His care for Christ He was a Father. And so He says -- Father, and this is a term of love and there is love within the members of the trinity of a nature that we can't even conceive.

Father -- and then I love this classic statement -- the hour is come. And in that little statement we could preach series after series after series. Do you know what that statement acknowledges? Fantastic truth ... that statement acknowledges that God is the sovereign of history. Did you get that? History is no accident, folks. History's not just flailing around. History's not just kind of floating down stream. History is going a positive direction energized and planned and mapped out and charted by a sovereign God who runs the universe. History is no accident. It's going exactly the way God planned it to go. He knew exactly what would happen and designed the hour for it to take place ... this is sovereign history.

And you find this all throughout Scripture. Why in Daniel chapter 9 He predicted the very year, the very month that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem. Remember Daniel seventy weeks? The book of Revelation tells us about the tribulation, how many years it will be, how it will be split into two three and a half year periods, how many months it will be. The Bible is explicit in terms of direct testimony on the basis of time. And when Jesus was born Paul called it the fullness ... what? ... of time. God is operating the clock of history and Jesus is conscious ... watch this ... that for every event in the mighty drama of redemption there is a moment on God's calendar and that moment is when it will happen, not before and not after. There is a time appointed in the eternal decree. History and its redemptive strain is the moment by moment materializing of the plan and the will of God. Did you get that? History is the moment by moment materializing of the plan and the will of God. That's what history is. It's no accident.

And in that plan the strain of redemptive history winds through at precise moments, hours, minutes when God designs to do His perfect work. And so, Jesus acknowledges sovereign history on the part of God.

I'll tell you, boy, it's exciting ... really exciting to contemplate the fact that God is writing history. I mean, that's security. You know, nothing ever got away from God yet. Did you know that? God has not lost His grip on the world. And so many Christians, you hear -- Oh, where is God ... what's happened to God in our world. See. Nothing's happened to God. God's just up there doing exactly what He's planned to do all along. It's all going the way it was designed to go. Sin runs its course, God designed sin to run its course and then destroy it. God designed the redeemed remnant to come to Him all the way along the line, and they do. History is God's will materializing.

All right. What hour is He talking about? He says simply the hour is come. What hour? Well, what hour has history been waiting for? What is the crucial hour in all of the redemptive strain of history for man? Why it's the hour that Jesus bears the sins of men. See? It's here. I mean, We finally got here, Father, from eternity through 33 years of time My living on earth, We've arrived, it's here at last. The apex of history, the glory hour, the coup de grace, coup d'etat, whatever else, it's here. The time to blot out the curse, to reconcile men to God, to destroy the power of sin, Satan and death, to illuminate the obscured spiritual kingdom of Christ, it's here, it's arrived, the hour is here. And Jesus said in chapter 12 verse 27: "For this cause came I into the world." See. He was born for that hour and when He was hanging on the cross and it was all over with He made the great statement -- tetelestai -- which translated is -- it is...what? ... finished, right on schedule. God's redemptive history climaxes itself in the glorious death of Jesus Christ. It's amazing that this glory would be accomplished in ... as He was nailed to a cross, as the King of glory was nailed to wood, as He became sin for His beloved people, as He bore the wrath of a sin hating God. And it was a moment. You remember correctly, don't you? That the sun refused to shine ... the whole universe went into chaos. The earth rocked and reeled, the graves split open and dead people came to life when Jesus died on the cross.

To men the cross appears as an instrument of shame, to Christ it meant glory ... glory ... glory. And so He says, look at it -- verse 1, "The hour is come," what's the next statement? What's the next word? "Glorify Thy Son." How are You going to do that? How You going ... going to lift Him up and make Him king of Israel? How You going to glorify the Son? How was He glorified? On a cross, wasn't He?

Now, it seems strange because from a human viewpoint you'd think He would say -- Father, exalt Me now to some great role of rule in the world. If it was real glory why you wouldn't think it would have anything to do with suffering, but it does. Because, you see, the glory came in the purchase of eternal life and the purchase of eternal life depended upon death and so He had to die. And so, Jesus is simply saying - Father, grant that by means of this event, My death ... and you must include death, resurrection, ascension and coronation all in it ... that by means of this event I may be glorified.

