

With Christ in Glory

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[0 : 00] Let's read now from John chapter 17 at verse 24. John 17 at verse 24.

Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me 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.

O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you and these know that you have sent me. 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.

We're going to round off our study of John 17, but we're going to look mostly at verse 24. Not that the other two verses are not themselves important and they are connected to verse 24.

Fairly closely. But what's in verse 24, which really takes us into heaven and to eternity. Then in verses 25 and 26, Jesus is praying that he will actually continue to make known God the Father to his people and will continue to make it known as what he's saying.

[1 : 13] So that the love with which the Father has loved him may be in them, in us, as his people, and he himself also live in us.

So, Father, I desire. It's really, literally, Father, I will that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am. And again, literally, it's so that they may see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

As we went through the previous verses in the chapter and we saw how they firstly referred to the disciples that were then with Jesus, the immediate 12 and then becoming 11, of course, after Judas had gone his way.

We come now to verse 24, which takes us from the immediate to the eternal dimensions of his prayer for his people. Verse 24, Jesus takes us into eternity, into heaven, into where we will be with him and he with us in a way that supersedes and in every way is above our experience of him in this life.

And it reminds us really powerfully that Christ's love reaches beyond the grave. It reaches into his preparation of a place, as he said in chapter 14, a place to prepare a place for them, for his people.

[2 : 42] And his love is behind all of that. The love of Jesus is what has gone towards what he's praying for in this chapter and for this verse, especially, as we'll see it tonight.

And what a powerful truth that is, as we come now to approach what we call Easter weekend, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, that we associate so much with the resurrection, the death and resurrection following of Jesus.

Though, of course, we remember that throughout the year, not just over this few days at this time of year. But traditionally, it is something that we associate with this particular time of year.

What a powerful truth that is, as we approach these days of Easter, that everything that we associate with that comes back to the love of Jesus preparing such for his people by virtue of his death and resurrection from the dead.

And when he's saying here that he is praying that these people, and we've seen not just the immediate disciples then, but as he widened out in the other part of the second part of the chapter, those that would believe in me through their name, through their preaching, believe in Jesus through them.

[3 : 56] So the whole church is really embraced in that and now embraced in these verses at the end of his prayer as well. And I want to just break it up into three parts.

First of all, looking at the subjects of this petition of Jesus. Who is it that he's praying for and how he describes them? Secondly, the substance of this petition.

What is he praying for? What exactly is he seeking for them that he is praying for? And thirdly, the strength of this petition.

What is it that gives it such depth and such strength and such energy? And indeed, we could say such certainty, because we'll see there that there is all of that to the way that he's presenting this to the father.

So the subjects of the petition, first of all, well, he says here, I desire they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am. So he's describing them as those that have been given to him.

[5 : 02] Now, we've seen that already appearing in the chapter, verse 12, for example, it's mentioned there. It's actually those that the father has given into his custody, into his keeping, into the son's work for them.

But they have been given to him as a grant from the father so that the son will look after them. And that in providing the salvation that he's going to provide for them, it will be specific to them, to those that the father has given him.

And there is a security in that. We've seen that already. And we'll see some more of that security later in what we see in the other part of the verse here. But that grant of the father, that giving of the father, of course, we realize that that has its fruition in time in our coming to faith, in our coming to know the Lord, and in coming to accept, as he says himself in this chapter, that he has come from God, that he is the one sent by the father specifically to be our savior, our savior, our redeemer.

And that the father has endowed him to that effect. And of course, that faith by which you receive Jesus, as he's offered in the gospel, as itself a means by which you embrace him through the grace of God, it is itself a result of an outworking, if you like, of this giving by the father of these people to his son.

It's a logical continuation of that wonderful stream of truth, that there is the father in eternity giving a people to his son to take to himself, to be their surety, to die for them, to rise from the dead.

[6 : 54] And you cannot then think of that in any other way, but it continuing into their coming to know him, coming to embrace him, coming to believe in him, coming to accept him for who he is.

