

### **The Lord's Greatest Prayer, Part 3**

Scripture: John 17:6–10

Code: 43-95

For this morning, it's John 17, it's John 17 to which we return, having already examined verses 1 through 5. We find ourselves now at verse 6 of this really remarkable chapter.

The famous and familiar Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6 – it's called the Lord's Prayer – is a prayer that Jesus would never pray. It's a prayer that He could never pray, because it's a prayer that asks for forgiveness of transgressions and debts. That does not apply to Him. So what we call the Lord's Prayer is a prayer He could not pray. But John 17 is the true Lord's Prayer, because He prayed it; and this is a prayer that no human could ever pray. That becomes reinforced to us as we study each of these verses.

From beginning to end, this chapter is the Lord's Prayer; He prayed it. It is pure prayer, and it is for us, it is for us. It is the Lord Jesus praying for us, praying for His people. And because it is for us, it is an incomprehensible privilege to have this prayer written down in Scripture. The eleven disciples heard Him pray these words. But in the purposes of God, they were written down so all believers through all time could also hear. This is a firsthand opportunity to hear what's on the Lord's heart for His people. This prayer was prayed deep into Friday morning in the darkness as the disciples walked toward the garden of Gethsemane where our Lord would pray, and be tempted, and overcome that temptation, and then be arrested by a crowd led by Judas; and later on that Friday, He would be crucified.

These are the last hours before the cross, and this is when He prays that prayer. He has said everything He wanted to say to the disciples in the upper room earlier on Thursday night when they were celebrating Passover and when He was instituting the Lord's Table, and then He said even more things as they left the upper room and walked through Jerusalem and beyond Jerusalem, headed toward the garden of Gethsemane. He's now through speaking, and what He's been saying – recorded in 13, 14, 15, and 16 of John – is promises; promise, after promise, after promise, after promise: promises of peace, promises of joy promises of blessing, promises of persecution, promises of death, promise of all promises – the Holy Spirit would come, and the Holy Spirit would fulfill in them all the promises that our Lord gave.

The legacy of Jesus is given to His disciples and to us in chapters 13 through 16. And now in chapter 17, He prays that God the Father will fulfill all these promises, and fulfill them in an ultimate way by bringing His own to heaven. These are the Lord's final words to the eleven before His death, and what we have here is a preview of His new heavenly ministry which is about to begin.

It won't begin yet. It won't begin until He ascends into heaven, 40 days after the resurrection. But when He does ascend into heaven, He will begin His new ministry, and it is a ministry of intercession. He will not be the sacrificial Lamb, He will be the great High Priest. He will be the advocate between His people and God, and He will intercede for them.

He is soon to be arrested, soon to be executed, and He makes this long and loving petition for His people. He prayed out loud surely so the eleven could hear; and it's written down for us to hear as well. The moment is a critical and long-awaited moment in redemptive history, and even in the life of Christ.

In chapter 17, verse 1, we read this statement: "The hour has come. The hour has come." So many times He said, "The hour has not come." There were times in His life when threats were made against His life and people were ready to kill Him, but the hour had not come. The hour now has come.

What hour is this? Well, He says it is the hour that He would be glorified. "Glorify Your Son." What does that mean, the hour of His glorification? It means the hour for Him to fulfill everything He came to do, and that is to die and rise from the dead, and then ascend into heaven, and then take His place at the right hand of the Father in exaltation, begin the ministry of intercession. In other words, the Son is to be glorified by accomplishing His redemptive work and then moving into that work that follows, the work of intercession.

His work of intercession gets overlooked an awful lot, an awful lot. We're going to talk about it a little bit this morning. He prays, in the opening five verses, that He would be glorified; and then in verses 6 to 19, that the disciples would be glorified; and then in verses 20 to 26, that all believers through all time would be glorified. In other words, He's praying that He be glorified; and through His glory, we all be glorified; and through that, God be glorified.

