

Glorify Them

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Turn in your scriptures to John 17. And we'll read verses 20 through 26.

John chapter 17. Again, we're hearing the Lord himself pray for his people. He's interceding, as we heard this morning.

He's always living to intercede for us. And so here we hear some of the words of intercession, starting at verse 20. My prayer is not for them alone.

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

I have given them the glory you gave me, that they may be one, just as we are one. I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

[1 : 16] Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

Let's hear the word preached. It wasn't planned this way, but our present two chapters, great chapters of the Bible that we are studying, are very special in that in both of them, we get to listen in to the personal communication between God the Father and God the Son.

So in Psalm 110, we are hearing the Father's word to His Son after He returns to heaven. And here in John 17, we are hearing the Son's words to His Father just before the cross.

And so to us believers who are wanting to get to know our God better, these words spoken within the Trinity to one another are most precious to us because they reveal to us the heart of our God.

[2 : 51] These words of Christ reveal His heart for His Father's glory, for their shared mission to the world, and then His heart as well for those that the Father has given Him, you and I who believe.

He speaks so fondly of them here in John 17, how they had believed in Him, how they had accepted and obeyed the word that He came from heaven to give them as our great prophet, and also how glory had come to Him through us, through His disciples.

But it's especially in His request for them that we see His heart of love for us. Protect them. They're in a dangerous world, a world full of people and a devil that hates them.

Sanctify them. They're in a defiling and polluting world with a devil who hates holiness and will do all He can to keep us from being sanctified.

And unify them. Four times in this prayer, He prays that we would be one, even as the Father and the Son are one, in order that we might reflect something of the glory of that unity within the Trinity and demonstrate to the world the power of the gospel to unite people who are so different from one another.

[4 : 21] And in that way, to help the world to believe that the Father really has sent the Son for nothing less than divine power can affect this unity. So tonight, we come to the end, to the last petition.

The fourth petition is glorify them. And it's verse 24. Father, I want those that you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you love me.

Before the creation of the world. You remember how we saw in Romans 8 that God's great plan of salvation that began in eternity past ends with our glorification.

Those He justified, He also glorified. That's our destiny. That's what it's all leading to. That's why our Father chose us, set His love on us, predestined us to be conformed to Christ's image.

That's why the Father called us by the Spirit, joined us to Christ. That's why He justified us, declaring us righteous, all in pursuit of this, that we should be glorified.

[5 : 39] Now notice how He refers to us here in this verse again. Father, I want those you have given me. We were given to Him to be His glorious bride. There was much that was needed to make us such, and so having received us as a love gift from the Father, from heaven He came and sought us to be His holy bride.

With His own blood, He bought us, and for our sins and for her life, He died. So no wonder He prays for her protection.

No wonder He prays for our sanctification. He wants to promote His own beauty of holiness in us, His bride cleansing us, that He might present us to Himself, a radiant bride without spot or wrinkle.

No wonder He prays for His bride to be with Him and to see His glory. So we have here in verse 24, two aspects to our being glorified.

Both things are things that He wants for us. Father, I want those you've given me to be with me where I am, and secondly, I want them to see my glory.

[6 : 55] So let's look at those tonight. I want them, first of all, to be with me where I am. Have you ever heard of a future bridegroom that didn't want his future bride to be with him?

Ladies, can you even imagine it? You're engaged to a man, and at once he takes a job in South Africa and says he'll go and nail down a house and a car and then send for you, and then we'll be married, he says.

But time is passing, and He's not sending for you. Well, things are busy down here. Houses are hard to find. It's expensive, too, so you patiently wait another three months, and He's still not sending for you.

I found a house. My job's demanding. Another three months goes by without you being sent for, just trying to adjust to the culture and weather a bit here.

I still love you and want to marry you, but just not yet. How long would you be strung along before you began to doubt His love for you?

[8 : 06] Well, it depends how blind your love is, because true love always desires to be with the beloved, the loved one. True love is unsatisfied until all distance between them is vanished and they are together.

We see it in the Song of Solomon that celebrates the love between a husband and wife. Chapter 2, verse 10, the bride says of her bridegroom, my lover spoke and said to me, arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me.

You see, all lovers want to be with their loved one. They want her to be with Him. And it's no different with our heavenly bridegroom and the bride that the Father gave Him.

