

John 17:1-5

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[0:00] Heavenly Father, what a marvelous passage this is before us today.! As Dave just said, as Dave just prayed, we get to listen in on the divine discourse between! Father and the incarnate Son of God. God, these things are deep and profound, just like all spiritual truth. And you want us, you desire for us, and you equip us by your Spirit to be changed by these words. So Lord, would you speak to us this morning? Would you open up our eyes to perceive these deep things of God? Would you encourage us in this truth? Would you lift up our eyes to see the vastness of your glory? We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Well, good morning, church. My name is Mike. I'm one of the elders here at Shoreline, and I'm so glad that you've joined us this morning. You know, it's all too common in life for the things that are right in front of me to sort of obscure the big picture, to obscure my perspective. I don't know if you, if this happens to you as well. One example of this, I've shared this a few years ago in another sermon, but I was in California in 2017 about to go on a hike in the Sierra Nevada mountains. So these majestic 14,000 foot peaks, the tallest, you know, Mount Whitney, which is the tallest in the continental states, other 14ers are there before us. And as my brother-in-law and I are driving towards them, we are getting closer to these little foothills. They call the Alabama Hills. And as we get into the Alabama Hills, we can no longer see these majestic giant peaks, right? These 100 foot tall hills are obstructing our vision. And we could have stayed there and enjoyed some time in the little foothills, but we wanted to get to the glory, right? The majesty of the Sierra Nevada mountains and being high above, you know, all of life, it seems. Now in this passage that we have before us today,

Jesus pans way out, and I mean way out, right? Beyond the borders of time and space to which we humans are subject. And Jesus shows us in this prayer, the big picture about God and man and history and redemption and eternity. And my hope today is that whatever foothills are obstructing our perspective, whether the foothills of suffering, of difficult things that we walk through in life, or the foothills of pleasure, of worldly pleasures that we're seeking after, or the foothills of sin that we cannot seem to get past, that God would allow us to step back from those hills and to see the glory and majesty that belongs to him. So Jesus has just concluded his farewell address, right? Also known as the upper room discourse, which he has been preparing his disciples for what's to come, right? What's to come after the cross and the empty tomb? And that's been the last three chapters of John's gospel.

And now Christ lifts up his gaze towards heaven in prayer to the Father. Though what proceeds from his mouth is no less instructive for the disciples than the last three chapters of explicit instruction.

And the prayer that Jesus prays in John 17, which we will cover over the next three weeks, is titled in some of your Bibles as the High Priestly Prayer. Now this title was not given, this title was not given by Jesus or even by the early church, but it seems to have been assigned to the prayer much later in history, like 1400s. And it certainly is for good reason. For in this prayer, Jesus intercedes for his disciples from within God's presence, as one commentator says.

And this is, it's anticipating that future high priestly role of intercession that he would take up after his ascension. And in this prayer, Jesus is also pointing forward to his sacrificial work on the cross,

right? In which he would show himself to be the true and faithful high priest over the household of God. So there's good reason that this prayer is called the High Priestly Prayer. And at the same time, it's not the title in the text. And our focus is going to be on the text and what God has to say to us through his holy inerrant word. And more profoundly still than the fact that this is God's holy inerrant word, it is also God the Holy Spirit letting us overhear this divine conversation, this cosmic conversation. As we think about the fact that Jesus, the incarnate word made flesh, right? The Son of God is speaking to his Father in heaven. And when Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father. So I just want to pause there and say, can you, can you imagine this, right? Jesus, the Son of God, God made flesh, right? He's now standing in time, in space, in history. His disciples are there with him, overhearing this discourse, this conversation of him speaking to his Father, who he has known from eternity past. Just think about that for a second. [5:34] And we also get to hear this conversation. We get to hear this prayer that Jesus prays. And in fact, only eight times in the Gospels do we get to hear the prayers of Jesus. We know that Jesus prays often.

He's seen on the mountains praying to God. He prays before he chooses his disciples. He's always praying. But only eight times. And three of those alone are on the cross. And this prayer right here, one of those eight times and the longest by far. And we get to listen in to this divine conversation. He says, Father, the hour has come. The hour has come. It's the first part of this sermon. The hour. What is this hour to which Jesus is referring? Now, if you've been walking with us through the Gospel of John, you already know that answer. But to provide some more background here, you know, years earlier, almost three years now, Jesus' mother Mary had approached him with a problem at a wedding.