He's praying then for glory for Himself, for us, and ultimately, for the Father. That's why in verse 1, He says, "Glorify Your Son through death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation, so that the Son may glorify You." At the end of all things is that God would be glorified; and God will be glorified when the Son is glorified, because the Son has accomplished the work that will bring the saints to glorification.

Now, I want to say something that you may at first not understand. We look at His cross work, the work on the cross, and we elevate that, and rightly we should. We look at the resurrection and we exalt Him for His resurrection, and rightly we should. But He has a more glorious work. It is the work of intercession that is the truest and fullest expression of the atonement.

It was as Aaron that He shed His blood; but it is as Melchizedek that He now lives in the veil to continue His work. Since Melchizedek is more glorious than Aaron, it is the work of intercession that is the more glorious work.

Yes, Christ died to pay our debt of sin; but even more importantly, He lives to bring us to glory. He lives to make intercession. Hebrews 7:25, "He ever lives to make intercession for His people."

The apostle Paul understood that intercession was more than atonement. Look at Romans, chapter 5. Romans, chapter 5 – familiar words – verse 8, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Then notice the next phrase: "Much more then." Wait a minute. How can anything be more than that? How can anything be much more than that? But he says, "Much more then, having now been

justified by His blood, we shall be being saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be being saved by His life.”

What is much more than His death? His life. His death provides the sacrifice for sin, but He ever lives to make intercession for us to bring us to glory. That’s the much more. That’s the much more. He goes on interceding for us.

From verse 6 on in this wonderful prayer, we have a glimpse of His intercession. We have His prayers to the Father that intercede for the saints through all redemptive history. Here’s an illustration of His prayer: He prays for the future glory of His people. He prays first for His own glory, verses 1 to 5, and then for the disciples to be brought to glory, and then for all believers to be brought to glory. So when the Lord said on the cross, “It is finished,” the work of sacrifice was finished, the work of atonement was finished, the penalty for sin was paid in full.

But His work on behalf of elect sinners wasn’t finished. It’s going on even now. It had only begun. It began when He went back to heaven and took His place at the right hand of God to intercede for us.

That’s the much more of Romans 5. He became our advocate. He became our intercessor. He became our great High Priest at the Father’s right hand in the heavenly Holy of Holies. He is always, all the time, at the supernatural work of intercession for the strength and security of His redeemed people still struggling on earth. And because He was in all points tempted like as we are, fully man, at the same time fully God, He knows our weaknesses, He knows our temptations, He knows the enemy’s strategies; and so He intercedes for us with full understanding as our caretaker, our protector, our defender, and the shepherd of our souls, and His intercession is to assure that we come to glory in the end.

It’s one thing to say, “Well, I believe if you’re saved you’re going to go to heaven.” That is true. But the reason if you’re saved, you’re going to go to heaven, is because Christ intercedes for you. There is a means by which God brings us to glory.

He’s different than any other priest. The priests of earth fail. Why do they fail? Because they die. But He is a great High Priest who lives forever to make intercession. He keeps on interceding. He keeps on, 1 John 1, cleansing us from all sin. He keeps on advocating our place before the throne of God.

First John 2, verse 1, puts it this way: “If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one.” He is there at the side of the Father advocating for us.

This is the present ministry of the glorified Son. It is accompanied by the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in us, because “we don’t know what to pray for as we ought – ” Romans 8:26 says “ – the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He always prays according to the will of God, and it’s always fulfilled.”

So we have an advocate in heaven at the right hand of the Father. We have an advocate living in us, the Holy Spirit. Both the Holy Spirit and the Son interceding on our behalf to bring us to glory. He is our blessed Lord, and He is doing His mediatorial ministry for us.

This then, this chapter is sacred ground. It is the Holy of Holies. Grace allows us into the Holy of Holies where we should have no right as sinners to go. This is pure prayer for His glory, the disciples glory, our glory, and ultimately the Father's glory. And, again, though the ministry of intercession didn't begin until the ascension forty days after the resurrection, this is a preview that intercessory ministry.

