

Father Glorify Me

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Date: 15 October 2020

Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[0 : 00] Let us begin our service this evening. We can begin by singing in Gaelic. We'll read these words as we have them in Psalm 103. And at verse 8, The Lord our God is merciful and he is gracious, long-suffering and slow to wrath in mercy plenteous. He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did to quiet our ill.

For as the heaven in its height, the earth surmounteth far, so great to those that do him fear his tender measures are. As far as east is distant from the west, so far hath he from us removed in his love.

iniquity. And verse 8 and here we are going to talk about small and small and small and small and and and and and and and countries and countries are to access to the space
Thank you.

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[3 : 21] Thank you.

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[7 : 21] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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[10 : 05] Thank you.

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We pray, and you are a part of the day of the world.
Thank you.

[12 : 07] Thank you. We pray, Lord, that you would remind us repeatedly of your goodness and your grace to encourage us in a world that is so far removed from you. little by way of respect is seen in this generation of which we form a part.

Even in the midst of this horrific, disease-ridden generation that has suffered much because of it, not only suffering because of the illness that has affected the bodies and the minds of some, even to the point of relinquishing life itself and surrendering to death, there are also temporal ramifications that are seen, and we cannot see beyond what is present.

However much they hold out hope to us as a people, those who govern us, we hear the promises, but they are shallow and hollow because you have not been included in their reflections or in their consideration.

We confess that. That it is when we exhaust all possibilities that we turn to you, and that is possibly what awaits us as a people, that you will leave us in such a way that we cannot but cry to the heavens for the mercy.

We do that in any case. Thankful that we can know of you as a God who is able to supply all our needs.

[13 : 58] We bring our families, our friends, our neighbours before you. Pray for our island community, our nation, the United Kingdom and all the nations of the earth.

We bring them, not necessarily in that order, but we begin with our homes. We begin with our loved ones. It is instinctive for us to do so, and to remember before you those that are near and dear to us.

We bring them in your presence, seeking your blessing to be upon them, that they may learn what it is to put their trust in Christ, that they may hear the sound of God in grace, even as you speak to us in judgment.

We pray that you would bless your word as it goes out, as the preacher should proclaim it. May they proclaim the true gospel, and nothing less than that, to remind us that there is salvation for needy sinners in Christ.

Remember the congregations of our denomination. Remember the churches of the world, especially those that preach Christ. You may choose to witness, to bring your witness to bear upon hearts and minds through, through situations and through vehicles that are uncertain, but it is the truth that will allow it.

[15 : 31] And it is only the true gospel that will yield fruit. We pray that you would remember all who are in the world, especially those who are crying out to you, the God of heaven, out of a sense of their need, those who are hungry, those who are bereft of creature comforts, be merciful to them, we pray.

Remember all the caring professions, those who go out for mercy ministries to the ends of the earth. Remember them, those who, such as for Blitheswood, those who work for care and for Oxfam, and all of these organisations that carry out mercy ministries in your name.

Even those who have no thought of God, may they still be an arm of God in the midst of this time of tragic need.

We pray that you would bless those who are in need at this time, those who are hospitalised, those who care for them within the hospitals, doctors and nurses, and all kinds of ancillary ministries.

Bless them, we pray. Remember our own community here, the hospital, the care homes, the hospice. We particularly remember the Southern Isles at this time, and remember those affected there.

[17 : 08] We pray that you would bring them to yourself, that they may trust in your safekeeping. So remember us, Lord, not because we remember you, because we don't as we ought.

Remember us when we fail to remember you. Remember us as we are in need of being reminded that you are God indeed, there is none like you.

We pray that you would hear our petitions, and grant mercy for our sins, guiding us in the truth, hardening us from our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We're going to read from the New Testament Scriptures, from the Gospel of John. The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to John, and we're reading chapter 17. We'll read the whole chapter.

John chapter 17. These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come.

[18 : 13] 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.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.

Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee.

[19 : 21] And they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.

And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and they are glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee, Holy Father, through thine own name.

I come to thee, Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.

While I was with them, in the world I kept them in thine name. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

[20 : 38] I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me, through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me, and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may be, hold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.

[22 : 09] O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known thee, that thou, and these have known that thou hast sent me, and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

And so on, may the Lord be pleased to add his blessing to this reading of his word, and to his name be the praise.

We're going to turn to this passage, reading again at the beginning of the chapter, John chapter 17. These words begged Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour has come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.

