

Glory to the Father

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] I want you to turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 17.

! John 17, verse 1.

Let's pray together.

Father, this morning as we take your word in hand, and we remind ourselves at the very outset that this word that we have is your clear and direct revelation to us, telling us about our Lord Jesus, telling us all that we need for life and godliness.

And this morning as we hold this word and as we study it together, we are reminded that we are dependent upon your spirit. I'm dependent upon your spirit in preaching the word.

[2 : 05] And your dear people are dependent upon the spirit in understanding and applying it that their hearts may grow in affection for our Savior. And that those who are here that do not know Christ this morning by your spirit would first be convicted of their sin and drawn to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in whom alone is salvation.

And we pray, Lord, this morning that the Lord Jesus would be the one that is exalted and lifted up, and those of us that know him would grow in our affection and our love and our desire to please him.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. As we take up our study of John, we are coming towards the end of the book.

And if I were to ask you this morning what is the central unifying theme of the book of John, you would tell me that we find that stated very clearly in the very end of the book.

Am I right? These things are written that you might know that Jesus is the Christ and that knowing and believing you might come to faith. And so we are looking at a portion of the Scripture and underlying the study this morning is this desire that you who sit here under the hearing of the word of God would grow in your love for the Lord Jesus.

[3 : 33] And as a result of growing in that, you would be transformed from glory to glory, as it says in 2 Corinthians, and grow to be more like him. I trust that this morning as you look at this passage in John 17, you realize that the gospel of John is different from the other synoptics in this sense.

John's gospel focuses primarily on the deity of Christ. Christ. The synoptics tell us more about what Jesus did, what he did in his public ministry, and how those things played out in the 33 years of his ministry here on earth.

And probably one of the characteristics that helps us see this so radically, I mean, the difference between the two, is particularly right here in the hours before the cross.

What we're looking at in John 17 is Jesus' prayer before he goes to the Garden of Gethsemane. The synoptics, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all tell us about the prayer in the Garden.

They don't tell us about this prayer, which many Bible scholars refer to as Christ's high priestly prayer. Now, that's an interesting comparison, isn't it? Stop and think with me just for a moment.

[4 : 51] What was the spirit that Jesus had when he was praying in the garden? What was it like? Can you think? Let me have you refresh your memories by having you turn.

Keep your finger there in John. But turn over, if you would, just for a moment to Mark chapter 14. Mark chapter 14, verse 32.

And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, Sit here while I pray. Stop just for a moment. The prayer that we are going to study the next three weeks is prayed prior to the Garden.

And we are going to note the radical difference between the two. So here in verse 32, Sit here while I pray. And he took with him Peter, James, and John and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.

And he said to them, My soul is very sorrowful. Even to death, remain here and watch. And going a little further, he fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. [5 : 54] It tells us in the book of Luke that as he prayed in this very, very earnest and passionate appeal to the Father, it says that he was suffering to the point that great drops of blood came.

And as you read the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, you get a picture of Jesus suffering in a fashion that we can sympathize with as human beings.

We can understand what it is to have a certain level of anxiety for what lies in front of us. We've all been there, haven't we? With one thing or another, we're not sure how this is going to work out.

And there's a little bit of anxiety and, oh man, do I really have to do this? I have on many occasions been with different people in our fellowship prior to their going in for surgery.

And those who are not frequent flyers, and by that I mean those who have maybe one surgery in their lifetime, some of us have been kind of in the environment where, yeah, you can cut on me.

[6 : 57] I know how that worked out last time. Others like, I've never been here before. Do I really have to do this? And a little bit of anxiety. And here's Jesus in the Garden praying his heart out.

In John, we see a completely different spirit. And I want you to recognize that the prayer in John 17 and the prayers in the Garden were only separated by mere moments.

Very interesting. In John, remember, John's goal was to show us the deity of Christ. And here in John 17, you're getting a window into the heart of the Lord Jesus as he prays prior to the cross and he is thinking about the cross with a divine perspective.

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, he is praying with a very human understanding of what is coming.

Now, as we put these two together, we have to recognize that the Scriptures see Jesus as entirely human and entirely God.

Not part human and part God. Entirely, completely, in totality. And we, in our finite minds, struggle with keeping those two pieces together.

[8 : 22] Isn't that true? How many confess that dealing with something of this theological nature, it's hard for us to press together? We can focus on this part or this part.

And John is going to help us focus on the divine. But remember that the larger picture of the Scripture gives to us the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, the God-man.