And that faith, as you know, has this matter of giving yourself to God, entrusting yourself to God.

But here's a wonderful thing. As you go on as a Christian, as you grow as a Christian, as your faith indeed grows and as your relationship with God develops, what he's saying and what he's praying for in this verse of the chapter is something that you learn to appreciate more and more.

You learn to appreciate this great action of God, giving you along with all his people into the custody of his son, because you realize that's where your life is rooted.

It's not in the dynamic of your own faith. It's not in anything that you find yourself doing, even though it may be a result of God's grace.

- [8 : 01] It goes back to being rooted here in the father giving his people to the son to be their savior, to be the one who looks after them, to be their custodian, to be in every way the one in whom they are secure.
- And you thank him for that tonight. You thank him that before you ever lived and before you came to Jesus, even after you came into the world, you were already in the grant of the father to the son.
- You were already involved in this number of people that come to be blessed in Christ, that come, as we'll see, to be eventually with Christ in glory.
- And as you learn more of that action of the father that has involved you now as a believer, you say, Lord, I am so thankful to learn more and more about this giving of your people into the safe custody of your son.
- Because I know that's where my security is. That's where it's rooted. Not in anything that I can do myself, even as a Christian. And of course, that also includes something before we leave the point.
- [9 : 18] He's describing the subjects of this petition, those that the father has given him. But in terms of accepting and thanking God for this wonderful action of giving you into the custody, the safekeeping of the son, you come to realize the worth of Christ himself.
- The worth of Jesus, how much he is worth. You cannot measure that, of course. But the worth of Christ is very much built into what we are taking from this verse.
- As these people are described as those that are given by the father to the son. And tonight, as you know, that that means your safety, your comfort, your eternal security.
- You realize from that how much Jesus means to you. How much the Lord is worth to you. The value you place on Christ.
- Though you cannot describe it or measure it, you can appreciate it. You do appreciate it. You do actually say, as Peter himself once said, well, to whom else can I go?
- [10 : 25] You have the works of eternal life. And we have come to know and believe that you are the Christ, the chosen of God. These are the ones that he's praying for.
- And isn't it tonight humbling and yet thrilling and exciting to realize that by the grace of God, you have been enveloped in this giving of these people to the son in eternity.
- So as to be the basis of your security too. You thank him tonight that you are subjects of this petition and for the worth of Jesus as he means so much to your soul.
- Secondly, let's look at the substance of this petition. Because Jesus is saying, I desire or I will that they also whom you've given me may be with me where I am so that they may see my glory that you have given me.
- And the substance of the petition, we can see, really divides itself into two elements. First of all, being with Christ. That's what he's praying for. That they may be with me where I am.
- [11 : 39] And we saw near the beginning of our study in the chapter that this is really presenting things to God before the cross took place, actually, before the resurrection actually took place.
- But in the mind of Christ, they're being presented to God the Father as already accomplished. I have finished the work which you gave me to do, as he said, near the beginning of the prayer.
- And now he's praying that they be with me where I am. And he's thinking there along the same lines, projecting forward into his being in heaven, the work being accomplished.

He's gone back to the Father, or as an earlier verse puts it, glorified with the Father in verse 5, with the glory I had with you before the world was. And it's there that he's actually locating this particular petition that we be with him where he is.

Father, I will that they whom you have given me be with me where I am. It's a reminder to us, too, that heaven is not just, it's not a nebulous place where you float around in clouds without much of an actual existence.

[12 : 54] A kind of ethereal world in which there's nothing really of any substance. It's a place. It's a place.

He's not going to leave them as orphans. I will come again to you. And then he proceeds to speak about, teach them about the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and how the Father and he, the Son, will be present with his people through that.

Wonderful truths again. So now Jesus is with us. He is with us. He is with us. He is with us. And we are with him in this sense that through his Spirit, the presence of Christ is made known to us and appreciated by us and enjoyed by us.

And then what he's with us. And then what he's with us. And then what he's with us is, he is with us. Now he's with us. Now he's taking us into an upper level beyond that, where we will have this experience of being with Jesus directly, to see him as he is.

