



September 24, 2023

“The High Priestly Prayer”

SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.

News:

★ **Wednesday Evenings at Alêtheia 6:30-8:00** ★

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JOHN 17:1-5 ~

The _____ between God and us is always due to our lack of receptivity never due to God’s lack of generosity.

God is not interested in showing you anything _____ when you haven’t _____ what He’s already shown you.

Pray at all times, and whenever you are able, engage your entire _____ praying as though you are in an _____ with a Holy and perfect God, because you are (I Thessalonians 5:17, Ephesians 6:18, etc.).

Bow your head?

Close your eyes?

Fold your hands?

Close with “In Jesus’ name, I pray”?

Add the amen?

[אָמֵן (ä-mān) :הֵלְלוּ-יְהוָה אָמֵן (ä-mēn hä-lě-lü yä)].

Jesus prayed for His _____, but He knew that the path to _____ was His sacrificial death (I John 2:2, Philippians 2:8).

That is the “hour.” Jesus said in Luke 22:15, “I have eagerly desired to eat this _____ with you before I suffer.”

There is a mutual, reciprocal, and ever escalating, glorifying of each other that is only possible for _____.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

The Father glorified Jesus by giving Him complete _____ over all mankind.

The Father knows the _____ of every person. For whatever reason, some people are able to be saved and some are not.

Those whom the Father has identified as being savable have been given to Jesus as He is the only _____. They will believe in His completed work on their behalf, and they will be saved through Him receiving _____ from Him.

Eternal life has very little to do with not _____. Specifically, eternal life means _____ the Father and _____ the Son.

Heaven is where Agapê flows unimpeded. If you are a person who serves yourself at the expense of others, you are going to _____ Heaven. That's the "whatever reason."

JOHN 17:6-8 ~

The Father has always known with precision the individuals who make up the total population of Heaven to come because He _____ in that place with all His saved children as we speak.

Revelation comes through the revelation of the _____ and the revelation of the _____ encompassing the Cross. _____ is essential (Romans 10:12-15).

Faith is what is required because faith is believing and believing is trusting - fully trusting in the _____ of God for you as revealed to you by God through His _____.

JOHN 17:9-19 ~

Why doesn't God just take _____ out of this fallen and depraved world, and take us home to be with Him at the very moment of our _____?

You are here because at the moment of your salvation you were sent to the world as a _____ of the Good News.

JOHN 17:20&21 ~

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____



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the gospel of
JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ ΠΡΟΕΤΗ
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ΤΟ Ν ΘΗ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟ ΥΕ ΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΤΕ



John 17:1–5, 1 Jesus spoke these things; and raising His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, so that the Son may glorify You, 2 just as You gave Him authority over all mankind, so that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I glorified You on the earth by accomplishing the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now You, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world existed.