Now, for this morning, I just want us to look at verses 6-10; and even that is a challenge, because it's so rich. So let me read verses 6-10. This is where He begins to pray for the eleven disciples.

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world. There were Yours and You gave them to Me. They have kept Your word. Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. I ask on their behalf. I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Your are Mine; and I have been glorified in them." You almost want to stop and catch your breath having read that.

Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He came to seek and to save the lost. He came to give His life a ransom. The saving purposes of God have always been Jesus' primary concern, even when He was on earth; and the saving purposes of God are still the concern of Jesus now when He is in heaven; and the purposes of Christ now as the great High Priest are to intercede on behalf of all God's people to bring them to glory. And it takes His intercession to get us there.

We all know it's going to happen with the eleven. When Jesus is arrested, they're going to scatter in fear. Their faith is going to be shaken. Their hearts are going to be even more grieved than they have been. But though His suffering is infinitely greater than theirs, though His suffering infinitely outweighs theirs, His love for them causes Him to pray this prayer.

Even though they are weak, even though they stumble, even though their faith is shaken, even though they abandoned Him, He prays for their eternal glory. Why? Because it says in John 13:1, "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them, *eis telos*, He loved them to the limits of divine love." In other words, He loved them with an infinite, divine love, He loved them as much as God can love, and it is that love that brings them to glory.

The disciples are deeply disturbed. They have heard that He's leaving. They have heard that they're going to be persecuted, thrown out of the synagogues. They're going to be hated by the world. They're even going to be killed; and now He's leaving. They're facing persecution, hatred, death.

Temptation's going to come and it's going to come fast. It's going to come that very day in the garden. It's going to overwhelm them. It's going to cause them to run and Peter to make denials. Our Lord must overpower all of that and bring them to glory, and that's why He intercedes.

As we look at verses 6-10, He identifies the people He's praying for, the disciples. Down in verses 11-19, He has more to say in this prayer about them. But He first identifies them in verses 6-10, and He identifies them from the divine side and from the human side. Here we face the interplay of that great mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. It's presented here in its beauty and its simplicity if also in its profundity.

Verse 6 introduces it, so let's look at it. "I'm praying for this group of eleven men. These are the men I have manifested Your name to, whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." He's praying for those who are marked by belonging to God and being given to Him from God, and who are marked on the human side by believing, obedient faith. Those two always go together.

So let's look a little more closely at verse 6. "I have manifested Your name. I have manifested Your name." He said essentially the same thing in verse 4: "I have glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You've given Me to do."

What was His work? To manifest God, to reveal God. He is the fullness of the Godhead revealed bodily. He is the exact representation – "Hebrews 1:3 – of God." He's the incarnate God. "If you've seen Me –" He said – "you've seen the Father. I and the Father are one."

John begins by saying in John 1:14, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father." Verse 18, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He's explain Him."

He is God explained; He is God revealed. He has revealed God in Himself. "If you've seen Me, you've seen God." So He said, "I have manifested Your name," name meaning identity, nature, attributes, works. "I've put Your person on display, Your nature as divine. I've put Your attributes on display. I put Your works on display."

Christ's earthly mission was to reveal the Father and all that was true about the Father, about God, and to do that revelation to the disciples at that most intimate level. "I have revealed You to them –" He says – "Your person, Your nature, Your attributes, Your works, Your will, Your plan." That's all bound up in name, all that God is, all that God wills, all that God promises.

David says in Psalm 20, verse 7, "Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God." He means more than just a term "God." He means all that God is.

Jesus said, "That's what I've done; I've revealed You. I revealed You personally through My life, and I've revealed the truth about You through My instruction, My teaching, and My works."

In Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Amazing reality. So He says, "I've manifested Your name. I put You on display, Father. I've revealed You to these men."