Over the next number of weeks for our midweek Bible study, I would like us to spend some time looking at the words of this chapter.

If you remember that far back, last February, we began a study in what is called the Lord's Prayer. Many consider that that be a misnomer, because it is more a prayer of the Lord's people.

[23 : 49] However, many consider the words of John 17 to be more accurately called the Lord's Prayer. Many entitle it the Lord's High Priestly Prayer because it reflects the clearly intercessory nature of the prayer.

Because of the intimacy expressed between Father and Son, some feel this topic to be of such a high order that they are loath to handle it.

Indeed, they speak of it as holy ground. Now you can understand why they think like that. However, it is part of Scripture and Paul, for example, writes that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Whatever those thoughts may be, if they are not prompted by the same Holy Spirit, the value of these thoughts will be very limited. Tonight, we want to look at the opening five verses, just very sketchily, I suppose, very much on the surface.

but here we see Jesus pray for himself to be glorified by the Father. It would not be wise for us to consider any part of Scripture in isolation, but as a part of the whole and this is no different.

[25 : 25] If you have read the previous chapters and I'm sure you have, you will remember that the Lord is preparing his disciples for his death. Let not your heart be troubled. He is saying, I go to prepare a place for you, He tells them further.

He is not going to leave them bereft of help. I will not leave you comfortless. I will pray the Father and he will give you another comforter. He gives them the awesome teaching of the true vine and the fruit it bears.

When Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, it was to exemplify the servant spirit that his followers should have. There are five things we can focus on in these opening verses.

Very briefly, first of all, we have the Father, secondly, the Son, thirdly, the glory, fourthly, life eternal, fifthly, the work, and sixthly, the hour.

Suppose, in all, as far as we can handle this opening section of the prayer, we can barely separate any part of it from the other parts, but for simplicity's sake, we can look at it like this.

[27 : 02] The prayer begins further. Jesus turns his eyes heavenward. God, we can't really say we're not in a position to do so.

We've said this often about any of the prayers or the petitions of the Scripture, where we hear, for example, in the Psalms or in any of the narratives where a man of God is doing business with God, what tone he has.

We don't know whether when Jesus is speaking these words and calling his Father, whether it's a term of endearment, and we certainly believe it is.

It is a statement addressed to act not just as a familiar but an intimate. Some may think that he's shouting or crying out for attention.

Some might say he's whispering. It's not possible for us to say either way. Some have taken offence at Jesus speaking to God or of God using such a familiar term, but we know that several times he uses the term in this prayer, but repeatedly during his time on earth.

[28 : 39] As many remark is it not natural for him to do so. At the resurrection of Lazarus he says, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

But you will remember how the gospel of John begins. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. the same was in the beginning with God.

And then when we move down to verse 14, John writes, And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Then in chapter 3, in verse 35, The Father loveth the Son, and has given all things into his hand. Without wanting to labour the point, the Lord Jesus is speaking to his Father as the Son, aware of all that the relationship entails.

Many of the theologians insist on this very fine point. We can pray our Father which art in heaven, and Jesus taught us to pray in that manner, but Jesus cannot pray in the same way as us.

[29 : 55] He is able to say, as he said to Mary Magdalene, I send to my Father, and to your Father, my God and your God, not however our Father, because what is true is that God is our Father by grace, but he is Jesus and Father by nature.

Me and the Father, he says, we are one. May appear trivial to some, but not to the Lord Jesus. This is God the Father, the only true God, and he is addressing him, not just as a suppliant coming into the presence of his God, he is coming into the presence of his heavenly Father as his Son.

It seems silly to speak of one without the other. In fact, the nature of the relationship is such that it is the Son that reveals the Father. Again, if we go back to chapter 1, we read, no man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father.

He has declared him. Now theologians, as you understand, they love to wrestle with the passages of the scripture they perceive as being difficult or complex or complicated in some way.

Passages they perceive as having a degree of uncertainty about them, mainly because of the peculiarities of the ancient text, for example, Hebrew pointing or Greek punctuation.

[31 : 46] The words that we've just quoted in the original identified Jesus as God. No one has ever seen God ever, but God.

I think that's where the emphasis lies according to linguists. No one has ever seen God, but God.

The only begotten has declared him. So again, the Son and the Father are both identified as God. While God the Father in the sense of him being a creator or provider or the father of Abraham or Israel, but, as Professor Finlayson has it, on the lips of Christ, it was a relationship such as no other human being ever bore.

he was eternal father to the eternal son. Here in the prayer Jesus is asking the father to glorify the son, so that the son can glorify the father.

