

Understanding The Heart of God

Jesus in John 17

“Now this is
eternal life: that
they know you,
the only true God,
and Jesus Christ,
whom you have
sent” (John 17:3)

Jesus concludes his teaching time (John 13-16) with the disciples and now moves to a time of prayer

- ✓ During his time in the upper room with his disciples - Jesus:
 - Washed the disciples' feet – showing he deeply loved them (John 13:1-12)
 - Ate a final meal with them where he tells them he would be betrayed by one of them (John 13:18-30) and that he was about to die (John 13:31-38)
 - Provided comfort that he would not leave them alone and would send the Holy Spirit to indwell them and teach them everything they needed to know. (John 14)
 - Instructs them to remain in his love (abide in him) and warns them that the world will hate them just as they hated him, but to remain strong. (John 15)
 - Instructs them to not lose hope, because even in anticipation of his death on the cross he boldly declares, "**I have overcome the world!**" (John 16)

Jesus prays for himself

“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began”
(John 17:3-5)



“After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.” (John 17:1-2)

- ✓ Jesus begins his prayer by looking upwards to where God dwells

*“I lift up my eyes to you, to you who sit **enthroned in heaven**” (Psalm 123:1)*

*“Taking the five loaves and the two fish and **looking up to heaven, he gave thanks** and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all” (Mark 6:41)*

- ✓ By addressing God as his Father, he is acknowledging his submission and dependence on Him. This doesn't make Jesus any less equal with God (Philippians 2:5-11), it is just how he chooses to address him in this moment.

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(John 17:1-2)

- ✓ **There is an important Theological truth that shouldn't be missed here:**
 - Jesus is not the Father, but he is the Father’s Son making him a distinct person within the Godhead – **Jesus was not praying to himself.**
 - Jesus is not a mere “**manifestation**” of the Father as some might teach, but instead should be recognized as separate and yet equal with the Father
- ✓ Earlier in the ministry of Jesus he would declare; “*Then they asked him, “Where is your father?” You do not know me or my Father,” Jesus replied. “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.”* He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. **Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.**”(John 8:19-20).
- ✓ But now **the hour** (his time) **has come** because God ordained it so

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- ✓ What is meant by the phrase; “**the hour has come**”?

“Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely, he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:1-6)

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- ✓ What is meant by the phrase; “**the hour has come**”?

“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people, he was punished. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:7-12)

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- ✓ What is meant by the phrase; “**the hour has come**”?

“Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (II Corinthians 5:16-21)**

“After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.” (John 17:1-2)

- ✓ It is not until after the resurrection that the disciples fully understood why Christ’s death on the cross was necessary. They will write about its significance in their epistles and other writings. (II Corinthians 5:18-21)
- ✓ God’s plan of redemption (the death and resurrection of Christ) was formed in eternity past (formally written in the Old Testament but ultimately known by God even before Adam and Eve sinned) in which God ordained/purposed to save a remnant of people who believed.

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.” Ephesians 1:4-7)

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- ✓ When Jesus asks the Father to “glorify your Son” he was asking that the eternal plan of redemption (salvation) be consummated exactly as it had been sovereignly ordained.
- ✓ This became the only request that Jesus made for himself in his entire prayer
- ✓ The glory that Jesus was asking of the Father would come through his death, resurrection, ascension and coronation (all decided and planned in eternity past) and ultimately proves that Jesus shares the same glory of the Father.

“For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this. How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my glory to another” (Isiah 48:11)

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- ✓ While Satan has “temporary rule” over the unbeliever the facts are that Jesus has true authority over the entirety of mankind.

“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (II Corinthians 4:3-4)

“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, “Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.” The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, “I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain” (Psalm 2:1-6)

“After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.” (John 17:1-2)

- ✓ The Son has the authority to judge, give his life (death), take up his life (resurrection), and grant eternal life to those who believe in Him.

“For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.” (John 5:27)

“The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father” John 10:17-18)

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world” (John 17:24)

“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began” (John 17:3-5)

- ✓ Eternal life as defined by Jesus, involves the experience of knowing the only true God through his Son.

“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Matthew 11:27)

- ✓ It's a personal intimate relationship that is continuous (eternal) and dynamic

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)

“We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did” (1 John 2:3-6)

“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. **I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.** And now, Father, **glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began**” (John 17:3-5)

- ✓ This prayer by Jesus considers that his death on the cross (though future) was a certainty and would be perfectly accomplished because nothing could prevent the Father’s purposes from being realized.
- ✓ It is also important to understand that only Jesus (who lived a sinless life) could accomplish this work (presenting himself as a sacrifice for sin) that the Father requested him to do.

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (II Corinthians 5:21)

- ✓ Were it not for the cross, there would be no salvation from sin (for anyone), no hope, and no eternal destiny for anyone other than total separation from God.

Jesus prays for his disciples

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”
(John 17:17-18)



“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.” (John 17:6-8)

- ✓ This portion of Jesus' prayer is primarily focused on the 11 remaining disciples
 - They are the ones to whom Jesus revealed (manifested/made known) the Father and his purposes to
 - The supreme manifestation of the name of God was the Lord Jesus Christ

“Then Jesus cried out, “Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness” (John 12:44-46)

- ✓ It will be their belief, faith and trust that will sustain them, for it won't be until after the resurrection of Jesus that they will fully grasp why he had to die.