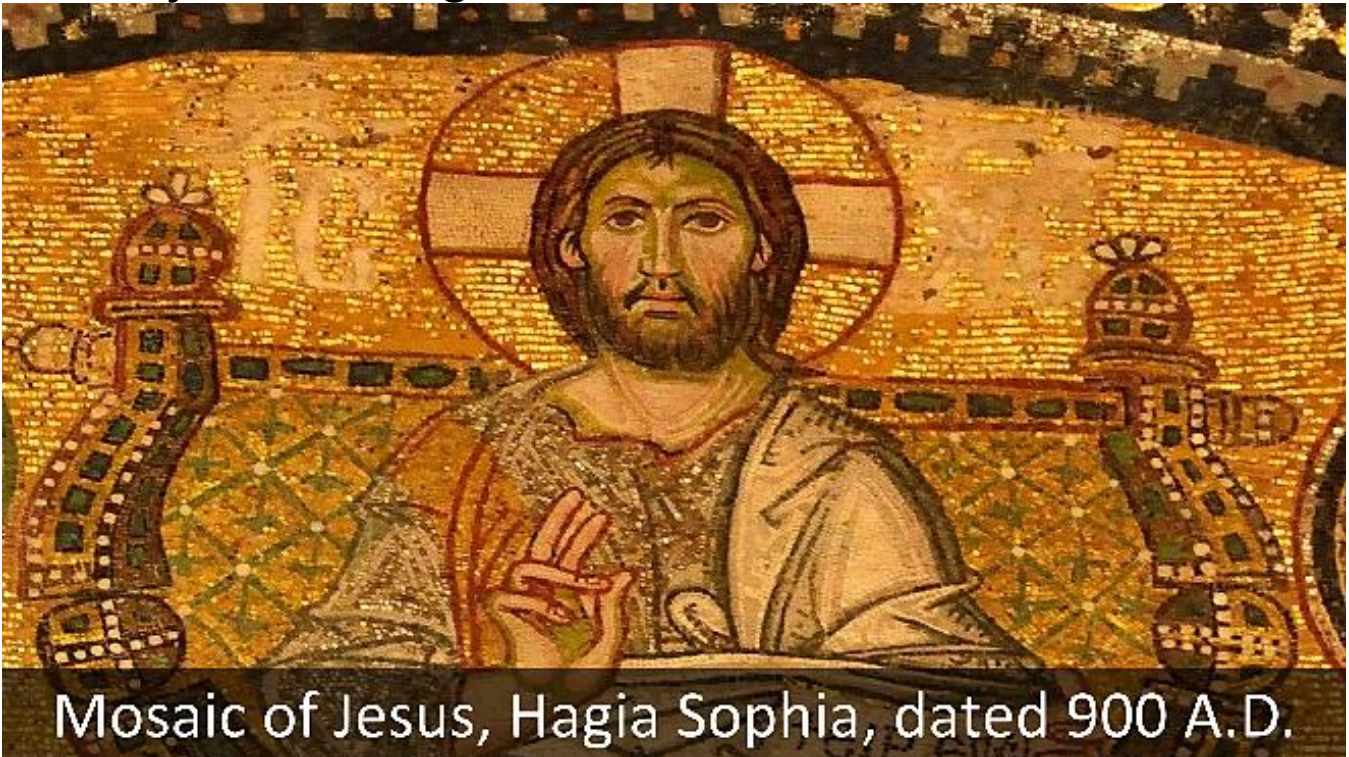
This chapter is widely known as the “High Priestly Prayer.” Jesus had said all that He could. He went well

beyond the Apostles ability to grasp what He was telling them, which is always the case. The disconnect between God and us is always due to our lack of receptivity never due to God's lack of generosity.

I said last week that God is not interested in showing you anything new, when you haven't implemented, incorporated, or obeyed what He's already shown you. That's not because God is miserly, or brooding, or vindictive, or punishing; He simply knows that there is absolutely no purpose in giving you more when you've yet to handle less. To use an analogy from a couple of weeks ago, if a student cannot grasp algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, there is definitely no point in showing them calculus.



It's truly like the worn-out proverb, "Never try to teach a pig to sing. It will only annoy the pig and frustrate you." The saying comes from Robert Heinlein and in context it is, "I have never swindled a man. At most I kept quiet and let him swindle himself. This does no harm, as a fool cannot be protected from his folly. If you attempt to do so, you will not only arouse his animosity but also you will be attempting to deprive him of whatever benefit he is capable of deriving from experience. Never attempt to teach a pig to sing; it wastes your time and annoys the pig." We can choose to be more receptive to new teaching by implementing what we've already been taught. Or we can be like Heinlein's fool.



Mosaic of Jesus, Hagia Sophia, dated 900 A.D.
We often get glimpses of Jesus praying in the Bible. Here He was probably seated and possibly standing, or

even walking. He had His eyes wide open, and His head raised with His face towards the ceiling, or the sky, and He prayed out loud. In other places we see Him praying while kneeling, while walking, while sitting, while standing, and while completely prostrate.



We typically bow our head down, close our eyes, and fold our hands together near our face, chest, or lap. If you're Catholic, you generally kneel and if your Protestant, you generally sit. We normally pray silently unless we're praying for a group.

Some Biblical accounts depict a person praying with their head bowed, but generally it is due to shame and either an angel or God encourages them to lift their eyes up. There is no good indication that anyone in the

Bible ever closed their eyes while praying. Nearly all Biblical accounts of prayer that mention hands state that they are raised up towards Heaven. All prayers were normally spoken out loud.

What do we know from all of this? It would seem that there isn't any correct way to pray physically speaking. The prayer positions in the Bible seem to reflect the demeanor of the one doing the praying at the time. Each one of them matched their physical posture to their spiritual posture. Their physical state was in conformity to their prayer state. The takeaway here is that prayer is to be an all-encompassing, whole-person, concentrated endeavor where the praying person is to be as authentically present in the process as possible. It should involve your whole person.