Do you remember this? They have no wine, she said. And Jesus replied to her, What does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come. A little bit mysterious at the time. But then all throughout John's Gospel, John in his narrating, and then Jesus in his speaking, they keep pointing forward to this hour that's to come.

Until having been rejected by the Jews, and then prompted by the arrival of Gentiles, Jesus had publicly declared, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. That was chapter 12, verse 23. But this glorification, it would come in a terribly unexpected way. Because Jesus then said, Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. [7:26] And later in the conversation, he sheds more light on that statement, because Jesus declared, And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. And John adds, he said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. The hour of Jesus' glorification would simultaneously be the hour of his death upon the cross. And Jesus, knowing that his hour was upon him, then withdrew entirely from the public eye, right, to spend his last remaining days with those closest to him, with his disciples. And in these final moments of his life, Jesus loves them to the end, right? We saw that in chapter 13, selflessly caring for them, even as the horror and the agony of the cross imminently awaits him. And having poured out his heart to the disciples, he now declares again, this time directly to the Father, that the hour has come, right? The hour is nearer now than it's ever been. And then he prays, glorify your Son. Glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you.

Note this, it's an hour of glory. The hour has come, and it's an hour of glory. So here again, as in chapter 12, Jesus connects his hour with glory. Now he had done so in chapter 13, after Judas had departed, the betrayer, and Jesus proclaimed, now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and glorify him at once. It's hours and hour of glory. Here in this prayer in John 17, we see Jesus is expressing both petition and purpose, right? The petition is glorify your Son. But there is a purpose to this petition. It's that the Son may glorify you. But how exactly would the Father glorify the Son? Like, what is Jesus asking for here? And how would the Son glorify the Father? What is Jesus saying in this prayer? Now we could certainly pull from all sorts of other passages in Scripture to answer that question, but Jesus provides the answer right here in these few verses. And he says next, since you have given him

authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. We're going to consider first the glory of the Son, the glory of the Son.

The Father has given Jesus authority over all flesh.

[10:15] Now I want to point out something here. That sense in verse 2, it's probably better translated as just as, which more clearly shows the connection. See, verse 2 is helping us understand what verse 1 is saying. Jesus is saying, glorify your Son just as you have given him authority over all flesh.

So the Father has given Jesus authority over all flesh. Jesus, the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, has always been and is always and will always be in a state of possessing supreme authority over all things, over every living creature. And so in this prayer, like Jesus is pulling back the curtain as it were, and we're shown the inner workings of the triune God. Like all authority derives from the Father, and the Father grants that divine authority to the Son. So as Jesus prays here, he is revealing his oneness with God, his identity as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Jesus is revealing his identity as Yahweh, right? The I Am, Israel's sovereign covenant-keeping God. I mean, even the fact that he says, glorify your Son, is Jesus' claim to deity again. For we know scriptures like Isaiah 42, verse 8, and where God says, I am the Lord, Yahweh, the I Am. That is my name, my glory, I give to no other. Jesus says, glorify your Son.

And in Jeremiah 32, verse 26, it says, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, behold, I am the Lord. Again, it's in all caps. It's Yahweh, the I Am, the covenant faithful God of Israel. Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me? Is anything too hard for me? Jesus has already known this glory from eternity past. And he's asking now, though, what he's asking for is a similar kind of glory. But as he stands looking towards what's about to come, he is praying for glory, not regarding authority over physical creation, right? The God of all flesh. Jesus is the creator God who created all of life. He has authority over physical life, but that's not what he's praying for here. It's regarding authority over a new spiritual creation, right? The new creation of sinners, redeemed by the blood of Christ, shed on the cross. So note this, it's through the cross, the glory of the Son through the cross.

It's as if Jesus is saying, Father, cause men and women to look to me, crucified for them. Like, cause all of the earth, all sinners in all nations to see me lifted up upon the cross, emptying myself in humble and holy love for them. Jesus is praying for no less than the redemptive plan of God to be fulfilled in him, to be carried out through his work on the cross. So Jesus's prayer is at once a prayer for glory and also a prayer of humble submission to the Father's will. Now I want to ask, is Jesus petitioning the Father this thing because he's not sure whether the Father is going to glorify him?