He wants us to be with Him where He is. It's a real desire in the heart of Christ. Just a couple hours earlier, He told the disciples in the upper room, verse 12 and verse 26, whoever serves me, well, this is before the, yeah, chapter 12, verse 26, whoever serves me must follow me and where I am, my servant also will be.

He tells them in chapter 14, I'm going to my father's house to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you may also be where I am.

[9 : 41] Now that's what He's now telling the Father in His prayer to the Father. He's told His disciples, now He's telling His Father, I want those you've given Me to be with Me where I am.

Is it not a precious thing to overhear the Savior saying those words of us? So let's consider several practical applications of this first petition.

I have five of them. First, believers, I want you to personalize this to yourself and so to drink in the Savior's love for you personally.

When He prays for, Father, I want these people to be with Me where I am, He's not talking about some vague, indistinct group of people.

He knows not who they may be that will fill up this bride. Not at all. They're particular individuals known and chosen by the Father and particular individuals that He's given to the Son to belong to Him.

[10 : 43] He knows them. We heard He knows the names of the stars. He knows these. Their names were written on His heart as He came into this world and lived for us and then went to the cross and died for us and even now prays for us.

It's not for some indistinct group He prays. It's for individual sheep that He loves. And so it is here. Personalize this. There's something very sweet about this prayer that He wants you personally with Him.

and you'll miss that if you don't personalize it. This is the pouring out of His love for you to the Father. And it's no small thing to be so wanted by the Son of God.

Wanting your presence, your company with Him forever. A little we grasp of that personal love of Christ for us individually.

And I must say I'm the poor for that. And so are you. We don't live like we ought unless we know that personal love of the Lord Jesus for us.

[11 : 53] The Apostle John can speak of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. That's personal. The Apostle Paul could say he was lost in wonder, love and praise, that the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me.

Personal pronoun. And this prayer of Jesus is recorded to enable you to know personally that Jesus loves you and wants you to be with Him in heaven.

So do you think of the Son of God in those terms as wanting you with Him? We live too much of our lives half asleep to that reality. And this passage is meant to wake us up to it.

Live in the reality of His love for you. We sing Jesus will be what makes it heaven for me. It just wouldn't be heaven without Jesus there, would it?

But can you believe that Jesus could sing it just wouldn't be heaven to me if she's not there, if He's not there with me?

[12 : 59] not because He stands in need of us. No, not at all.

Father had the Son, the Son had the Father, they both had the Spirit and so on. But because He set His love upon us and once His love is set upon us, He wants us with Him.

And so Father, I want them, those You've given me, to be with me where I am. As long as there's just one the Father gave Him that is not with Him where He is, there's yet an unfulfilled desire in the heart of the Son of God.

Now, in one sense, He is already with us, isn't He? If we believe our Bibles. Right now, you share in a spiritual union with Christ.

You are joined to Christ as a branch as in the vine, as a husband and wife are joined as one. These are some of the images that are given. Right now, you are in Him and He is in you as you are joined with Christ by the Holy Spirit.

[14 : 06] But Christ is here talking about something more than that union, that spiritual union. He's speaking of having you with Him in His immediate physical presence where He is bodily.

Not His presence mediated through the Holy Spirit, but His immediate presence forever and ever. So let's drink in the love of God for us personally. That's the first application.

Secondly, believer, this prayer seals your assurance of full and final salvation. We saw that as an application this morning, didn't we? That having Him at the right hand of the Father seals our salvation.

Well, which is it? Well, it's not either or. It's all these ways that we can't be lost. Our assurance is sure for many different reasons. Here's another one. Does Jesus pray this for you?

Father, I want her to be with me where I am. Then this prayer will be fulfilled. You not only have His comforting promise that those He justifies He also will glorify.

[15 : 10] You not only have His promise that those He has begun a good work in He will complete to the end. You have the promises guaranteed by this prayer of your Lord Jesus.

Jesus because the Father cannot deny this request of His Son for you. He gave you to His Son to come and redeem you that He might do everything needed to save you.

And having completed the work, do you think the Father will go back and withhold the reward that He promised His Son? Never. Your eternal security is sealed by this prayer of your Lord Jesus.