Now, to glorify God or to glorify Christ means to render what is due because of the glory of His attributes. Because of who He is and because of the display of all of His attributes it is to render Him

the honor that He is due. And so Christ is simply saying -- Father, let's get at it so I can display these attributes and receive the honor that is due. The cross was glory for Jesus.

Now some have said -- Well, Jesus had an ego problem. And He was very selfish. He was saying -- Glorify Me. But if you look at the verse again you'll see that that's not the case. It says this: "Glorify Thy Son -- hina-- in order that Thy Son also ... what? ... may glorify Thee." See, He didn't even have Himself in view. He had the Father's glory in view. And what's the key to the whole universe? The glory of God. If you've been here at Grace Church very long you know that, don't you? That's one you've got down pretty good. The glory of God is what it's all about ... buy the tape if you haven't gotten that one down yet. That's it. The glory of God is the whole issue of the universe and so Christ says, just like He should, -- I want to do it to glorify You. Father, I want to put Your attributes on display. See. So men will give You the honor You deserve. And on the cross did He display the attributes of God? Why, like not other time in history, like no other time in history. The cross put all those attributes on display. Love ... you see love at the cross, you see mercy, you see power, see righteousness, holiness, justice, judgment, wrath, grace, goodness, wisdom, etc. They're all at the cross. The full magnificent display like a many faceted diamond of all the glories of God were on display through Jesus' death and thus did God and Christ both receive the honor they were due.

And so, Jesus looks to His glory. And you'll notice that there can't be anything that glorifies the Son that doesn't also glorify the Father. Did you know that? It's impossible to glorify just the Father and not the Son. It's impossible to glorify the Son and not the Father. You can't believe in God apart from Christ. You can't believe in Christ apart from the fact that He was God. The two go together.

And so, Jesus says -- Father, let's get at it. Let's get at this thing so We can receive the glory due.

Now you say -- Well, how could a person actually be glorified by dying. Well, a lot of ways, just from a human viewpoint...isn't it true that some great men have never been appreciated until the time of their death? And in dying they became noble in a nobility that they'd never known in living? We ... this is ... this occurs many many times. Abraham Lincoln, for example, had his enemies during his lifetime, as any president has. But even those who criticized and undervalued him saw the tremendous person that he was after his death. One came out of the room after he died from a bullet and said -- Now he belongs to the ages. Stanton, who was Lincoln's minister of war and who really hated Lincoln all along, he always described Lincoln as a crude and an uncouth man. And he had taken no pains to conceal this contempt for Lincoln. But he looked down at Lincoln's dead body with tears in his eyes and says ... and said there lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen. You see, what he never could acknowledge in life he acknowledged in death in regard to that man.

Joan of Arc was burned as a witch and a heretic by the English. Later canonized and later de-canonized. It's kind of interesting to follow history with Joan of Arc. But amidst the crowd of Englishmen who were there, there was one who helped start the fire who said this: "Would that my

soul were where the soul of that woman is." And one of the secretaries of the king of England said -- "We have burned a saint."

When Montrose was executed by his enemies he was taken down High Street to the Mercat to be crucified. An Englishman in the crowd ... in the crowd there was a government agent ... wrote for all time to his superiors these words: "It is absolutely certain that he hath overcome more men by his death than he would have done if he had lived." That's true.

You want to know that's true of Jesus? Did you know that? If Jesus had come into the world, lived, taught, gone back to be with God He wouldn't have done us any good ... not a bit. We still would have had to die for our sins. What good would all the lessons be? It wouldn't mean anything apart from death. So, again and again a martyr's majesty has appeared in death and infinitely more so in Jesus Christ because all of His glories really revolve around the fact that He died. And you remember the centurion got the message. He stood at the foot of the cross and looked up and said "Truly this was...what? ... the Son of God." What he couldn't see in His life he saw in His dying. Majestic ... Jesus was never more majestic then when He died. Did you know that?

And so, He says Father, let's get at it. Lift Me up. And He had said earlier "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Myself." Lift Me up, Father. Give Me glory.

Now in the death of Christ and that which followed, His resurrection, ascension and coronation when He reached heaven, His glory is revealed in three ways. That was the introduction, but that's a long introduction because it's a very important chapter. And we'll just barely consider point number one, so relax, don't worry about the roast or anything like that ... whatever it is that's going on at your house today, we'll be done in a minute. But you love this stuff anyway 'cause it's the Word of God and you need to know this.