[13:40] Absolutely not, right? The redemptive plan of God has been determined from ages past. Ages past. It's a certainty. It's a fact. It's going to happen. Nevertheless, Jesus goes on asking the Father to bring it about. And this is instructive for us in our own praying. And I feel like I have to mention this because Jesus has been telling us all over the farewell discourse to pray in his name, right?

And the Father will grant requests in his name. Jesus is modeling that for us right now. A prayer to the Father according to the character and concerns of God. And it's a prayer that God is going to answer.

It's going to see the fulfillment. Indeed, the Father did glorify the Son through the cross. Sometimes we want to think about, first, the resurrection and ascension. That is certainly glory.

But there is a glory of the cross that radiates out of Christ. For as Jesus obediently carried out the Father's will, the glory of Christ, his majestic love for sinners on full display to the world, right?

The glory of Christ, his divine ability to stay, to drink the full cup of God's wrath. Christ is like a lightning rod bearing all of the power of God's wrath, his holy anger for sin. And Christ stayed.

[15:06] He endured it. That is glory. A glory that none of us could ever know. But in Christ, on the cross, him crucified, we see that glory, his holy love, his glory as the divinity to bear sovereign wrath for sin. See, on the cross, the glory that was hidden in Christ's flesh, it exploded in brilliant display for the world to see throughout the ages.

This is the glory that Jesus is asking for, the glory of the cross. Now in verse 5, Jesus sheds more light still in what he's asking for. As he says, And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with

the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

It is glory through the resurrection and the ascension. Now do you see how Jesus, in this prayer, he's panning way out, way out, right?

He's giving his disciples the big picture. And that is no understatement. This is the big picture, right? Even after three chapters of Jesus' comforting, illuminating words of instruction, the disciples remain. We've been saying this over and over again. The disciples remain confused, right? The disciples are troubled. But Jesus is reminding them in his prayer to the Father that he is the one who predates any date, right? He is the one who pre-exists all of existence. Jesus of Nazareth, the man standing before them praying, he is no mere man. He's no mere man. For before the foundations of the world were laid, before the sun and the moon and the stars were fixed in the heavens, Jesus dwelt with God the Father. He was in a relationship of perfect mutual love, of splendor and glory, clothed in light, possessing all authority. This is mind-bending, but we've got to try to think about this. Jesus, before time existed with the Father, one with the Father. Paul exclaims in 1 Timothy 6, 15 and 16, that God is the blessed and only sovereign, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.

To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. Indeed, no one has ever seen God, John said in his opening prologue to this gospel. But the only God who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

[18:09] All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. This is the glory of Christ. The glory of Christ. And Jesus is asking the Father to restore him to that glory. The glory that he has always known. The glory that he will forever know. And we know, we know that this prayer was answered, right? Well, because first the glory was revealed in Christ crucified, which we talked about.

But then, three days later, the Father of glory raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right hand, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet. Ephesians 1, we looked at that on Easter Sunday. That is the glory of Christ through the resurrection and ascension. And friends, if Jesus had stayed dead in the tomb, he would have been shown to be a fraud.

There would have been no glory on the cross, because his sacrifice would have meant nothing. He would have been shown to be either a lunatic or a liar. But Jesus could not stay dead. He could not stay dead, because he is the eternal God from whom flows life itself, right? Instead of staying in the grave, Jesus buried death in the grave. And he rose to victorious and indestructible life.

And he took again his rightful place at the Father's right hand in glory. This is the glory of Christ. This is the glory of the Son of God whom we worship. And what does this mean for us today?

[20:01] I was reminded this week of Jesus' transfiguration. It's not in the Gospel of John, but it's in Matthew, right? If you remember this, Peter, James, and John are given this beautiful picture of Christ, transfigured before them. And Matthew says in his Gospel, His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. They get to see the glory of Christ in his pre-incarnate state. And as Jesus is transfigured before the disciples, the Father's voice booms from heaven. It says, he says, This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him. Yes, friends, listen to Jesus as if he is the supremely glorious and powerful God of the universe because he is. He is. Worship him in the splendor of his holiness. Bow down before him. Adore him for his excellencies. Serve him in complete submission.