"The truth about God through Christ was hidden from the wise and the religious, from the elite, the leaders of Israel; but it was revealed –" Jesus said – "to babes, to these humble men." As many as seven of them might have been fishermen. None of them was a part of the religious establishment. "So, Father, the hour has come, the revelation is complete. I have manifested Your name to them, the men You gave Me."

It's so wonderful to think about the verbs that are used in this text – and we'll look at them in just a few minutes. But He is saying, "They got it, they understood it." And then He describes them from the

divine side and from the human side, verse 6 still, “Whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours and You gave them to Me.” That remarkable statement is scattered throughout this entire prayer many times.

Back in verse 4, He talks about the work that He had been given to do. Back in verse 5, He talks about the glory that belonged to Him. But in verse 2, He says, “I have finished My work in regard to all whom You have given Me, and I will give them eternal life.” He constantly refers to the disciples and all believers as those whom the Father has given Him.

It appears again further down into this chapter – we’ll see it repeated frequently. Verse 24, for example, “I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am,” and He says it again in the same verse. All right, let’s talk about this for a minute.

Go back to verse 6 and look at this phrase: “They were Yours. They were Yours.” Who? “The men You gave Me. The men to whom I’ve manifested Your name; they were the ones You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours.”

Let me talk about that. “Before they were ever converted, before they were ever called, before they ever knew anything, before they ever believed, they were Yours – ” past tense “ – they were Yours.” It’s really a stunning statement. “They were in the world, and You gave them to Me out of the world, but they were Yours even when they were in the world.”

What is the world? The world is the evil anti-God, anti-Christ, satanically ruled system of evil and sin, composed of demons and all the unredeemed human beings who oppose God, who belong to Satan, and who live in the kingdom of darkness. Within the realm of darkness, there are some sinners who belong to God. “They were Yours – ” Were, not our, were “ – even when they were in the world, they were Yours, and You gave them to Me out of the world.”

Back in chapter 15 and verse 18, our Lord said earlier that night, “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you’re not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.”

“You were in the world. I chose you out of the world. God delivered you out of the world. When you were still in the world lost in sin, and darkness, and death, and ignorance, you were still God’s, you were God’s.” Powerful reality.

In the 13th chapter of Acts, there’s an illustration of this as Paul is ministering – Paul along with his companion Barnabas – and in the 13th chapter, they’re on their early missionary journey. It says in verse 48, “When the Gentiles heard this – ” they heard from Isaiah that the Messiah was a light to the nations, the Gentiles; bring salvation to the ends of the earth. “When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord – ” listen to this “ – and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.” Did you get that? “As many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.” They had been appointed to eternal life, that’s why they believed. They had been appointed to eternal life before they believed.

Look at the 18th chapter of the book of Acts, and again, ministry of Paul. The Lord comes to Paul in

Corinth, down in verse 9, “And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, ‘Do not be afraid. Go on speaking; do not be silent, no matter what the threats were.’” There were some serious threats earlier in the chapter.

“Go on; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.” There were people in the city of Corinth who belonged to Christ, who belonged to God. They were still in the world, in the darkness, in the ignorance of sin, but they belonged to God.

How did they become God’s? Ephesians 1:4 says, “He chose us before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.” Colossians 3:12 says, “We are those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved.”

Back to Ephesians 1:5-6, “He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.” Verse 11, “Predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His own will, to the praise of His own glory.”

So God, for His own glory, made an uninfluenced choice. He chose some people and they are His, even though they are not yet saved. They were predestined for justification, they were predestined for adoption, they were predestined for heaven because they were chosen by God.

In 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 13, Paul says, “We should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation.” Those who believe in the Son of God, those who accepted the ministry of Jesus and believe in Him, did so because they are God’s. They’ve always been God’s. They were God’s before there was a creation.

Revelation 13:8, Revelation 17:8, “Their names were written in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world.” Did you get that? “Their names were written in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world.” God chose them before He ever created them. God wrote their names down. And Revelation 20:15 says, “If anyone’s name was not found written in the Book of Life, he’s thrown in the lake of fire.”