With that kind of as a background, I want you to step now to what we do find here in John 17. We're going to spend time looking at Christ's prayer prior to the cross and a prayer that is not marked by a single moment of hesitation or caution.

We find, first of all, in verse 1, a personal request. Here at this stage, Jesus is praying to His Father, and He is praying without lament, without anguish, and He is praying in a very objective way about what lies in front of Him.

Here, He makes a statement there. He says, the hour has come. If you were to work your way back through the life of Christ, you would find at various times, He had made the statement, the hour is not now.

[9 : 37] It's not the time. It's not the time. It's not the time. And there were various instances in His public ministry where He had made it clear that this was not the moment, the primary purpose of His coming.

It was something that was in the future. And now, here He is in the shadow of the cross. He says, now, the hour has come. And as you think about our Lord's ministry, I want you to recognize that from the very moment of His arriving here on the earth, His face was set towards Golgotha and towards the ministry on the cross and Him dying for my sins and for your sins as the remedy for the fall.

We look here and we find that Jesus looks at the cross and look what it says there. He says, the hour has come. Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.

He looked at the cross and instead of seeing it as a gross injustice and a denial of His basic rights as a human being, He looked at it and said, that's going to be my glory.

Instead of looking with this heartache and this sorrow as we sometimes do and not inappropriately so, but remember, there has to be a balance. Jesus looked at the cross and He looked at this thing and He says, this is the most glorious moment of all of eternity in history and it is the moment when God's amazing work of salvation is going to come to full fruition.

[11 : 05] So listen to what Jesus says there. Glorify your Son that your Son may glorify you. Let's take those two pieces together or one at a time here just for a moment and think them through as

we look at the passage.

We mark that Jesus as He is making this statement, He looks at what was going to happen and He sees that His dying on the cross was going to be for our benefit and for His glory.

He was glorified. He was glorified by dying on the cross for our sins. Now what is the glory in that? Stop and think about it. What is the glory of Christ dying for our sins on the cross?

If you do something that is necessary and is an obligation, is there any glory in that? What's the answer? Not really. I think about the passage in Luke where it talks about the servants who served all day and they did their work and they did what was expected of them and even in the evening when they came in from the fields the master says I want you to take care of cleaning up and then cooking for me and serving me.

And he says does the master thank them? No. Just hey, you did your job. You did your job. There is no glory in one sense in doing that which is understood to be our responsibility and so where is the glory in Christ dying for us?

[12:32] The glory lies in this. It was something that he did not need to do in the sense of divine obligation other than the plan of God and he did it because of his love for us and his willingness to be part of what the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost had planned for our salvation.

It's interesting that when you stop and think about this issue of salvation as being a moment of glory you stop and set it against some other of the spectacular works that God has done namely the matter of creation.

And I want you to think of what we find in the book of Job when it talks about the angels observing God in the creative acts and as the angels watch the heavens come into being and watch every aspect of this creation it says that they kind of burst out in applause, right?

They were pretty excited seeing what God was doing. They appreciated that evidence of his power. They appreciated what they were watching God create.

But when it comes to the matter of our redemption and our salvation I want you to stop just for a moment and think of how it humbled them to ponder this imponderable thing for them.

[13:46] Turn over in your Bible you're going to keep your finger there in John 17 but turn over to 1 Peter chapter 1 we're talking about the glory of Christ and dying for our sins and I want you to understand that it is a glory that is transcendent it is unbelievably significant.

1 Peter chapter 1 verse 12 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 12 I want you to look at verse 8 one of those verses that even this morning as I was praying and preparing my heart for this morning this verse came to my mind though you have not seen him you love him though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory your thoughts of Jesus rightly framed are characterized by satisfaction and delight let me say that slowly your thoughts of Jesus rightly framed are characterized by satisfaction and delight is that true the answer is yes so if you're sitting here kind of dull and indifferent in your thinking about Jesus is the problem with him or is the problem with a heart that is distracted by the moment and distracted by the life that you're engaged in and you need to reconcile yourself that you need the enabling of the Holy Spirit to think properly of Christ that your heart might be filled with incredible delight and satisfaction

Jesus the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast we look here and Peter says listen you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory obtaining the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls concerning this salvation wow it's spectacular that we're saved the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully inquiring what person or time the spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven things which the angels what does it say long to look have you ever really wanted to understand something really wanted to understand something but it just wasn't clicking you ever been there

