

Gospel: John 17:1-11

¹After Jesus had spoken these words [to his disciples], he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; **glorify** your Son so that the Son may **glorify** you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³**And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.** ⁴**I glorified** you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, **glorify** me in your own presence with the **glory** that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been **glorified** in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that **they may be one**, as we are one.”

This is a continuation of John’s Farewell Discourse – All of chapter 17 has been called the ‘Priestly Prayer’. The beginning of 17 – marks a shift from a general discourse aimed at the disciples to a prayer directed primarily to the Father.

- 1. When does this part of the text occur – what is happening?**
- 2. What other times does Jesus pray in John’s Gospel?**
- 3. What is Jesus last prayer in the synoptic gospels (Matt/Mark/Luke)?**
- 4. When you pray for others – who do you pray for? What do you pray for them?**
- 5. When you pray for yourself – what do you pray for?**
- 6. How can the Lord’s Prayer help to form/inform your prayer life?**

1. **It is right before Jesus arrest**
2. **None – this is Jesus' last and only prayer in John**
3. **Anguished petition in Gethsemane –**
4. **Healing? Understanding? God's will be done? – of course there are many others.**
6. **Look at Luther's explanation in the catechism and how it can inform our prayer life with each of the petitions in the Lord's Prayer.**

If you want more in depth look - verse by verse

- v. 1 – What body gesture does Jesus use in his prayer? Looks up to heaven – what are our different body gestures in prayer? What might they represent?

When did we hear previously in John about Jesus' hour? 2:1-11 – What is the purpose of the 'hour'?

to reveal who Jesus really is. Eternal and Pre-existent son (1:1) and 17:5)
 The hour is the crucifixion when Jesus draws all to himself – following God in obedience – sharing in God's glory – being Unified with God in Glory – confirms identity beyond doubt.

Glorify/Glory -

Process of glorification in John - Glory (*doxa*) and glorify (*doxazo*) appear forty-two times in John, most of them in 13-21. More than one-third of all NT occurrences of the verb "glorify" occur in John.

The process starts with Mary anointing Jesus' feet for his burial, and Jesus' indication that: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (John 12:23).

When Judas leaves to carry out the betrayal, Jesus says, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him" (13:31).

17:4 – the ultimate glory – finishing the work of the Father in the crucifixion

v. 2 ‘all people’ more literal translation in Greek is ‘all flesh’ – why important in John 1:14 – the word became ‘flesh’. (truly human – sinful temptations) The Word has authority over flesh.

What is startling about this claim of all people? Judaism are a chosen – separate people – and now Christ is for all people – wow – bombshell --

‘to give eternal life’ - What is eternal life in John? For John – eternal life is not defined in terms of a quantity of time or an eternal resting place after death – rather it is a quality of relationship that the believer has with God. See v. 3

v. 3 – ‘this is eternal life’

It’s not often that we get a straight forward definition of eternal life, but here it is, “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (17:3).

How many times have we heard this depiction of eternal life?

I would wager rarely, if at all. On this last Sunday of Easter, in the season of the resurrection, here is an idea about eternal life that just might stand out and mean something beyond the empty tomb and the lilies and “Jesus Christ is Risen Today.”

Eternal life is to know God and Jesus. What if it is that simple? How would that change what we imagine in this life? How would it affect our thoughts about and beliefs in our future life with God?

‘Jesus Christ’ - odd verse that Jesus has to explain to the Father – might be a narrator note – why – Jesus refers to himself as ‘Jesus Christ’ only other time in John is 1:17.

Who are the ones who get to / try to know Jesus in John?

Chapter 4 – Samaritan Woman

Chapter 9 – Blind Man

Chapter 12 – Mary

Chapter 19 - Thomas

What do they have in common? They participated in ongoing relationship and encounter with Jesus. Both the Samaritan woman and the blind guy have lengthy, increasingly deep dialogue with Jesus and as they do, they understand him more and more to the point where they "know" him and understand that he is the source of their lives and loves them like no other. This leads them to worship him and testify to others about him.

Mary is described as one whom Jesus loved (11:5) and John makes it clear and that she, her brother Lazarus and sister Martha regularly spent time with Jesus.

Thomas may be a less obvious hero, but he's a hero nonetheless in this Gospel. He sticks with Jesus even though he discerns trouble is in store (11:16); he asks questions when he doesn't understand (14:5); he's not gullible or prone to flights of fancy but he's willing to believe when confronted with raw glory (chapter 20). On the basis of all of this, Thomas comes to fully know Jesus such that he declares him to be "My Lord and My God" (20:28).

v. 4-5 how is Jesus glorified? Crucifixion

v. 6 – Jesus identity is that of Revealer – of the Father

v. 9 - clear shift to a concern for others – distinction between those who are included and ‘the world’ The use of the word world refers to those who are not sympathetic to Jesus –

v. 11 – call for unity among those who he leaves behind – these words not only form an imploration to the Father, but also an imperative to those who would be called Jesus own. End of 1st century – Christianity and Judaism were splitting – this is not He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands song – Jesus is praying for those who know the truth about Him

The world is a hostile environment in John in which the believer finds himself or herself. A call to stand firm in unity in a world that doesn’t treat you kindly. Can we be as unified as Father/Son/Holy Spirit are?

How can we be one? When the church focuses on Jesus we are at our best!!

In Spanish, there is a statement that comes to mind when I reflect on Jesus’ prayer: “El pueblo unido jamás será vencido.” (A united people will never be defeated.) The challenge to live in unity is a great one. It is difficult to keep people on message, and the church has a long history of schism.

Misc:

What difference does it make to overhear Jesus praying for you?

How will you hear Jesus’ words in another way?

How might we understand prayer in a new way?

- What if we imagined that the resurrection of Jesus was just the beginning and not the conclusion of the Gospel? That the promises of the resurrection are, in part, ours to fulfill? How would a life of discipleship, of witness, of love, between Pentecost and Advent, be different were we to trust that Jesus meant what he said in 14:12, “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.”