So, we want to just consider the first point here. In terms of the glory revealed it was first of all revealed because He provided eternal life. Christ's glory was seen in providing eternal life. Also, in perfecting obedience and personally returning to God. But let's just look for a minute at providing eternal life. And this is in verses 2 and 3. Here is the first and the most obvious glory of the cross for which Christ was to be honored, and that is He provided in the cross eternal life. Isn't that a fantastic realization, that out of the dying of Christ came life? You see, the Bible says the wages of sin is ... what? ... death. So, for every sinner there must be death. So we die for our sins or else there is a substitute that dies in our place and that's exactly who Jesus was -- the substitute, He bore our sins in His own body. He became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. So, Jesus died and when He died bearing the penalty of sin He freed us to live, you see.

You say -- Yeah, but even Christians die ... only physically, that's no big deal. There are three kinds of death the Bible talks about; physical, spiritual and ... what? ... eternal. And Jesus eliminated the

eternal and the spiritual and all we have to do is die physically which isn't a bad deal anyway. I don't know if you're happy with your body, but the promise of a glorified body is appealing to me. And so the only thing left is that physical death which merely releases us to God, that's all ... that's liberation. And so you see, Christ's dying bore the penalty of sin and freed us to live ... and that's what eternal life is all about.

Now notice verse 2 ... He's still praying to the Father, "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh." That's right. Christ is acknowledging that He has power over all flesh, "That He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." Father, let's get at this thing because in this I'm going to be able to give eternal life to all those You've given Me. Now He wanted the glory of the cross that came in providing eternal life. Would you say eternal life is glorious? Sure. You say - Yeah, I'm hoping for it. No, no, no, you're not hoping for it, you've got it. Did you know that ... that you have eternal life right now? We'll get into that next week when I give you a definition of eternal life. Unlike, perhaps, what you think it will be, but that's for next week.

The idea here is that Christ wants to get at the cross because He sees in it the provision of eternal life for all those that the Father gives Him. Oh, this is tremendous. Now notice very importantly, that as He begins this prayer in verse 2 He acknowledges what He already knows is the Father's will. Do you see it there? "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." Glorify Me, Father; You said this is how You're going to do it. You said it would happen this way, let's get at it. See?

Now there's a very important principle here. The principle is this -- Christ is praying totally consistent with what He knows is the will of the Father. Do you see that? He knows that the Father's already designed that He should have control over all flesh, all humanity. He knows, secondly, that the Father has designed that He should give eternal life. He knows, thirdly, the Father has designed to give Him certain ones to whom He will give eternal life. He knows, also, the Father wants to glorify Him. He knows all of this, He knows, also, that the hour is come. He knows the whole deal and He is simply praying consistent with what He knows and saying Father, let it be.

Now, there's something very significant here that we can transmit to our own experience in prayer and that is this -- He prayed knowing the mind of the Father, totally consistent with God's will. Do you see? His prayer was almost an acknowledgement of what He knew God was going to do. Have you ever prayed a prayerlike that? You say -- I don't know. Yes ... have you ever said Even so, come Lord Jesus? Have you ever prayed that prayer? That's not any ... that ... that's -- you know that's going to happen, don't you? You know that. And yet you pray even so, Come, Lord Jesus. It's kind of a confirmation of what you know to be the mind of the will of God.

So, Jesus' prayer here is one which knowing the will of God and knowing the mind of God He directs right at what He knows is so and says -- Let's let it happen, let it be.

Now, do you remember that in chapter 14, chapter 15 and chapter 16, two times in 14, once in 15, and once in 16, Jesus said - If you ever pray be sure you ask in My ... what? ... name which means consistent with My ... what? ... will? So, whenever we pray we pray consistent with the will of Christ, to the will of God. As we pray to the Father, according to the will of Christ, so the Son prays to the Father according to what He knows is the Father's will.

Now, most of the time we pray like James said. We pray, and we ask amiss because we ask to do ... what? ... consume it upon our own lusts. And Jesus here acknowledges what is God's plan and He says -- Let's do it. Confidence in God.