Paul said as much in Colossians 3 and verse 4. He says, When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

It will happen. Facts are facts. You also will appear with Him in glory. So, for our assurance, we listen to our Father, our Savior, praying this to our Father.

[16 : 19] Third application, marvel at the amazing grace of God in this petition, that Jesus should want to be with us, us to be with Him and pray to make it so, is a great and an undeserved favor, which is what grace is.

And the reason it's undeserved is because we didn't want Him to be with us. That's the whole idea of the depravity of man. We held God at hand's length.

We were just contented and fine with living our life without Christ. We all deserve, or we all, like sheep, have gone astray from Him.

We ran from Him as if He was the end of all of our joy and freedom, and so we were glad to live without Him. And therefore, the words that you and I deserve to hear from Him are, depart from me, you worker of iniquity.

I never knew you. You didn't want me, so for all of eternity, you will not have me with you. And so we all deserve to be punished with everlasting destruction, shut out from the presence of the Lord.

[17 : 37] And He would have been perfectly just to have done so to every one of us, to give us what we wanted. But instead, He prays, Father, I want those You've given me to be with me where I am.

Amazing grace. How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me who didn't want to be with Him. And then, fourthly, this prayer of Jesus helps us to accept the loss of dear, believing loved ones who have been taken from us in death.

The last funeral I attended was that of a pastor who had lost his wife to cancer, and inside the program was a devotional on this very verse, John 17, 25, by Spurgeon, taken from his March 22nd entry in his book Morning and Evening.

I paraphrase, but here it is. We wonder why death sometimes snatches from us the most excellent of the earth in whom is all our delight, the best of friends, the most generous, the most prayerful, the most holy, the most loved.

And why? It is through the prevailing prayer of Jesus. Father, I want those You have given me to be with me where I am. It is that prayer which bears them on eagles' wings to heaven.

[19 : 05] Every time a believer mounts from this earth to paradise, it's an answer to Christ's prayer. Then Spurgeon quotes an old unnamed preacher as saying, Many times, Jesus and his people pull against one another in prayer.

You bend your knee in prayer and say, Father, I want this one of yours to be with me. where I am. Whereas Jesus prays, Father, I want this one You've given me to be with me where I am.

And so the disciple and his Lord are praying at cross purposes. Now the beloved cannot now be in both places at once with Christ and with you.

So which pleader shall win the day? What if the father stepped off of his throne for a moment and said, You can have your choice? Which of the two prayers should I answer now?

Yours or Christ's, my son's? Oh, I am sure though it were with agony, you would say, Jesus, not my will, but yours be done.

[20 : 12] And you would give up your prayer for your loved one's life if you could but realize the thought that Christ is praying in the opposite direction.

And so by faith we let them go. Thus Spurgeon. So I say this prayer of Jesus helps us to accept the loss of dear believing loved ones taken from us in death.

And then fifthly, this prayer also casts a whole different light upon our own death. Our own death. we're all going to die unless Jesus returns first.

How are you going to die? Will it be by an accident? Will it be by a disease? Whatever it is that takes you from this world, it's the Father's chariot sent in answer to his son's prayer to have you with him where he is.

There's this beautiful passage at the very end of the second part of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. At the very end, finally there came a message for Mr. Standfast which said that he must prepare for a change of life that his master was not willing that he should live so far from him any longer.

[21 : 37] There it is. His master is not willing that he should live so far from him any longer. That's beautiful.

Is that how you will receive the doctor's report should it come to you that your time on earth is over? Your master is not willing that you should live so far from him.

And so he went down into the river and spoke to his companions on the edge. I see myself now at the end of my journey. My toilsome days are over. I'm going to see the head that was crowned with thorns and the face that was spit upon for me.

I have been living by hearsay and faith but now I'm going where I shall live by sight and I shall be with him in whose company I delight.

I've loved to hear him spoken of and wherever I could see his footprints on the sands of time there I delighted to walk. His name has been to me a precious treasure sweeter than all perfumes.

[22 : 39] His voice I rejoice to hear and his face to me exceeds all beauty in earth and sky. His word I have used as food for my soul and for an antidote against my faltering.

He's kept me back from my iniquities and he has held me fast. Yes, my steps he has strengthened in his way. And then he said take me Lord for I am thine I come to thee and they could see him no more.