[14 : 59] To actually be there in the place in which he is now located as the risen and glorified God-man, the Savior of his people.

That they be with me where I am. And that really is the outlook of your hope, isn't it? That is where you find such wonderful comfort.

Of course, he is with the disciples here as he's praying this in their presence. He is with them there physically. They can see him. And what he's telling us here and praying for is that that will be the case with us when we come to be with him where he is.

Except on a much higher plane that we shall actually be with him in glory. In his glory and in our glory too to be like him.

And that's taken up in the next element of the substance of the petition. These are the ones he's praying for. And this is what he's praying for them. That they be with him where he is.

[16 : 08] But it's so that they may see my glory. And it's very important that we keep little participles. Sometimes they're not translated. And sometimes I missed out in translation here.

The ESV says that they may be with me where I am to see my glory. Which is fine. But it misses out a little bit about the purpose for which he is seeking that they be with him where he is.

So if we retain the literal meaning of it. That they be with me where I am. So that they may see my glory. This is Christ's desire. This is really part of the purpose for which he's praying this for his people.

I want them to be with me where I am. But I want that because I want them to see my glory. I want them to experience my glory. So that they may actually see my glory.

The glory which in verse 5 God the Father has given him. To see him as he is. As 1 John chapter 3 puts it.

[17 : 15] And of course that brings in something else that's equally precious. It's not just that they be with me where I am to see my glory. 1 John 3 goes further than that.

But when it says beloved it does not yet. It has not yet been made clear. What we shall be. Though we know we are sons of God. Children of God. But we know that when he shall appear.

Or when that shall be made clear. We shall see him as he is. And shall be like him. We shall be like him. For we shall see him as he is.

Is the way the verse is literally. And that itself adds a nuance of teaching that's important. Or significant. We haven't got time to go into it. But what John is saying there is. We shall see him as he is.

For we shall be like him. In other words. It's the fact that we are like him. Or made like him. That enables us to see him as he is. If we were not made like him.

[18 : 14] If that was not what God is bringing us into. If it's something short of that. We would not be enabled to see him as he is. But this is the great emphasis that God is giving us here.

That Jesus is praying for here. That they may see my glory. Which carries with it. That we shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is.

And of course that too involves something else. I'm just going to mention it again. It's important. And you can expand on it yourselves. And that is the enjoyment of God.

And the enjoyment of Christ the Savior. Because you cannot think of being with him where he is. Without the supreme enjoyment that that's going to involve.

The enjoyment of salvation in its pinnacle. The enjoyment of fellowship with God. The enjoyment of the Father through Christ. That they may see me where I am.

[19 : 13] As so that they may be with me where I am. So as to see my glory. What an enjoyment that's going to be. Throughout all eternity in heaven.

Enjoying seeing the glory of Christ. The immeasurable glory of Christ. The wonderful person of Jesus. As his glory is manifested continually.

To his redeemed glorified people. And as they find that glory reflected in themselves. Whatever that's going to be like. Or mean we know that that's what it's going to be.

And that's at the very heart of what heaven is about. And heaven will be for his redeemed people. And of course that means for us too.

That we should think about enjoying God. As much as we possibly can in this life. In anticipation of the enjoyment of God.

[20 : 15] Through Christ in heaven. That's really what it's all about. That's what God has created us for. To glorify him.

And to enjoy him forever. And it's a wonderful thing that. In itself. This point itself. That the purpose of your creation. I think you could say the purpose of the whole creation.

Comes to be focused in the glory of Christ. And the redemption of his people. Purpose for which you and I were brought into being.

Is to enjoy God. And that is something restored to us. In the glory of Christ. Immeasurably in its fullness. In what Christ is praying for here.

That they be with me where I am. So that they may see my glory. And that we be like him. Throughout eternity.

[21 : 17] That's the substance of this petition then. To be with Christ. And to see Christ. To see especially his glory. And thirdly. The strength of this petition.