As a Christian, when you pray, you are spiritually standing before Almighty God in His Heavenly throne room speaking with Him. Our demeanor should reflect that fact to the greatest extent reasonable. What I mean by reasonable is if you are driving down the road and cannot devote yourself fully to prayer, still pray - it's okay - it's actually good - please pray, but don't take your hand off the wheel, or your eyes off the road.

I want to encourage you to pray when you're doing other things as a supplement, not a substitute, for fully devoted prayer. Don't allow distracted prayer to be your prayer life - don't allow that practice to cheapen the experience of prayer. Don't take talking to God for granted. Pray at all times... yes! As the Bible so tersely commands in I Thessalonians 5:17, "Constantly pray." And in Ephesians 6:18, "pray at all times in the Spirit."

So, of course, pray at all times as best you can and whenever you are able, pray like you are in an intimate conversation with a Holy and perfect God, because you are. Whenever you can and to the best of your ability let your physical posture match your spiritual posture. Engage your entire person in prayer as much as you are able, but constantly pray.

I want to move on, but I wonder... are you hung up on thinking about the "bow the head, close your eyes, fold your hands" thing that we do? Are you perhaps also wondering about closing your prayers by saying the formulaic words "In Jesus' name, I pray"? Further, are you then thinking about the "amen" tacked onto the end as well?

It's all fine, of course. The bowing of our head came about as a sign of reverence, the eyes closed bit

developed as a way to avoid distraction while praying, and the folded “prayer hands” is an ancient gesture of submission. It was much the same as our placing our hands out in front of us with our wrists together... “I surrender - take me where you want me to go.”



**BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL FROM
EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING: AND LET ALL THE PEOPLE
SAY, AMEN. PRAISE YE THE LORD.**

PSALM 106:48 KJV

The formula “In Jesus’ name, I pray” doesn’t get your prayers better heard in heaven or answered on earth. It’s a reminder that prayer is to conform our will to His Will. Amen is simply derived from the Hebrew אָמֵן (ä-mān), meaning “truly,” with the idea of agreeing, or validating, or approving. The psalms often end with אָמֵן הַלְלוּ יְיָ (ä-mēn hä-lě-lü yä). Hal-lel means praise and Yah is short for Yahweh. All together it is Amen, Hallelujah, “truly we praise our God!” Now you know the rest of the story.



Jesus prayed “Father.” I love that. Jesus started the Lord’s Prayer found in Luke chapter 11 that same way. Simply “Father.” It is intimate - it is personal - it is relational. Jesus prayed that way and taught us to pray that way as well.

In the more detailed version of the Lord’s Prayer found in Matthew chapter 6, Jesus expanded it to “Our Father.” The principle is that while He is intimately your personal Father, you have siblings - you are part of a family.



In one sense Jesus Himself is our brother. That is quite profound. Pray to your personal Father in Heaven and, at the same time, recognize that by praying that way you are recognizing yourself as His child and therefore a member of His family together with all His other children, with all the other Christians throughout time. You have a family, and your family has you. The question is will you act like you are a member of His family with siblings, or not?

What Jesus prayed for here was ultimately His reunification in Heaven with the Father...