Even so when you come to breathe your last believer to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord who prayed for this very thing to have you with him where he is.

Remember Jesus as he hung on the cross spoke to that thief and he said to him today you will be with me in paradise.

That's it. And one day he'll speak that to you and to me. Let's think of it as the answer of his prayer in John 17.

[23 : 52] But there's more. There's more because Jesus prays for more than just our being with him. That were enough but he says Father I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and and to see my glory the glory you've given me because you love me before the creation of the world.

So that's the second part of our glorification not only to be with the Lord where he is but to see his glory. Now he's already said in verse 5 Father glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

So that was the glory that was now hidden in his incarnation. The full display of that glory was concealed and veiled by his flesh by his humanity.

It wasn't that he gave up that deity he was ever God he never gave that up but in becoming man that deity was veiled and rarely seen.

Now throughout the Old Testament when the glory of God was displayed visibly it was often represented by bright light wasn't it? We can think of the Shekinah glory in the most holy place of the temple or the pillar of fire that attended the children of Israel in the wilderness at night.

[25 : 26] John can say in his gospel chapter 1 verse 14 we have seen his glory the glory is of the one and only who came from the Father full of grace and truth and yet that glory that John saw was most often veiled and hidden from man's physical sight light.

But it was unveiled and revealed to Peter James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration you remember that. This is how Matthew records it he was transfigured before them his face shone like the sun that's light that's bright and his clothes became as white as the light the apostle John on Patmos was given to see a revelation of the divine glory of Christ he says I saw a figure as if the son of man walking among the seven golden lampstands dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest his head and hair were white like wool as white as snow his eyes like blazing fire his feet like bronze glowing in a furnace and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters in his right hand he held seven stars and out of his mouth came a sharp double edged sword his face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance the glory of God his divine glory shining out in humanity forever and ever that's our glorified

Christ and John says when I saw him I fell at his feet as though dead we're going to need new eyes to look on that glory a new heart to appreciate it a perfected heart and perfected eyes and then as John describes the new Jerusalem he says in chapter 21 verse 23 it does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it for the glory of God gives it light and the lamb is its lamp so the glory the brightness the splendor the brilliance of God displayed in Jesus Christ and Jesus is saying he wants you and me to see that with our own eyes father these disciples of mine have seen me in my humiliation and my shame they've seen me with spittle on my face they've seen me with blood streaming down my body from the thorn crown brow they've seen me crucified in weakness taken down a dead body and buried now father let them see me in my glory and even in asking for that it's not so much for himself but for us oh what will it be for us to see him in his glory you and I too have seen the world's hatred of Christ we have heard his name drug through the mud we have seen his name despised and misused and he wants us to see him in all of his glory face to face you remember the queen of Sheba had heard about the glory of king Solomon in his kingdom and she came from a long way to check it out for herself and when she saw the king and his glory her breath was taken away and she said the half has never been told what I saw was far more than what I'd heard and we too have read the reports of the glory of our king we have beheld his glory in the scriptures by faith but one day we're going to see the king in his glory by sight to see the one you've read about for so many years to see the one that you've talked to every day in your prayers the one you've listened to speak to you in his word the one who's been your shepherd leading you guiding you loving you all the way home now to see him face to face in all his glory face to face face to face with Christ my savior face to face what will that be when with rapture

I behold him Jesus Christ who died for me so what happens when we see him in his glory well again we too will say the half has never been told all that we've read about oh it was a good description yes it's true but the reality is far greater than we ever dreamed because when we see him face to face what will happen to us again this shows why it's for our benefit that Jesus wants us to see him because John says we know that when he appears we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is that in seeing him we will be immediately transformed into that same glorious moral likeness as Jesus and that will affect the final full transformation into his moral likeness so we'll be made like him every sinful thought every sinful desire every sinful choice gone forever never again to feel anything of a downward pull away from

Christ any weariness of Christ any desire to be away from him all of it gone not a bit of difference between your will and his will forever and ever no sins committed no duties omitted that's our glorification sanctification complete finally perfected the very thing that we've longed for now our reality when we see him in his glory and so as Romans 8 17 and 18 says having shared in his sufferings we will also share in his glory and I consider that our present trials are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us it will be an eternal weight of glory and even our lowly bodies will be transformed into the likeness of his glorious body the body of glory his glorified body we too will have glorified bodies so we see the desire of the bridegroom to be with his beloved bride but it's not just a one way thing we see this in the song of Solomon that the beloved bride has the same longing to be with and to see her beloved bridegroom and so the bridegroom says to his bride come away with me and it's the reciprocal desire of the bride to want to be with him and so she says to him take me away with you and let's hurry take me away with you tell me you whom