But then it is as if it is a record or a CD that skips from asking for that glory. Jesus speaks of it as if it is already a done deal.

[33 : 11] In verse 4, what do we read? 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.

It seems as if it has already taken place. It would not make much sense were it not for the one praying, and the one to whom the prayer is being offered.

But what does the son want from the father? Father, glorify thy son in order that you may glorify, that you, the son, may glorify you.

Father, glorify thy son in order that you, son, may glorify God, God, the father.

O father, glorify thou me with thine own self, he says, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. It could so easily be misunderstood as get me out of here.

[34 : 25] I know what is in store for me in this place. Take me away from this, back to where I was, with yourself. Who could blame him if he had actually thought that thought?

But of course he did not. He did not think like that. He was in the world to do one thing. He was in the world to seek and to save his own.

He was in the world to bring his church into existence and glorify that church ultimately. Don Carson writes by way of explanation, the verb to glorify can mean to praise or to honour.

But in this context the primary meaning is to clothe in splendour. The petition asks the father to reverse the self-emptying entailed in his incarnation and to restore him to the splendour that he shared with the father before the world began.

So in actual fact, although both aspects which appear extreme, what was and what will be, with the cross in between. In fact, Carson goes so far as to say that these words in the prayer are also a moving experience of his own willingness to obey the father even unto death.

[35 : 52] The thing is, Jesus knows that God the father will be glorified in his death. faith. It is the will of the father that he has come to do.

He has power over all flesh, we are told. Bishop Ryle states the keys of heaven are in Christ's hands. The salvation of every soul of mankind is at its disposal.

Both the father and the son are glorified when God's way of salvation in Christ Jesus bears fruit. that glory is therefore connected with life eternal.

Read again verse 2. As you have as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. a very definite amount as many as you have given. The doctrine of election stated bluntly we are told who the elect are.

[37 : 04] They must be and they cannot be anyone else. Those that know God as the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. No one else can know God in this way.

Jesus already stated this truth. In John chapter 6 verse 37 he says all that the Father giveth me shall come into me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

H.C.G. Mool writes about the deep mystery of God's election and he says whatever it is its origin is in eternity and its goal is eternity glory.

There is no doubt that Jesus anticipated what was beyond the cross for him and for his people. It in no way lessens the awful reality of his sufferings.

If anything it accentuates the reality of the sacrifice and the willingness with which he embraced it. whenever I come across the words that we find in Hebrews in chapter 12 I think I see more in them than I ever did the outset.

[38 : 25] Let us run with patience the race that is set before us looking into Jesus the author and finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The more I think of it the more I am in of it. But this was the work that he came to do. It was we are told for this hour that he came into the world.

Father he says the hour has come glorify thy son that thy son also may glorify thee. We quoted at the outset the words of chapter one.

Christ Jesus reveals the father to us. Rabbi Duncan once said only what comes from God will lead to God. Such a statement may have many layers but it certainly is true of what the Lord Jesus was in the world to do.

He was in the world to lead his own to God. Charles Ross in the book The Inner Sanctuary wrote and with this I'm going to finish.

[39 : 39] Christ had a glory with the father before the world was even from all eternity. That glory was veiled or eclipsed when he tabernacled on earth.

With this glory he now seeks to be reinvested. Not ever as before but now in our nature. And this prayer has been answered.

what Jesus here asks for, Jesus has obtained. Christ is now glorified in our nature at God's right hand.

This indeed is a prayer of the Lord Jesus and it has much in it far more than we could ever begin to do anything with except touch the surface.

But we give thanks that such a prayer was on the lips of our Lord and Saviour. And that as Ross has said whatever we believe to be in that prayer we believe that that prayer has already been answered.

[40 : 52] May God bless to us these few thoughts. Let us pray. Gracious God we give thanks that there is one who has demonstrated to us a desire to pray in the world and to pray often and to pray earnestly and to pray in a way that we could hardly begin to imagine.

Give thanks for every word that is recorded for us where we can eavesdrop into this relationship that exists between himself and his father even as it was in this world.

We pray that you would bless your people as they discover the truth as it is in Christ. Bless all who are labouring in this world and who are struggling even with regard to their faith.

We give thanks that Christ has fulfilled all righteousness on their behalf and the day will come when they will enter into his glory and enjoy that glory with him.

Forgive our sins and pardon us in his name and now may grace, misery and peace from God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you all now and always.

[42 : 11] Amen.