There is no higher authority. There is no greater being in the universe. But don't just look upon Christ's risen and reigning. Also look upon Christ crucified. Marvel at him for his radical, self-emptying love.

Stand in awe of him for his perfect obedience to the Father. Magnify him for staying on the cross and enduring the agony. Who else could have performed such an inconceivable act of love? Who else could have done that? Nobody else. Who else could have absorbed divine wrath for sin?

Nobody else could have done that. Look at Christ crucified and give him all the glory. glory. Jesus prays, glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you. And so now we're going to consider the glory of the Father. And this has been the purpose of Jesus every single moment of his life on earth, has it not? Jesus has been laser focused on the glory of the Father. And we saw this back in chapter 12 when Jesus, you know, lamenting the agony he was about to endure said, now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this very purpose, I have come to this hour, Father, glorify your name. Do you remember what happened right after Jesus prayed that? Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and I will glorify it again. There had not been a single nanosecond of Jesus's life in which he was not bringing glory to the Father. Jesus had been the perfect embodiment of what humanity was created for, the glory of God.

[23:12] In Psalm 86, verse 11, King David prayed, Unite my heart to fear your name. And Jesus is the only one in the history of mankind who has had a heart perfectly united in its desire to reverence and to honor the holy name of God.

But Jesus' prayer here in John 17, it's saying more than just that he has glorified the Father through his earthly ministry so far. Remember the connection we established between verse 1 and verse 2, that the Son may glorify you, and that since is more like a just as, and so that the Son may glorify you is connected to, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

The Son may glorify you to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And what do I mean by that? See, the Father entrusts people to the Son, and the Father gives authority to the Son. And what is the Son going to do with those people and with that authority? He's going to give them eternal life. And this brings glory to the Father.

But before we answer how, I want us to go to verse 4, because verse 4 sheds even more light on this. Jesus says, I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

[24:44] Write this down. The glory of the Father through the mission being accomplished. You see, giving eternal life to all whom you have given him, and accomplishing the mission, the work that you have given him to do, those are not two different things.

They're the same thing. That the work that the Father gave the Son to do is to grant eternal life to those entrusted to him by the Father. Jesus had told us this back in chapter 6 in the Bread of Life discourse.

For I have come down from heaven, Jesus said, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

And how would Jesus do this? How would he do this? How would Jesus grant eternal life to people stained with sin? Well, through the cross, right?

[25:53] Through the cross. Now, we've already talked about the cross, but I think we should talk about it some more, because it's such a central event in all of history. And I was reminded, there's a children's book called The Garden, The Curtain, and The Cross.

If you have kids, you should buy it. If you don't have it, if you don't have kids, you should still buy it because it's an awesome book. And there's a refrain that they say in this book, and it's this, because of your sin, you can't come in. Because of your sin, you can't come in.

See, Adam and Eve had been kicked out of the Garden of Eden because of their sin, right? They couldn't come in anymore. Kicked out of the Garden. Well, then God established a people for himself, for his own possession, and he gave them the tabernacle and the temple so that they could enjoy his presence.

But there was a divide, right? The veil of the temple. And only a high priest could come in but once a year. And he had to make atonement for the sins of the people. Well, we see all throughout the Old Testament that Israel proves over and over and over and over again, they cannot hold to the commandments of God.

They cannot remain pure and ceremonially unclean and able to enter the presence of God because of their sin. They can't come in. How could sinners ever be granted eternal life?

[27:07] The life that's promised and pictured all throughout the prophets and the Old Testament, this glorious life to come. How could sinners ever attain that? You see, the God of all flesh is obligated because of his holiness to punish sinners.

This is justice. This is divine justice. There can be no union with a holy God and sinful man. Our sin separates us from God. You see, but there's something about God.

There's something that runs so endlessly deep in his heart that radically changes the outcome. You see, God is a God of steadfast love.

Emanating from his core, the deepest part of his being, his very essence is boundless, radical love for those whom he created. It's a love that blazes like a fire that many waters cannot quench, nor floods can drown.

And this ferocious love of God, it led the God of all flesh to send his son, Jesus Christ, to take on human flesh and then let his flesh be crushed unto death to pay for the sins of the world.