“They were Yours; You gave them to Me, You gave them to Me.” This is not new to us in the gospel of John. Go back to chapter 6.

Much earlier in our Lord’s ministry, He made it clear to the disciples that anyone who came to salvation was a gift from the Father. Listen to John 6:37, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out, or reject.” Verse 39, “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose none, but raise it up on the last day.” Verse 40, “This is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.” In verse 44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise Him up on the last day.” And we’ve learned this through the years, the Father chooses, the Father writes names down before creation.

There are people throughout all of human history who are born sinners in the world, engulfed in sin, spiritually dead and blind and ignorant, but they are God’s; and in God’s time, He plucks them out of the world, then they become love gifts to His Son. The Father chooses, the Father gives; the Son

receives, the Son keeps, and the Son raises, and no one is lost.

It's as if the Father gives a gift and it's up to the Son to protect the gift and bring that one to glory, that's John 6. "All that the Father gives to Me come to Me. My job is to receive and not reject. My job is to guard and keep and raise them all in the end to glory." That then is the much more work of Christ, the work of getting all of us through all the vicissitudes and issues of life, and all the battles with sin and doubts and fears, to get us all to glory. That's His intercessory, mediatorial ministry. "You gave them to Me, and I'm going to get them to glory."

Look at Romans 8 for just a moment. Romans 8 essentially illuminates this truth, verse 28, "We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

Sure, everything is going to be for good in the sense that it's all going to go toward getting them to glory. Why? Because, "For whom He foreknew – " that is predetermined a relationship with " – He predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren. Whom He predestined, He called; whom He called, He justified; whom He justified, He glorified." God's plan then was to choose to predestine, and then to call, and then to justify, and then to make sure they all arrived in glory.

So the Father gave them as love gifts to the Son, the Son keeps them and raises them to glory. It's His ministry of intercession that gets us to glory. "If God is for us, if this is God's plan – " verse 31 " – what are we going to say? If God is for us, who's against us?" which is to say there's someone more powerful than God? Of course not. "He who didn't spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

You know what that verse is saying? He gave His Son in death to provide the sacrifice for sin; do you think He wouldn't give us His Son who ever lives to get us to glory? "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. Who's the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died. He died for us, but rather was raised and is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." That's the much more. That's the rather. That's the completed work.

So if God planned to get us to glory and Christ promised to get us to glory by interceding for us at the right hand of God, "Who is ever going to separate us from the love of Christ: tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, perils, sword?" Paul had, all in his life, experienced all of those things. No, we're going to be overwhelmingly conquering through the one who loved us.

Verse 39, "I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." God loves us enough to choose us, and Christ loves us enough to get us to glory to keep us.

The Father is gathering a bride for His Son – back to John 17 – the Father is gathering a bride for His Son, purchased at the infinite price of His own life. The Father gives us to the Son as His bride; that's why the New Jerusalem in Revelation, chapter 21, is a bridal city; that's why Revelation talks about the marriage supper. All the redeemed of all the ages become the bride of Christ. The Father has given the redeemed to the Son as His eternal bride so that they can honor Him, love Him, serve



Him, worship Him, adore Him, and reflect His glory forever. And in the next few hours after our Lord prays this prayer, the Son would demonstrate His willingness to pay the price to receive the Father's gift.

The Father's gift of redeemed souls is so precious, He is willing to die under divine judgment; not just human pain, but under divine judgment for all the sins of all the elect. So that's the first side: "I'm praying for those who are Mine because You gave them to Me." There is this great divine reality in salvation.

But there's a human aspect too. Look back at verse 6, end of the verse, "They have kept Your word, they have kept Your word." That's the side that marks the believer: obedience to the Word of God; obedience to the gospel, the gospel. His command: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved." "This is my beloved Son, whom I'm well pleased; listen to Him." A person who is saved is a person who is obeying the gospel.