Which brings in the father. As he's praying here. Father. I will. And brings in this will itself of Jesus. And it also.

In the final part of verse 24. Says. For you loved me. Before the foundation of the world. So the strength of the petition. Is an important element in itself.

As we study it. Because following on from. The people he's praying for. And the substance of the petition. The strength of it really is. In the fact that. First of all. It's the son of God.

The eternal son of God. That's praying to the father. This is. Not. A mere human being. Appealing to God. Like you find in the Psalms.

[22 : 15] Or with ourselves. Or every other human being. Has ever lived. This is the son of God incarnate. Glorified now. In our nature. As the chapter.

Envisages that. And so. It's really. An appeal. To God the father. From God the son. And an appeal. From God the son.

As the son. To God. His father. Father. And. That gives such depth. And such vigor. And indeed.

Such certainty. Of response. On the father's part. To this. To this prayer. To this plea. To this petition. Who is.

Actually praying this. It's the eternal son. To whom is he praying. He's praying to the father. Who are they. They are the persons of the trinity. That have been. As God. From all eternity.

[23 : 09] Face to face. In eternal love. One with the other. You cannot imagine. Any greater depth. Of plea.

Any greater depth. Of petition. Than from this son. To this father. And any. Any. Vigor. Beyond that.

You can't really. Think of it. Makes the outcome. Of this. Absolutely certain. Of course. We also. Have to realize. That he's. Bringing in. His people.

Into this as well. This is what he's praying for. We are actually. Embraced. In this. Think about this. For a moment. Here is God. The son. Praying to God.

The father. And it's all about. Us. It's all about. His people. It's all about. Being glorified. With him. It's all about.

[24 : 04] Seeing him. In his glory. In heaven. For all eternity. That really is humbling. Isn't it? And it's exhilarating.

And it's just. Beyond. Our full description. Of it. But. What a great thought. That. We're anticipating. That very truth. Being fulfilled.

In our own. Personal. Human experience. When we are with him. And when we are like him. And then. Of course. He does say. I will.

It's desire. That's in the. ESV here. But literally. Father. I will. That they be with me. Where I am. And when. You find. The will of God.

Or the will of the son. As it is here. That again. Adds a dimension to. That. The word desire. Doesn't just quite capture. It's not just that. Jesus wished.

[24 : 57] Or that Jesus desired. That this would be the case. He is projecting. His own divine will. And he's projecting it. In such a way. As the eternal son.

That is saying. To the father. Father. My will is equal. To yours. In respect. To their glory. In respect. To them being with me. And you see.

What. Additional power. And meaning. And strength. That actually adds. To the petition. As well. It's not just. That it's the fact. Of the son. That's praying.

To the father. It's this son. And his. Equal will. With the father. In respect. To the glory. Of his people. I think you could say.

Also that. Whenever you find. This word. Will. You think about. The possibility. At least. Of it. Involving. And including. A bequeathing.

[25 : 52] Element. In other words. A will. A last will. And testament. If you like. As we call it. Ourselves. Where we will. Things. Or things are willed. To us. At the point. Of someone's death.

Or of our own death. So in a sense. That Jesus is really. Signing off his will. If you like. By saying. Father. I will. This is my will. For them. That they be with me.

Where I am. That so that they may see. My glory. Which you have given me. The devil will. Very often.

Suggest to you. Indeed. The flesh. The. Sinful motions. Of your own heart. Can do it. But the devil. Will take a hold. Of that. And take that handle. And.

Will try and. Utterly spoil. Your sense of peace. And comfort. And assurance. And will say to you. Who are you to think. That you've. Really made it. As a Christian. Or who are you to think.

[26 : 48] That you should actually have. A right to. What the Bible talks about. When it speaks about heaven. You're a sinner. You're still sinning. You're letting God down. Every day. You're not matching up.

You're not measuring up. You're failing. Your will is not. Often. In keeping. With the will of God. Well.

Show him this will. Will. Show him this will. Speak it out to him. When he. Tempts you to think. That you're not really.