[28:27] And this is how, friends, this is how Jesus has granted eternal life to those whom the Father has given him through the cross. Through the cross.

And that was the plan of the Father from ages past. That was his plan. Before the world began, it was to redeem mankind through the cross of Christ.

So by Jesus accomplishing the mission for which he was sent, Jesus glorifies the Father. He puts on brilliant display the boundless love of God for mankind.

Jesus' death on the cross for fallen humanity is, we've been saying this throughout the parable discourse, it is the clearest revelation of the loving heart of God, the cross of Christ.

God the Father is glorified as Jesus reveals his boundless love in the cross. Jesus also put on majestic display the divine wisdom of the Father and his eternal plan of redemption.

[29:41] How could, think about this, how could mercy and justice coexist? How could God give love and mercy to sinners and punish for sin at the same time?

Through the cross of Christ. Through the cross of Christ. It was a mystery for hundreds and thousands of years, but in the cross of Christ, the wisdom of God is revealed through the cross.

How could God save the Jews, his chosen people, and bring in the nations into his covenant family? How could that ever happen? Israel didn't understand it. It's through the cross of Christ.

That's the Father's wisdom on display. And now we have people like Ryan and Randy taking the gospel to the nations. And friends, that is also our job.

There aren't just two missionaries in the room today. There are dozens of missionaries in the room. If you are in Christ. Jesus glorified the Father by showing the Father's authority as he himself, the Son of God, submitted himself to the will of the Father.

[30:51] God the Father's authority is ultimate, and Jesus showed us this in the cross of Christ. The glory of God the Father exploded.

An epic display for the world to see in the person and work, the finished work of Christ. So church, let us worship.

Let us worship the Father for his boundless love displayed in Jesus. Let us worship the Father for his divine wisdom displayed in the cross of Christ.

Let us bow down before him. Let us serve him in wholehearted submission. Let us adore him and marvel at his excellencies. This is the purpose. Did you know?

This is the purpose that we were created for. It's to glorify Father and Son. This is the goal, the end of our existence. It's magnifying the eternal glory of God.

[31:48] That's it. The glory of God. The glory of Father and Son. Now did you notice Jesus says, I glorified, past tense, I glorified you on earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And you're like, Jesus, you haven't finished your work yet, right? You haven't finished your work yet. Why is he saying that? Past tense. Now some people think that because he's saying past tense, he's only referring to what he's done so far in his earthly ministry.

That seems to really miss the point, in my opinion, because first of all, God is entirely outside of time. This is another, this is one of those mind-bending truths. God is outside of time.

God created time and space. He's outside of time. So think about this. In this moment, for God, the cross has already been accomplished. It has happened.

In every single moment of all of history, the cross of Christ has been a present reality for God. But second, it's not uncommon, you read through the prophets, it is not uncommon for the Lord and for those heralding his word to speak in this way, to speak of a future event with past tense.

[33:00] Why? Because it underscores the certainty of what's to come. All right? Jesus' finished work on the cross was already a certainty, though it had not yet come to pass.

And this is because the God of all flesh, the God who is outside of time, the God of endless and eternal glory, what he says always comes to pass. His plans cannot be thwarted.

His purposes will stand. And all of history, all of history is moving towards a day when his glory, it's going to be unveiled in a way that it's never been unveiled before and all people and all nations will bow their knees before his majesty in heaven.

That day is coming. I hope you're ready for that day. I hope you're ready to meet your maker. And friends, the good news is that instead of waiting until that day to know God, and if you do, you will know God in his wrath on that day.

You can actually know God today and forever in his love. In his love. Now we've skipped over the middle verse of this prayer.

[34:15] Jesus says, eternal life is knowing God.

eternal life is knowing God. Here in the middle of this opening section of Jesus' prayer, sandwiched between the glory of God, if you see that, verses 2, it's the glory of God, 1 and 2, verses 4 and 5, we're about the glory of God, and then here in the middle is this beautiful, profound, yet simple definition of eternal life that challenges us in our understanding.

When you think about eternal life, what comes to mind most immediately? Well, living forever, right? Eternal life, living forever, being in heaven. We think about the picture in Revelation of living without pain, without any sorrow, right?