Andy Manweller in his Sunday school this morning that was a phenomenal little video clip it's called a speed artist how would we look it up on Google or YouTube a man painting upside down in a minute and a half it is just really phenomenal he paints this picture upside down in literally one minute and thirty seconds and the last millisecond you're sitting there thinking what is that and he turns it around and whoa it's a picture okay apart from God giving to us an understanding of his son and salvation through grace we would be brain dead would we not the angels don't get it the angels don't get it they look at the issue of the holiness of God and the justice of God and the judgment of

God and the reality of sin and what do they understand they understand this once and done we have received a measure of grace and forgiveness that angels cannot get their heads around and here is Jesus before he goes to the cross saying this father glorify your son make me spectacular why that I may make you spectacular doesn't that give you cold chills make me spectacular that I may make you spectacular that's

Jesus' prayer we're moments away from my sacrificial death for the sins of the whole world and in that moment make me spectacular that I can make you spectacular Jesus was not only glorified on the cross but he also glorified the father in planning our redemption and so as you think about this matter this morning and you think about the example that Jesus is to us you look at the model that our savior sets of having a singular desire that his father might be glorified isn't that right and here is Jesus praying I want you to be glorified how by glorifying me and so I ask the question that [19:45] I want you to ponder in your own heart am I passionate about his glory about him looking good now stop and think about that am I passionate about his glory am I interested in him looking good hey you know one of the things I know from personal experience when I spend a lot of time thinking about myself and my glory I invariably end up quite unhappy does anybody identify with me how many of you understand the more you become a navel gazer the less happy you become do you know what I mean by a navel gazer do I need to go into biology we'll stop there here's the deal father I'm really interested in your glory and you work in me that you might get glory am I passionate like Jesus was about the father's glory well let's look secondly at verse two and three since you've given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you've given him we can't miss the fact that

Jesus understood that he was the sovereign lord of all and that the father had given him complete authority one of the interesting lines of logic in relationship to this is that in the apostolic preaching of the cross on Pentecost Peter as he's preaching to the crowd he says listen the ones who you've been who you crucified is the one who now has authority to judge you I mean can you imagine just I want you to imagine this just temporarily that you have been apprehended for some vile criminal deed and you are in Franklin County court and you see some guy trundling through the lobby on his way and you're having a bad attitude and so you say something snarky to him you get into the judge's chambers and the guy who was just ambling across the lobby now has a black robe on and in comes the bailiff and he says oh yeah oh yeah whatever they say you know stand up it's the guy I offended that now is my judge like bad decision Peter preaching says listen the one you crucified is the judge the one you crucified is the judge here is Jesus saying you have given me authority over all flesh and in relationship to this authority he says there to give eternal life to all whom you have given him in a broad sense what Jesus is talking about here in verse two and three is the fact that what lay in front of him was the work of redemption and the cross that he was referencing earlier was really all about this work of salvation and I want you to understand several things that are here in the text for us to kind of get our heads around for one salvation is something he gives not something we earn look at what it says there in verse two since you have given him authority to give eternal life to all who you have given him where does eternal life come from is it something that I earn is it something that I decide is it something that is entirely up to me and what is the answer in this passage it says hey it is something that I have been given by his grace not something that I've ever earned individual came up to me earlier today and said you know pastor I had an opportunity to share the gospel with somebody and actually I had somebody say to me they've been a pretty good person you know it's like hey really are you going to go to heaven because you're a pretty good person what's the answer is this a Baptist crowd it is here's the secret you're not going to heaven because you're a pretty good person you're a lousy rat a couple weeks ago when I had the privilege of presenting the gospel at a graveside you know I have no hesitation of telling people we're all miserably sick and sinful and apart from Jesus we have no eternal hope right and here is Jesus explaining the reality that salvation is something that he has given to us we don't earn it he gives us eternal life furthermore mark what it says here the saved ones are the ones that the father has given to

Jesus look at the passage there to give eternal life to all whom you have given him now I have to tell you that the passage is pretty explicit in explaining that the issue of salvation is something that is in God's hands it is in God's hands now can I put together the reality of the sovereignty of God in salvation and the responsibility of man in calling out for salvation and the answer is no and I don't have to I accept both of them equally the same as I accept follow me carefully that Jesus is all man

100% and he is all God I accept it I accept it and I don't have a problem with that and when we get carried away on one side or the other of this whole thing we end up with attitudes invariably that reflect the fleshliness of our own hearts and argument of the spirit and it's not of the [25 : 36] Lord I want you to look a little bit more as we go into the passage here and mark what it says there in verse 3 and this is eternal life that they may know you the only true God I want you to recognize this morning listen to me carefully so you don't miss this everybody lives forever everybody lives forever do you understand that everybody lives forever and so the real blessing is not that we receive eternal life the real blessing is what kind of eternal life we receive death would not be frightening if those who died apart from Christ were annihilated and disappeared into nothing the Bible gives us a clear indication that those who die apart from