A Christian. Or worthy of. Of heaven. Even though. You're in Christ. And show him. As he comes.

With the old sentence. That was against you. Your condemnation. Because of your sin. And your sinfulness. And when that is. Exposed. In your presence. By the devil.

[27 : 42] And says. Look. This is what you are. You're a lawbreaker. You're a sinner. You're a fallen creature. You don't deserve. Any of. What the Bible.

Talks about. When it talks about heaven. You don't deserve. To be with Jesus. And you'll say to him. Well. I know that. That's my old sentence. This is my new one.

The will of Christ. This is the will. That's been bequeathed to me. This is now what I possess. I haven't deserved it. I haven't earned it.

I haven't worked towards producing it. I haven't created it. But he has made it mine. I will that. They whom you have given me. Be with me where I am.

Devil has no argument with that. He can't find an argument against that. There is no way he can. In any way penetrate that. Because it's absolutely secure.

[28 : 41] Spiritually. Now and forever. What he said. You loved me. Before the foundation. Of the world. That's the way it finally is finishes.

That's again. That's something that adds strength. Of his petition. You loved me. Before the foundation of the world. And it's another wonderful. Point of theology.

This again is a huge theology. For practical ends. For our comfort. For our assurance. For our encouragement. For our stimulation. Of one another in love.

And. That request. Of the first part. Of the verse. That they be with me. Where I am. So as to see my glory. It is rooted in this. For you loved me.

Before the foundation of the world. It's another dimension to it. Because. Your hope of eternal life. Is actually rooted. In the love of the father for the son.

[29 : 42] It's rooted in the love. Of the father. For the son. That of course doesn't mean. That his love for you. Doesn't come into it. For his love for us. As his people doesn't commit.

It does. Of course it does. But you go to the back of that. You go even beyond that. And you're taken to. The love of God the father. For God the son. In whom God has placed you.

As we said at the beginning. And in whom Jesus lives. That's the root. That's the foundation. That's where you find the.

Ultimate security. Security. Of your hope. In the love of the father. For the son. In whom. You have been placed. For your eternal security. Well I hope that that's. In some way. Gone over very quickly. I know. But hope it's brought us into some.

[30 : 40] Appreciation. Of this verse. And indeed. Of this chapter. As we've gone through it. And we have gone through it. Fairly quickly. Apart from maybe a few passages. But I want to finish with.

A quote. Which I think really summarizes. What we're about. And looking at this chapter. And it's a quotation. From the Puritan. Thomas Manton. He's got a book on. The 17th chapter.

Of John. Incredibly detailed. As of course the Puritans. Usually are. But I took this quote out. Just to finish our study. And I think even the first.

The first sentence of it. Is just dynamic. It says. We go to heaven. To study divinity. In the Lamb's face.

We go to heaven. To study divinity. In the Lamb's face. And then he quotes. Revelation 22. Verse 4. They shall see his face. And his name shall be.

[31 : 37] In their foreheads. And he continues. There is an assembly. Sitting round about the throne. And the Lamb is in the midst of them. And there. By looking upon his face.

They learn more of God. We need no other books there. Than beholding his glory. We converse with Christ. That we may learn more of God.

Christ. In his glory. And eminency. Is Bible. Enough. That's how he finishes. Christ. In his glory.

And eminency. Is Bible. Enough. May God bless these. Thoughts on his word. To us. Let's pray. Our gracious father.

We give thanks tonight. For your love. Through your son. And your love. For your son. In which your people. Are embraced. And we give thanks tonight. For the assurances. That we have.

[32 : 34] From your word. Oh Lord. Of your unfailing love. Of your. Never ending love. And your unbegun love. For your people. For your love. Them with an eternal love.

And Lord. We ourselves. Are privileged. To be taken within. The scope. Of such love. Bless us. Then we pray. And once again. We pray your blessing. For your word.

And for it. To have that effect. Among ourselves. That we will love one another. Even as you have loved us. Hear us we pray. For Jesus sake. Amen.