Living in a place of wealth and riches and prosperity. prosperity. We think of being with friends, with loved ones that have gone before us. We think of being with all the saints together, right?

[35:35] For all the ages. And Jesus will also be there, right? He's going to be there in heaven. Now friends, all of those things are true, what I just said, right?

We find those truths about eternal life in God's word. But Jesus' prayer here, it reveals the core of what eternal life is, right?

This is the essence of eternal life. Eternal life fundamentally is knowing the only true God. Knowing the only true God.

This is the essence of eternal life. And this knowing, we've also talked about this recently, this knowing, it's not an intellectual knowledge. It's not like knowing addition and subtraction, right?

This is a personal, relational knowledge. It's the word for knowing that the New Testament uses so often. The essence of eternal life is sharing in the divine life of God.

[36:35] This is another theme all throughout the faribual discourse that we've been talking about. The Father sharing with the Son, sharing with the disciples, inviting them into His shared life.

We've been talking about this over and over again and now Jesus shows us this in His prayer to the Father that we can know God in intimate, personal relationship and that is eternal life.

That is eternal life. And it's not just knowing any God. It's not knowing the God of your own making. Do you know, we don't really do idolatry worship of carved images, but we are idolaters and we like to make our own gods.

We're really good at that. It's not knowing just any God of our making. It's knowing the only true God. The only true God. The God who has revealed Himself to mankind, right, through His Word. The God who has revealed Himself to mankind supremely in the Word made flesh, right, in the person and the work of Christ, His Son.

[37:48] And this is why Jesus says, eternal life is knowing you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Now, Jesus isn't saying and because He's not also God.

He's not saying and because the Father and the Son are not one, right, Father, Son, Spirit, they are one God in three persons.

Jesus says this because He is the most clear, the fullest self-revelation of God to mankind and therefore one can no longer know the only true God apart from knowing Jesus.

You can't do that. God has revealed Himself in Christ. To know God is to know Christ. To know Christ is to know God. This is what He told Philip only a few chapters earlier.

Christ. The name Christ means anointed one. It's referring to the promised Messiah, the one that had been promised to Israel from the beginning, from Genesis 3, the one who would crush the serpent's head, the devil, right?

[38:58] The one who would come from the royal line of King David and reign in righteousness and justice and peace. the one who would redeem and save God's people from all their enemies.

And all throughout the Gospel of John, people have wondered, is this the Christ? Could this be the Christ? Is He the Christ? The Bible says this in the Old Testament, is this really the Christ? But here, Jesus makes the proclamation clear.

He is the Christ. He is the Christ. Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Messiah promised from of old and also God. God, the Messiah.

And He would demonstrate this by being lifted up on the cross, right? To die for the sins of the world. Eternal life is knowing Jesus as the Christ, as the Messiah, as the King, as the Savior, and knowing Him as the only true God, the Lord.

And Paul says that he counts as Philippians 3. Paul counts everything as loss. Because of what? Because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord.

[40:14] Surpassing worth. Eternal life is knowing, having relationship with, fellowshiping with, being one with this God of resplendent light.

Knowing the one for whom the whole universe advances for His glory. It's knowing Him being brought into a shared life with the glorious God of the universe.

How can this be? I mean, you know yourself, kind of, at least. We know ourselves, we know our sin, the ugliness of our thoughts that we would never want displayed to the world.

How can, how can mere, fallen humans like us be invited into life together with God only through His love, which we've already, which we've already looked at today, only by the grace of God through the cross and the gospel of Christ.

Through the cross and the gospel of Christ, we are granted eternal life, eternal fellowship with the one true God. God. And this granting of eternal life is, at the very same time, the glorification of Father and Son.

[41:30] It's our eternal life for His eternal glory. The two are inseparably bound together. They're bound together. His glory, our life.

And what's amazing, saints, is that means that you and I today, those of us that have put our faith and trust in Christ, we are actually part of the answer to Jesus' prayer that the Father would glorify the Son.

See, we have looked upon Christ crucified and seen His beauty and His majesty. We have marveled at His divine act of self-emptying love and of humility and sacrifice.

And we have believed in Him. We have been raised to newness of life in Him through the Spirit and we have been eternally united to Him.