The gospel is a command, not a suggestion, it's a command. We talk about it being a gift. It's a gift in the sense that you don't have to pay a price for it. But it is a command, "Believe or else, believe or perish, believe or die."

Obedience to the command of the gospel is essential, and our Lord is saying they obeyed. They heard the gospel and they obeyed. That's essentially the same as faith. Obedience and faith are one in the same, and that's demonstrated in John 3:36. Jesus says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son will not see life."

So believing and obeying are the same thing. Believing is simply obeying the command to believe. Obedience and believing is one in the same. So He says about the disciples, "Not only did You choose them, not only were they Yours, not only did You give them to Me, but they have kept Your word. They believed the gospel and they believed the truth of everything else I said to them." That's back to John 6.

Jesus said, "Are you going to go away?" and Peter said, "Where are we going to go? You're the one who has the words of eternal life, and we believe."

Obedient faith is the mark of love. What have we read in John 14 and 15, "If you love Me, you do – " what? " – obey Me. Whoever obeys Me, loves Me." "They keep Your word. They believe; they obey." These are the ones who responded with obedient faith when they were given the truth of the gospel.

And it's not just that they were chosen by God, that they belonged to Him and were handed to Christ, there had to be this other aspect of it. The human response had to be there. They believed, they believed. And that becomes the theme of verses 7 and 8, just quickly: "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me."

That is just a great statement. They believed. This isn't false faith like John 2. Jesus didn't commit Himself to people who had false faith; or John 6, "Many of His disciples walked no more with Him." They really believed, and you can see how it breaks down in the verbs, "They have come to know."

Verse 8, “They received, they truly understood, and they believed.”

That essentially is what ministry is about. That is our Lord giving us a model of ministry. He came so that they would know the truth, so that they would receive the truth, so that they would understand the truth and believe the truth. This is a model of how ministry should be. They believed.

They believed that Jesus worked by the power of God. They believed that Jesus had come from God. They said, “We know You’re the Holy One of God.”

They believed that everything He did was according to the will of God, everything He said was the Word of God. They believed that His miracles were done by the power of God, and they were full of the compassion of God. They believed that everything He ever taught had divine authority because it was from God. They believed that Jesus was holy, that every day He ministered to sinners and yet never sinned. They believed that He had regular constant communion with God the Father, and that everything He did expressed the will of the Father. They believed that He was the divine Son of the Father, and they heard the Father give that testimony at the transfiguration and at the baptism.

They knew that everything He possessed was from God. His nature was from God, His words were from God, His works were from God. They received, therefore, all His words as true; and they understood, therefore, His divine origin that He came from the Father; and they believed in His divine mission up to now. They believed that He had been sent by the Father, that He came from heaven, that He is the eternal Son of God. They believed that.

Repeatedly in this prayer, Jesus says, “They know that You sent Me. They know that You sent Me.” They believe that He is the Son of God: co-equal with God, co-existent with God, co-eternal with God, the Creator, the source of life, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. They believed that. What they were having trouble believing was the suffering that hadn’t yet happened.

By the way, nearly 30 times in the gospel of John, Jesus says He was sent from the Father; that is to say He is of divine and eternal origin. They were just having trouble believing the suffering, but they would be okay by Sunday night; this is Friday morning. On Sunday night, they would have a lesson on the Old Testament where our Lord would go to the Old Testament and speak to them of all the things that the Messiah had to suffer, and rise again, and then be glorified. But they had a true faith, all the way up to and including everything that had been taught them by Christ. That’s the evidence of true regeneration: they knew, they received, they understood, and they believed. Genuine believers.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if you knew that the Lord was before the Father now saying about you, “By the way, that’s a true believer. I want to give You, Father, My testimony that that person knows, receives, understands, believes – and not just the part up to the cross, but the part including the cross: the resurrection, the ascension, the exaltation.” Well, that’s exactly what He’s doing for us.