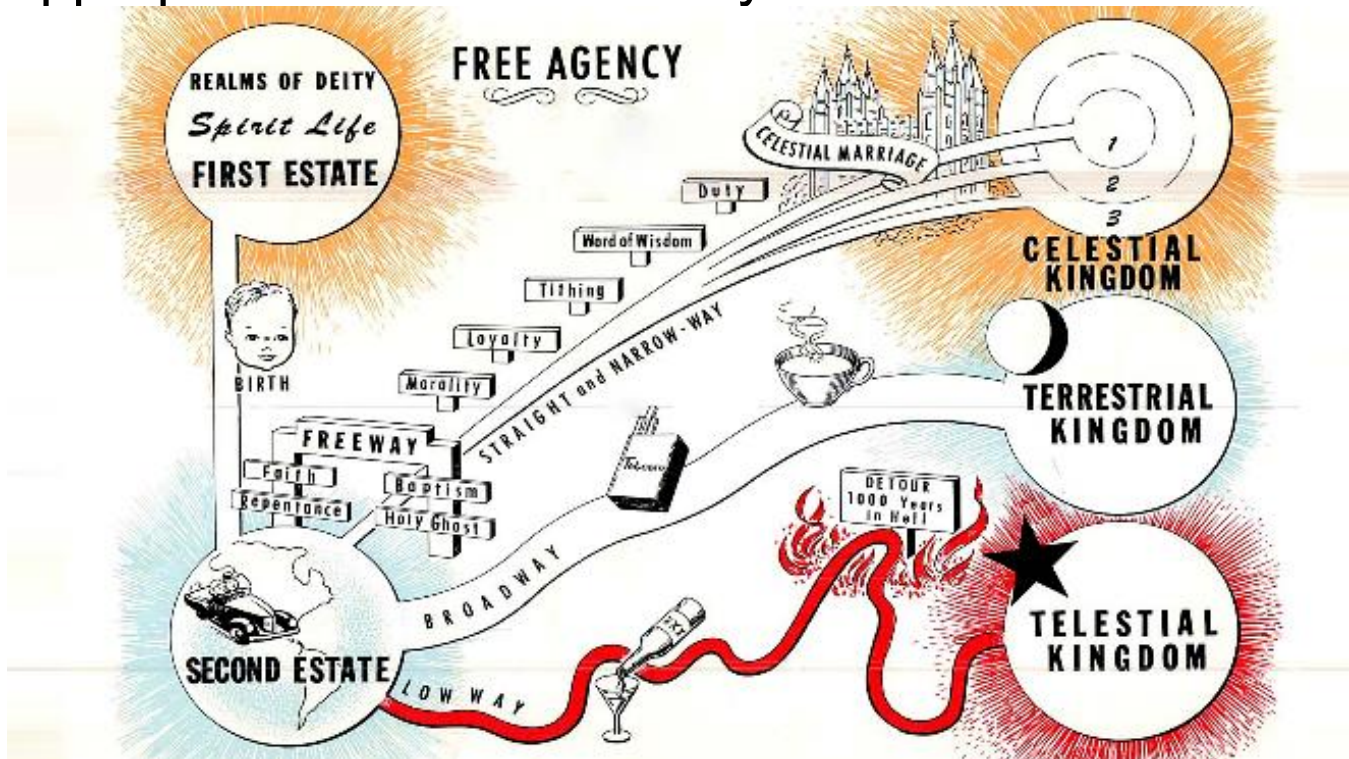
... but that meant that what He was praying for penultimately was His Own horrific betrayal, torture, and execution. His sacrificial death, after taking ownership possession of the sins of the world (I John 2:2), was the gateway to Their reunification.

The glorification of Jesus was His Ascension back into Heaven seated at the right hand of God. To get there He glorified the Father by being perfectly obedient, even obedient unto gruesome death on a cross (Philippians 2:8).

That is the “hour” that Jesus so often spoke of - the “hour” of His “labor” using His recent metaphor of childbirth. When we have Communion, I often mention that Jesus interrupted the normal flow of the Passover Meal by inserting a new and different sacramental element by thanking the Father for the Bread again. The prayer and subsequent explanation made it clear that Jesus was correlating the physical bread with Himself as the Bread of Life Who came down from Heaven. What followed acknowledged the New Covenant that was about to be instituted through His sacrificial death and triumphant Resurrection. It is what we call Holy Communion and Jesus prefaced it by saying, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15). He went on to say that He would not eat it again until He ate it with all of His disciples in Heaven at the “Great Wedding Feast of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9).

The point is that as Jesus spoke about an expectant mother facing her “hour” of suffering with joy at the prospect of what it would produce, so He likewise viewed what was to come in light of the joy of everlasting Salvation for His friends - for those who believe in Him.

I often mention that there are millions, perhaps billions of people who view Jesus as a good dude. Once again, we have the words of Jesus recorded here where He appropriates absolute divinity for Himself.



In the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, and in the early Jewish and Christian traditions, we never get any indication whatsoever that any human being ever existed in any form or manner before their physical conception in the womb. Contrary to the ridiculous Mormon belief, no one existed before their life here. Beyond that there is never any suggestion at all that any person will ever be glorified together with God in the way Jesus prayed.

