

April 23, 2023

The Prayer of Jesus

Jeff Rogers / Empty Nesters

John 17:1-26

John 17:1–3, *When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*

John 17:9–10, *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.*

John 17:17, *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*

John 17:24, *Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.*

John 17:26, *I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”*

This prayer should be to us something of what the burning bush was to Moses, for here we hear God speaking, and we should put off our shoes and bow humbly, being about to tread on the most hallowed ground.

James Montgomery Boice

I. The Time in the Upper Room and Jesus time with His disciples on earth ends¹.

- A. The evening had begun with Jesus washing the feet of the disciples (John 13:5)
- B. The final meal, the last supper had been served (John 13:21-30; Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26)
 - 1. Jesus revealed Judas as His betrayer (John 13:26-27)
 - 2. Jesus revealed that He was about to die (John 13:31-35)
 - 3. Jesus revealed Peter would deny Him (John 13:36-38)
- C. The evening of the last supper Jesus encouraged His disciple (John 14:1-2)
- D. Jesus reminded the disciples of their salvation in Him (John 15:1-16)
- E. Rather than conquering, Jesus would be crucified (John 16:16)

II. The Setting of Our Lord's Prayer (John 17:1a)

- A. Our Lord's demonstration of humble boldness - *Lifted Eyes* (v. 1a)
 - 1. The expression of His boldness (**Ephesians 3:12**, *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.*)
 - 2. As opposed to the tax collector's unwillingness (**Luke 18:13**, *But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'*)
- B. Our Lord's demonstration of humble confidence - *Father* (v. 1b)
 - 1. Demonstration of divine intimacy (17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25)
 - a) Equality with God as His Son.
 - b) Acknowledgement of dependence and submission.
 - c) Intimacy available to every believer
 - (1) **John 17:20**, *I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,*
 - (2) **John 17:26**, *I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”*
 - 2. Demonstration of distinctive equality

¹ MacArthur, John F., Jr. *John 12–21*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008.

- a) Jesus, as a Son, was equal with the Father (**John 5:18**, *This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*)
- b) Yet, Jesus was distinctive from the Father as a person
- C. Our Lord's demonstration of humble obedience - *The hour has come* (v. 1c).
 - 1. **John 2:4**, *"My hour has not yet come."* **John 7:6**, *Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come."* **John 7:30**, *"but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come."* **John 8:20**, *but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come."*
 - 2. This is the hour.
 - a) The sinless would be made sin (2 Cor 5:21)
 - b) The sin debt of the redeemed would be paid in full (Col 2:14)
 - c) The Suffering Servant's time (Isa 53:3-7)
 - (1) To be acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3)
 - (2) To be despised and rejected of men (Isa 53:3)
 - (3) To be smitten of God; afflicted (Isa 53:4)
 - (4) To be pierced for our transgressions (Isa 53:5)
 - (5) To be crushed for our iniquities (Isa 53:5)
 - (6) To be the Lamb led to slaughter (Isa 53:7, John 1:29)
 - d) For defeat to give way in victory over sin.

III. The Glory of Our Lord's Prayer (John 17:1b)

- A. What is **"glory"** in the Bible? Perhaps among the least understood words in the Biblical vocabulary.
 - 1. Even when defined, we can feel like we come up short, particularly in this passage.
- B. Throughout His earthly ministry Jesus sought to **glorify** His Father
 - 1. Jesus continually brought the Father glory (His birth, teaching, miracles, death, resurrection)
 - 2. **John 6:38**, *For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.*
 - 3. **John 7:18**, *The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.*
- C. The **glory** in this passage²:
 - 1. Jesus possessed a certain glory with God before His incarnation (v. 5)
 - 2. The glory Jesus had was God's glory (the same glory shared among the God-head)
 - 3. Jesus did not possess this glory during the years of His incarnation (the glory that I had)
 - 4. Yet, there is a sense in which He possessed glory while on the Earth (John 2:11).
- D. How is **"glory"** used in ancient Greek and Hebrew literature?³
 - 1. In the Greek language, the word for glory is *"doxa,"* a noun. *"Doxazo"* was the verb form, glorify.
 - a) In the early days the verb meant, "to seem," "to appear" or "to have an opinion." (From this we get *orthodox* – a straight opinion. *Heterodox* – a different opinion. *Paradox* – a contrary opinion.)
 - b) In the process of time, *doxa* or glory, grew to mean "good opinion" as opposed to any opinion. In other words, *"that which merits a good opinion."* (praise, honor, good standing, reputation, renown)
 - c) The word develops and is applied to God in **Psalm 24:8**, *Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle!* **Psalm 24:10**, *Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory! Selah* (*"Doxa"* ascribe to God) (Love, Truth, Holiness, Grace, Power, Knowledge)
 - 2. In the Old Testament, *"kabed"* is used for glory (the idea conveyed is heaviness).⁴
 - a) Wealth was characterized as glory and carried the idea of heaviness. (Heaviness, burden, riches, reputation, importance, glory, splendor, distinction, honor.) (Gen 13:2, 31:1, 45:13)⁵
 - b) Paul likely had this in view when inspired he penned, **2 Corinthians 4:17**, *"For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,"*

² Boice, James Montgomery. *The Gospel of John: An Expositional Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Beale, G. K. *Union with the Resurrected Christ, Eschatological New Creation and New Testament Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2023.

⁵ Kittel, Gerhard, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985.

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- c) Often God's glory is linked to his name or demand to give God "glory" that He is due in recognition of who He is.

IV. The Magnitude of our Lord's Prayer.

- A. To the degree we embody Christ's character, we possess his glory.
1. **John 17:10**, *All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.*
 2. **John 17:22**, *The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,*
- B. The pathway of giving our Lord "**glory**."
1. As Jesus **denied** His will and deferred to the Father's will, so must the believer.
 2. As Jesus **obeyed** His Father, He prays for His glorification resulting in the Father's glorification.
 3. As Jesus **suffered** death, His Father had granted authority to give eternal life (John 17:2)
 4. As Jesus completed His work, by His "**glorious**" obedience is the only way to life (John 17:3-4)