All right. So, God has ordained that Jesus should give eternal life. And as Jesus Christ is God's love gift to the world so believers are God's love gift to Jesus. Did you know that He is going to give eternal life to as many as the Father gives Him? Did you ever think about that? That's a fabulous thought. Did you know that if you're a Christian you are the Father's love gift to His Son? I mean, is that exciting to know that? To realize that you have been given to the Son as a love gift from the Father? And Christians go and they say -- I don't know if I'm really saved. I don't ... I was saved and I'm maybe not saved and ... and no security and they worry, worry, worry. Listen, your security doesn't depend on your attitude; you're the Father's love gift to the Son. You think He's going to show His love to the Son by giving a gift and taking it back? Security depends on the sovereign design of God. You have been designed to be a love gift to the Son. And it wouldn't show a whole lot of love if He took His gifts back. Christ acknowledges that those who receive eternal life will be such as the Father grants Him. And so He gives eternal life.

Well, it's exciting to see Christ as the giver of life, isn't it? As the one who frees us from spiritual and eternal death? You know, this so consumed John in his gospel, that's the whole point of his book. Just in your mind with me, for a minute, we'll close at this point, review the gospel of John with a frame of reference of how often John talks about Christ providing life, eternal life. For example, right at the beginning John 1:4, "In Him was ... what? ... life." Sure. And then in John 5, "He hath life in Himself." John 5, verse 4, "That you will not come to Me that you might have... what? ... life." John 10:10, "I am come that you might have life and have it more abundantly." John 6:33, "He giveth life." John 6:35, and 48, "He is the bread of life." John 8:12, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of ... what? ... of life." Eleven: twenty-five, to the sorrowing sister He said, "I am the resurrection ... what? ... and the life." And to Philip who didn't understand much He said: "I am the way, the truth and the life," Life, life, life, life all over the place in John's gospel, and those are just a few.

You say -- Well it may ... John had a lot to say about that. That's the whole reason he wrote the book. John chapter 20, verse 31, here's his comment on his own book: "But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have ... what? ... life

through His name." The whole thing was written that you might believe and when you believe in Christ that's how you receive eternal life.

You say -- What do you have to believe about Him? Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Believe that. If you believe that you have life. You say -- It's that easy? That's right. You believe that you have life. John wrote the whole book so that you might have life. That's the whole reason for the gospel.

Then, beautifully, John was really hung-up on this concept of life and rightly so. In I John 5, listen to why he wrote the epistle of I John. "And this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Now, here's why I wrote this, "These things have I written unto you, I John, why did he write it? "That believe on the name of the Son of God," I'm writing to Christians, "That you may know that ye have eternal life." So, he wrote the gospel so that you might have eternal life and he wrote the first epistle so that you might know that you had eternal life. And the whole epistle deals with the characteristics of a Christian and how you can know you have eternal life.

Jesus came to give life. And John said it well. He said, "These things are written unto you that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing you might have life." That's the only way to have life. There's no life in any other than Jesus Christ. We'll stop there. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You that the first great glory of the cross was that Jesus provided life. And, Lord, we just anticipate next time when we'll talk about what eternal life means. But, Father, even as we share in this the glories of this new life that we have right now, how our hearts are thrilled and lifted up. We thank You for Christ, for a willingness to go to the cross, to suffer, to bleed, to die because He looked past the pain and saw the glory. We give You glory. Father, we just exalt You. We honor You. We give You majesty for what You did in the cross. Christ, we exalt You. Oh, we see Your glories. Be assured that Your glories are on display forever in the cross. And how glorified the Son became, and how glorious it is to know Him and to love Him in a personal way. Father, we thank You that there are so many in this place right now this morning who have believed and who have life. But, Lord, at the same time we're made aware that there are some in our midst this morning who do not have life, who will die not only physically but spiritually and eternally, who will go out of the presence of God. And, Father, we would pray that this morning they might receive the gift of life. That they might be given as love gifts of the Father to the Son. Lord, that they might come to know what it is to really live in a new kind of existence that comes by faith in Christ. We thank You for the lessons that we've learned as Christians, this morning ... the importance of teaching and then praying that the Word will find root, the importance, Lord, of considering Your will when we pray and other principles, God, confirm them in our hearts and instruct us. As we close our service together, as we share together in, moments of retrospection and really considering what it is the Holy Spirit would want from us, may we do so with open hearts and minds, sensitive to what You're saying that You might be glorified as You were on

the cross in us. We give You the praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

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