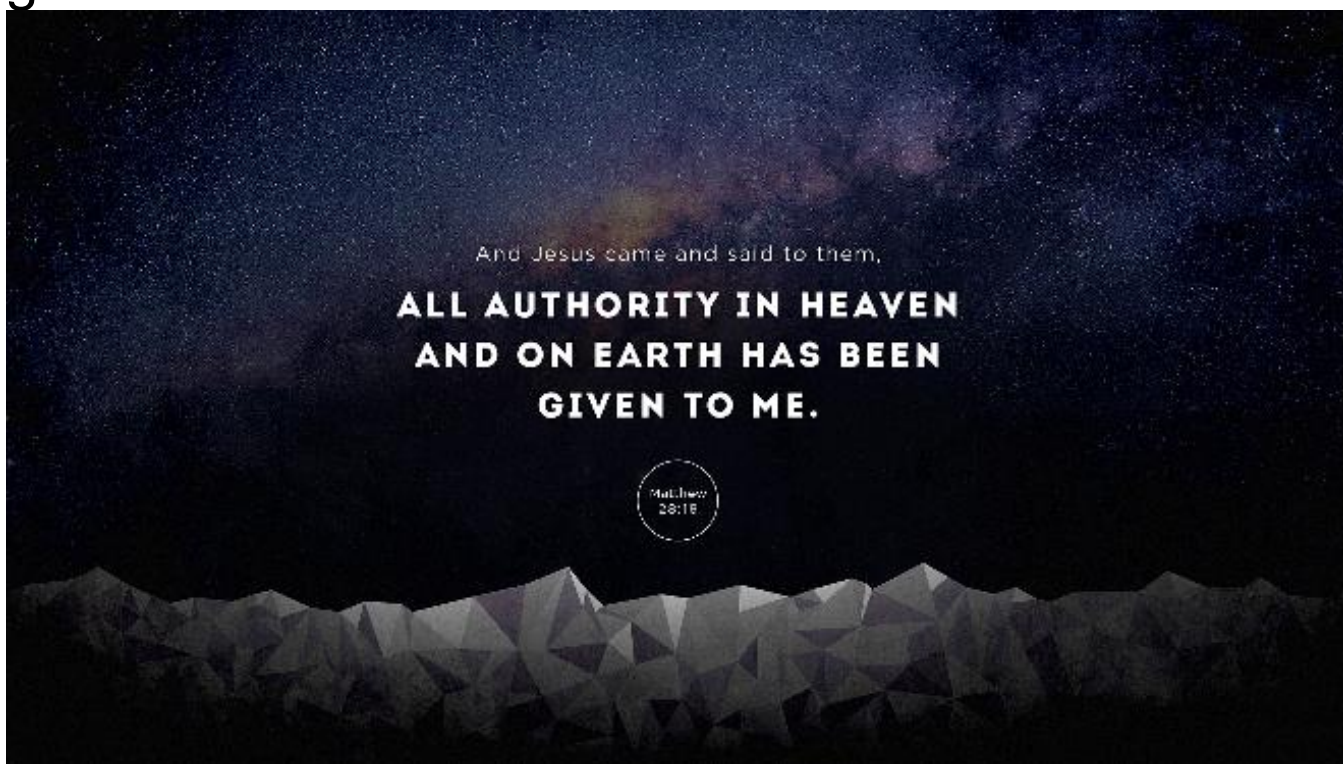


He was praying that as He was about to glorify the Father through His perfect obedience in accepting the sins of the world upon Himself and paying the penalty for them all by His physical death, that the Father would likewise glorify Him by returning Him to the glorified estate that He possessed before He took on human flesh and dwelt among us.

Please note that Jesus actually reversed the order by saying "Glorify Your Son, so that the Son may glorify You." From a human perspective the most glorifying thing that the Son, the Word of God, has ever done was to provide us Salvation in the way that He did. In that sense, the most glorifying thing that the Father ever did was the sending of the Word, as His Son.

Jesus, in accomplishing His task, by fulfilling His sending, glorified not just Himself, but also the Father. The Father in sending Jesus glorified not just Himself, but also the Son as He fulfilled His sending.