Christ suffer for all of eternity they have eternity they have eternal life and it is something that should give us pause when we stop and think about those that we love that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ our prayers should be incessantly begging for their redemption and their salvation because apart from Christ they will live forever and it will be a heartache of unbelievable imagination so here we look at the passage and we understand that Jesus is making a statement and this is eternal life that they may know you the only true God and Jesus Christ that you have sent so how is it that I end up knowing God oh brains yeah really really brains it's just all about me being so smart that I figured it out do you follow that turn back in your Bible just for a moment not turn back turn forward in your

Bible to 1 Corinthians chapter 1 just take a second here is Paul explaining the issue of salvation and how it is that we have come to appreciate the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior where is the one who is wise verse 20 1 Corinthians 1 verse 20 where is the one who is wise where is the scribe where is the debater of this age has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world did you figure it out on your own in fact if you look around you recognize that God chose as it says there in verse 28 what is low and despised in the world even things that are not to bring to nothing things that are and verse 29 so that no human being may boast in the presence of God and because of him you are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom from God righteousness and sanctification and redemption why as it is written let know the one who boasts boast in the Lord so I want you to understand going back to John chapter 17 we mark what it says there in verse 3 the blessing that we have of our eternal life is that our eternal life is marked by knowing

God knowing God there's one other piece that I want you to recognize in this passage and we pick up on it there in verse 4 and 5 I have glorified you on earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do and now Father glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed did Jesus want to come here to this earth yes he did because of us because of the plan of redemption but here he was just moments away from the cross and as he was thinking about this large plan of salvation and redemption he was thinking and when I finish this I get to go home that's pretty neat one of the things that has happened to me on various occasions is I'll be away for a couple days from Judith and from home and there's something about my car when I turn towards home do you know what it's like there's one unrelenting interest in my life it's get back home

Doug's a truck driver the journey out is not half as much fun as the journey back am I right it's man I am coming home and here is Jesus looking forward to the divine reunion he's looking ahead to being with his father again in his presence and having that absolute unfettered communion in the presence of the father he says I've done my work I finished the job you sent me to do I'm coming back and I want to be glorified in your presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed I gotta stop and ask you this question how often do you think about the pleasure and satisfaction that you will have as a believer in the presence of Christ for all eternity does it occupy any of your thinking does it let me give you a couple passages to kind of hold on to here as we think this through for one in Psalm 17 verse 15 it says for me as for me

[31 : 18] I shall behold your face in righteousness when I awake I shall be are you ready I shall be satisfied with your likeness hey Tim Kenoyer understands what it is to be a moody person without the enabling of the Holy Spirit let me read Psalm 17 15 again and listen to me carefully there is no remedy for the soul apart from the sweetness of the word of God with the enabling of the Holy Spirit will you get that settled Psalm 17 verse 15 as for me I shall behold your face in righteousness when I awake and I shall be satisfied with your likeness turn in your Bibles to 1st John chapter 3 1st John chapter 3 and just follow as you read the text and follow along see what kind of love the father has

given to us that we should be called the children of

God and we are the reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him beloved we are the children of God now and what we will be has not yet appeared but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is and everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself because he is pure it doesn't yet appear where we're going to be or who we're going to be like or how it's going to all work out but I got to tell you this it tells us here that we are going to be like Jesus will that satisfy us will that satisfy us will that satisfy us absolutely and here's what it says he that has this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ and how the story ends makes a world of difference in the way you think thinking about the Lord Jesus and the way the story ends makes a world of difference in the way you think here's Jesus the cross right in front of him and instead of just he says all right Lord father this is the hour make me look good so I can make you look good thank you for giving me the blessing of bringing salvation according to the plan that you and I and the Holy Spirit put together and Lord father I am looking forward to coming back home let's pray our father

God this morning we are in awe when we think about Jesus in the face of the cross being so caught up by the glory of what you had sent him to do that at this time and in this moment that we're pondering today we do not see sorrow but we see hope and joy and ambition and we ask that you would work in our lives we who know Christ that we would have a same desire that the glory of the father would so consume us that we would find our delight in everything that exalts your name I ask this because of Jesus Amen