[33 : 32] I love where you graze your flocks and where you rest your sheep at midday she wants to go see him she's not even willing to wait till he's he's he's off work she wants to catch him at his lunch hour to be with him when he's not with her she longs for him and she goes in search for him and in revelation 22 the bridegroom says I am coming soon and the bride responds even so come Lord Jesus does he want to be with me oh I want him to be with me too I want to be with him and when we are finally with him where he is perfected and sharing in his glory the only thing greater than your delight in being with Christ will be his delight in having you with him what will that do for your delight factor but just inflame it all the more father I want them to be with me where I am and the bride saying oh that's what I want as well and he the bridegroom as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride so will your God rejoice over you as he looks upon you in that day without fault without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish perfectly reflecting his own beauty of holiness sparkling with the splendor and the majesty of holiness the beauty of holiness he will rejoice over you with singing and what will that do for your love and delight in him that make you rejoice over him as well so does he long for us to be with him then let us long to be with him there's the apostle

Paul he's he's tried to destroy the church and every memory of Jesus Christ and yet Jesus was gracious to him and saved him and because of that Saul was a willing troop and servant of the Lord and he spends his life you've read the list of what he endured serving the Lord and then we come to his last letters he writes to his beloved Timothy the time has come for my departure I fought the good fight I finished the race I kept the faith and now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge will give to me and not to me only but also to those who have longed for his appearing ouch how much am I longing for his appearing am I ever longing to the point where it makes me groan like Romans 8 says do we long to be with him where he is and to see his glory to be with Christ is better by far indeed it's the greatest blessing of heaven to be with Christ is it my desire now and do I show it by the regularity with which

I turn aside in the midst of my day and I spend time with him and talking and communing and fellowshiping with him because we long for his appearing when we don't sense his presence we're not happy we're not satisfied we long to know his presence and to sense his smile his joy his love for us are we ever homesick for heaven you know what it is to be homesick we're not home yet are we homesick for heaven are we lovesick for Jesus how can we inflame our hearts desire to be with him well for one thing we listen to him telling his father father I want I want her to be with me where I am to see my glory I want him and we recognize that love of Christ that's what inflames our love for him it's his love for us so we personalize that can you believe that he wants me to be with him so use this prayer to read your savior's heart for you and a heart that doesn't change this is his heart's desire laid bare

A.W. Pink sees this verse verse 24 as the climax of this wonderful prayer because all the former three requests are going to be fully answered by this last request when this last request is answered and we see him as he is and we're with him well then his protection will be complete there will be nothing in heaven to threaten us or to harm us nothing unclean will enter every enemy cast into the lake of fire where there will be torment day and night forever this will be the home of the righteous the prayer to sanctify us will be complete for when we see him we'll be made like him glorification is simply sanctification completed his prayer that we would be united and be one will be fully satisfied fully answered because there are no divisions or disagreements in heaven we'll all be fully grown up into the unity of the faith to a mature man heaven the world of perfect love with all the graces that make for unity flourishing and all of this will be reality when we're brought home to be with him where he is to see his glory well just one last insight into this prayer and it goes back to what

Jesus said at verse 13 he says father I say these things while I am still in the world so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them again you see what he's doing he wants you to know the full measure of his joy he could have waited till he went to heaven and said father now I want them to be with me and I want you to protect why did he pray it here where John could listen and write it down so that you and I as we heard now have Bibles through all the providential keeping of that word and bringing it to our language that we might read he wants to be with me that's why he said this prayer while he was still here on earth that you and I might hear it and have his joy in us and our joy might be full when it's in his presence that there is fullness of joy and at his right hand that there are pleasures forevermore so let's drink in the wonder of it as we sing of the lamb being all the glory of

[41 : 11] Emmanuel's land that's where we're headed and Jesus will be the glory of that place it's number 599 stand and let's sing the glory of our Savior 599 up 1959 then .

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