So our resurrected lives, they read down to the praise and glory of God. We're the answer to Jesus' prayer. The Father, He's answered that prayer by making the work of Christ effective, right, effectual in the hearts of thousands of saints for the last 2,000 years all over the world.

[42:46] Glorify Your Son. And you know what that means, saints? That you and I can actually further the answer to Jesus' prayer through our evangelism, right, through missions.

Now first, because, like, evangelism itself, the act of itself brings glory to God. Like, whether or not people respond in faith, it brings glory to God because it is shining a spotlight on the redemptive work of Christ, the redemptive work that the Father had planned from ages past glorifies God.

But second, because God has ordained that through evangelism the lost would be found, right, the sheep would be gathered into the fold through the lips of the saints and the Spirit working in their hearts to bring life.

God has ordained that through our witness the dead would be raised to life. This was His plan. This was His plan. Through our witnessing, through our sharing of the gospel, through our lives lived out as testimonies to the gospel, the Spirit uses that and He breathes life into the sinners' hearts that were once dead.

And the Father gets glory. The Son gets glory in that way. And I want to ask, is this what we're teaching our children?

[44:08] That life, eternal life that Christ gives us is for His eternal glory. That life is knowing God and glorifying God. Is this what we're teaching our kids?

Or are we teaching them, you know, just morality and behavioral change? And that's what Christianity is about. It's about looking a certain way and acting a certain way. Is it primarily something that we do or is it someone that we know?

That's what Christianity is. It's knowing Christ. And that is eternal life, right? That is eternal life. And the purpose of that is for His endless glory. I know I've got to change some of the ways that I talk to my children.

I always want them to conform, conform, conform. Am I pointing them to Christ and His glory and His beauty? That is what all of life is about. Knowing Him and His glory.

Is knowing God in Christ and glorifying Him is at the substance and the aim of our prayers? Is at the substance and the aim of our time in God's Word?

[45:18] Of our time here in our corporate gatherings and community group? Knowing God in Christ, glorifying Him. That's what it's about.

That's what it's about. That's what it's about. Our eternal life bound up with the glory of God. I don't know if any of you are Lord of the Rings fans, but in the last episode of the Rings of Power, the first of 20 rings of power is forged.

And to form this ring, or any alloyed metal for that matter, not just the Rings of Power, to form this ring, metals are heated up in a blazing furnace. Right? Until they turn into liquid and the liquids are combined together and they are inseparably linked together at that point.

Right? And from eternity past, God has ordained that His glory, His eternal glory, and our eternal life would be inseparably joined together.

And this was done so on the cross of Christ. On the cross. in which the blazing heat of God's divine wrath for sin was poured out on Jesus and the blazing heat of His steadfast love for mankind was radiated to the ends of the earth.

[46:38] It's our eternal life for His eternal glory. We can know this God of everlasting glory now and forever.

We can know Him. Church, let us strive to know Him more. To know His surpassing worth each and every day that we draw breath upon this world.

Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, I feel like we are only beginning to scratch the surface of the glory in this passage.

God, our minds are too small. We're too limited. We're too weak. We're not wise enough to understand these deep and profound mysteries. Would you help us, though, by your Spirit to understand more?

To understand your eternal glory that all of the universe was made for your glory to give you thanks and praise and honor and reverence.

[47:48] God, all power belongs to you. All wisdom, all wealth belongs to you. You are the God of endless glory. But your glory was revealed in the cross of Christ and in your boundless radical love for mankind.

Lord, we don't deserve your love. We don't deserve it. None of us do. And that's what's so glorious about it.

And you directed sovereign, steadfast love on sinners. Because that love flows from your heart. God, I pray that you would change us as we think about these things.

Because, Lord, there are so many obstructions to your glory in this life. God, whether it's trial, whether it's sin, whether it's pursuit of worldly things, God, we want to see your glory.

[48:58] We want to know you. We want to know you. The surpassing worth of knowing Christ, that's what we want to know. So, God, as we leave from here, would you cause these things to go deeper and deeper into our

hearts?

God, would we give you our lives in worship? Because you are the only one, the only one worthy, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent, you are worthy of endless glory. So, receive it from us, we pray. Amen.