“I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but **for those you have given me,** for they are yours. **All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.**” (John 17:9-10)

- ✓ Although this prayer is specific to the 11 disciples and not to the “world” at large it doesn’t mean that God doesn’t care about the world.

“For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!” (Ezekiel 18:32)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30)

- ✓ Once again, Jesus affirms his claim to deity by declaring full and complete equality with the Father – **“All I have is yours, and all you have is mine”**
- ✓ After Jesus ascends to the right hand of the Father – his glory would continue to be displayed on earth through his followers even in his absence.

“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and **I am coming to you**. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.” (John 17:11-12)

- ✓ Jesus will complete his work of redemption on the cross
- ✓ Jesus will triumph over sin, death and all evil forces by raising from the dead
- ✓ Jesus will ascend to heaven (“***I will remain in the world no longer***”) to be at the right hand of the Father (***“I am coming to you”***) where he will continually intercede for us

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? **He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all**—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. **Christ Jesus who died**—more than that, who **was raised to life**—is at the **right hand of God** and **is also interceding for us**” (Romans 8:31-34)

“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.” (John 17:11-12)

- ✓ Jesus knew that the world (those who reject Jesus and the entirety of evil) would be hostile toward the disciples – he already warned them as such. John 16:1-11)
- ✓ Because they were in Satan’s crosshairs the disciples would need the Father’s protection and Jesus prays for them.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time” (I Peter 1:3-5)

- ✓ The only exception was Judas (who was never one of Jesus’ sheep and a “dead branch”) who rejected Christ and aligned himself with Satan – he chose his destiny.

“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:13-16)

- ✓ These words spoken by Jesus were intended to bring great comfort to the disciples but the reality of the “full measure of my joy” would not be fully realized until after his resurrection.
- ✓ **What “joy” is Jesus speaking of** - He will conquer the evil one and bring eternal life to them (and all who believe).

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:37-39)

“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:13-16)

- ✓ The disciples had the unique pleasure of being taught by Jesus and receiving his word while the world (those who hated Jesus) rejected his words.

“I have testimony weightier than that of John. **For the works that the Father has given me to finish**—the very works that I am doing—**testify that the Father has sent me**. And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, **nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent**. You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. **These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life**” (John 5:36-40)

- ✓ The disciples were now “aliens and strangers” on this earth because they are no longer of this world.

“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Philippians 3:20-21)

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.” (John 17:17-19)

- ✓ In addition to the request for “spiritual protection”, Jesus also asks the Father to sanctify and purify them as they prepare to preach the truth to the world.
- ✓ What does “sanctify” mean?
 - Its literal meaning is to be “set apart” for God for the purposes of honoring God by doing the Father’s will
 - To be internally conformed even more to the Son which on occasion might require a spiritual cleansing of the heart

“The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.” (Psalm 19:7-9)

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.” (John 17:17-19)

- ✓ This statement serves as a preview of the Great Commission that Jesus will give to these same 11 disciples:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20)

“Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:6-8)

- ✓ Having been set apart from the world and transformed by God’s grace, the disciples would now be ambassadors of that same grace to the very world that hated them.

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:1-5)

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)

Jesus prays for all believers

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.” (John 17:20)



FATHER,
THE HOUR HAS COME.

GLORIFY YOUR SON,
THAT YOUR SON
MAY GLORIFY YOU.

JOHN 17:1 NIV

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

(John 17:20-23)

- ✓ Jesus prayed for himself (John 17:1-5)
- ✓ Jesus prayed for the eleven disciples (John 17:6-19)
- ✓ Jesus already stated he was not praying/interceding on behalf of the unbelieving world (John 17:9)
- ✓ This group he now prays for is a distinct group from the ones mentioned above. These are the people (Church age saints) who would hear the message of the apostles (both spoken and written) and believe in Him.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.** May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, **that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity.** Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

(John 17:20-23)

- ✓ What were they to be “one” (united) in:
 - Love for God and one another
 - Obedience to God and his word
 - Commitment to the Fathers will
- ✓ The unity that Christ desires for his church is the same kind of unity the Son has with the Father.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.** May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, **that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity.** Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

(John 17:20-23)

✓ All true Christians are united in these 7 things

- One Body
- One Spirit
- One hope
- One Lord
- One faith
- One baptism
- One True God

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:3-6)

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. **Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”**

(John 17:20-23)

- ✓ The goal of this unity is:
 - To give evidence to the world that Jesus is God’s Son and that evidence is intended to bring others to a point of salvation (belief in Him)
 - That the world will sense that God’s love for believers is deep, intimate, and lasting just as it is for His Son
- ✓ This should be the goal of everyone who is a part of the body of Christ (The Church)

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. **“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known** in order **that the love you have for me may be in them** and **that I myself may be in them”** (John 17:24-26)

- ✓ Jesus is speaking of a future reality

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3)

- ✓ Until that future reality comes true, the eleven disciples as well as all believers, are able to enjoy the personal presence of Jesus in their lives.