And then in verses 9 and 10, He goes back to the divine side: “I’m praying for those, yes, who believe. They’ve come to know everything that You’ve given Me is from You. They know I came from You, it’s all from You. But also I’m asking on their behalf. I do not ask on behalf of the world. I don’t pray for the world.” Jesus says, “I do not pray for the world. I don’t pray for the world. I pray for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours – ” there it is again “ – and all things that are Mine are

Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.”

The Son of God was certain that the Father would hear His prayer, one, because they were true believers; two, because they belonged to God to start with. “They’re Yours. I ask on their behalf, not on behalf of the world. I ask on their behalf; they are Yours, they’re Yours, and You gave them to Me.”

And then in verse 10 He says this, “All things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine.” Now, that is a staggering statement. That is a staggering statement. I can understand, “They’re Yours; You gave them to Me.” But, “All things that are Mine are Yours, and all things that are Yours are Mine”? That is a very, very significant statement.

What does our Lord mean by that? Well, Martin Luther said that kind of a statement is so serious that it needs consideration.

Luther wrote this: “Everyone may say this: ‘All I have is God’s.’ You can say that. That is much different than saying, ‘All that’s God’s is mine.’” Luther said, “This is much greater to turn it around and say, ‘All that is Thine is mine.’ There is no creature able to say that before God: ‘All that is Yours is mine.’ That leaves nothing out. You’re saying you’re God.” That’s exactly what He was saying, exactly.

“Father, hear this prayer because they are true believers. Hear this prayer because they are Yours. Hear this prayer because they’re Mine, and I have been glorified in them.” What a transformation of sinners, from Satan’s kingdom of darkness: “I have been glorified in them.”

He’s not talking about heaven, He’s saying, “Already My glory is in them. Already My glory is shining through them already. They’re Mine; they’re Yours. They have obeyed. My glory is shining through them by their obedience, by their love. They are Mine.”

Going back to John 10:28, “I give eternal life to them, they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.” “They’re Yours, they’re Mine; they’re Mine, they’re Yours; and they give evidence of it because of their obedience.”

As our Lord faces the cross – we’ll see this next time in verses 11 and 12 – He says, “I’ve been caring for them. I’m going to have to go to the cross and die. Father, hold onto them while I’m doing that. They’re Yours and they’re Mine.” What an exalted privilege for every believer, to understand that we belong to Him and He belongs to us.

I can say all that is mine is God’s, but I can’t say all that is God’s is mine; I’m not equal to God. But I can say I am God’s, I have always been God’s since before the foundation of the world. He picked me up out of the world, He saved me, He gave me life, He put His glory in me, enabled me to believe the truth; and as Peter says in 1 Peter 4, “I serve Him. I serve Him for His glory.”

In 1 Peter 4, just one verse there, “Whoever speaks, do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God. Whoever serves –” talking about believers “– do so as one serving by the strength with God’s supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory

and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” So we live here to the glory of the Lord; and the Lord, always interceding, one day brings us to full glory in eternity.

You have had a glimpse of how He prayed for His disciples. That prayer is extended from them to all who believe in Him, and we’ll see that as we move down in the chapter.

Father, we’re grateful this morning that we have been able to step into this sacred place and hear the prayer of our Lord, the cry of His heart for His beloved. Thank You for the work of the cross, and we thank You that He gave His life for us there. Much more, we thank You that He ever lives to make intercession for us to bring us to glory. We have no words to express our gratitude for the fact that we are Yours and we have been Yours since before there was creation. We’re thankful that You opened our minds and hearts to believe, to understand, to receive the truth, and to become capable of manifesting Your glory.

What a high calling; what a glorious life. May we cherish it, and may we exploit it to its fullest extent for Your honor. May God be glorified in us. May Christ be glorified in us, may the Spirit of God be glorified in and through us as we manifest the work of salvation, and may our lives be shining lights that can draw others from the darkness. As You gather Your people, those that are already Yours out of the world, Lord, use us as the human instruments to bring the truth of the gospel. We thank You for that privilege, Christ’s name. Amen.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2018 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).