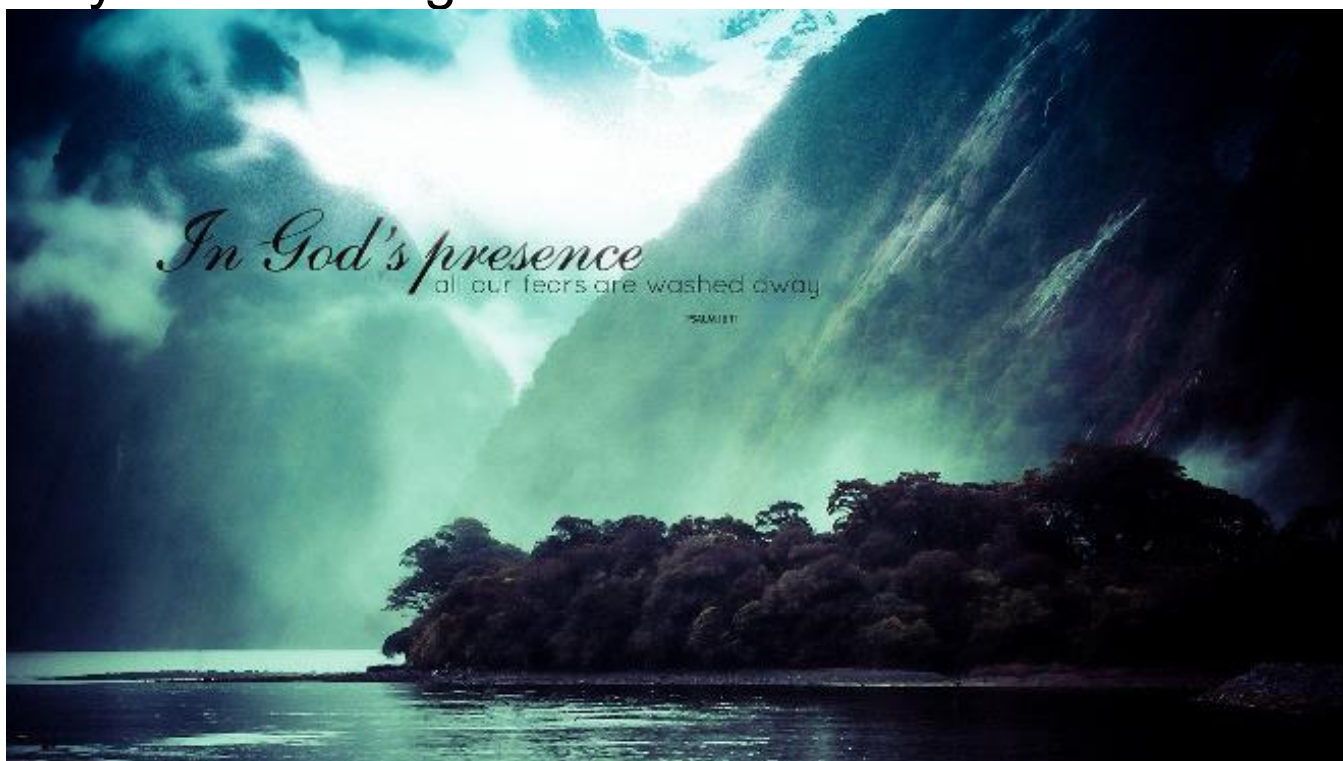
There is a mutual reciprocal and ever escalating glorifying of each other. Each is glorified by the other and instead of basking in that glory for themselves they forward it on to the other and around and around we go.



The glory given to Jesus by the Father in this passage is narrowed down to a focus on the authority part. The Father glorified Jesus by giving Him complete authority over all mankind. You think that there is another way to Heaven? Well, not according to Jesus. Out of all of

mankind there is a subset who belongs to the Father and all of them have been given by Him to the Son.

What that means in the simplest possible terms is that the Father knows the heart of every person. For whatever reason, some people are able to be saved and some are not. The Father knows the difference, and He has given all those who are able to be saved to the Son, which means that through the Son, every one of them will be saved. All people who the Father has identified as being savable will believe in the Son's completed work on their behalf and thereby will be saved through Him receiving eternal life from Him as they have been given to Him.



Eternal life has very little to do with not dying, with not ceasing to exist. Specifically, eternal life means knowing the Father and knowing the Son. That is an intimate relational knowing. Eternal life is life in its fullest abundance dwelling in the presence of Almighty God and interacting with Him in His Three Persons and with all His other children forever and ever in a family devoid of fear, pain, or evil. A holy family characterized by our God-derived selfless love for one another.

Heaven is where Agapê flows unimpeded. If you are a person who serves yourself at the expense of others, you are going to hate Heaven. That's the "whatever reason" I mentioned before. For whatever reason, many humans are unsavable.

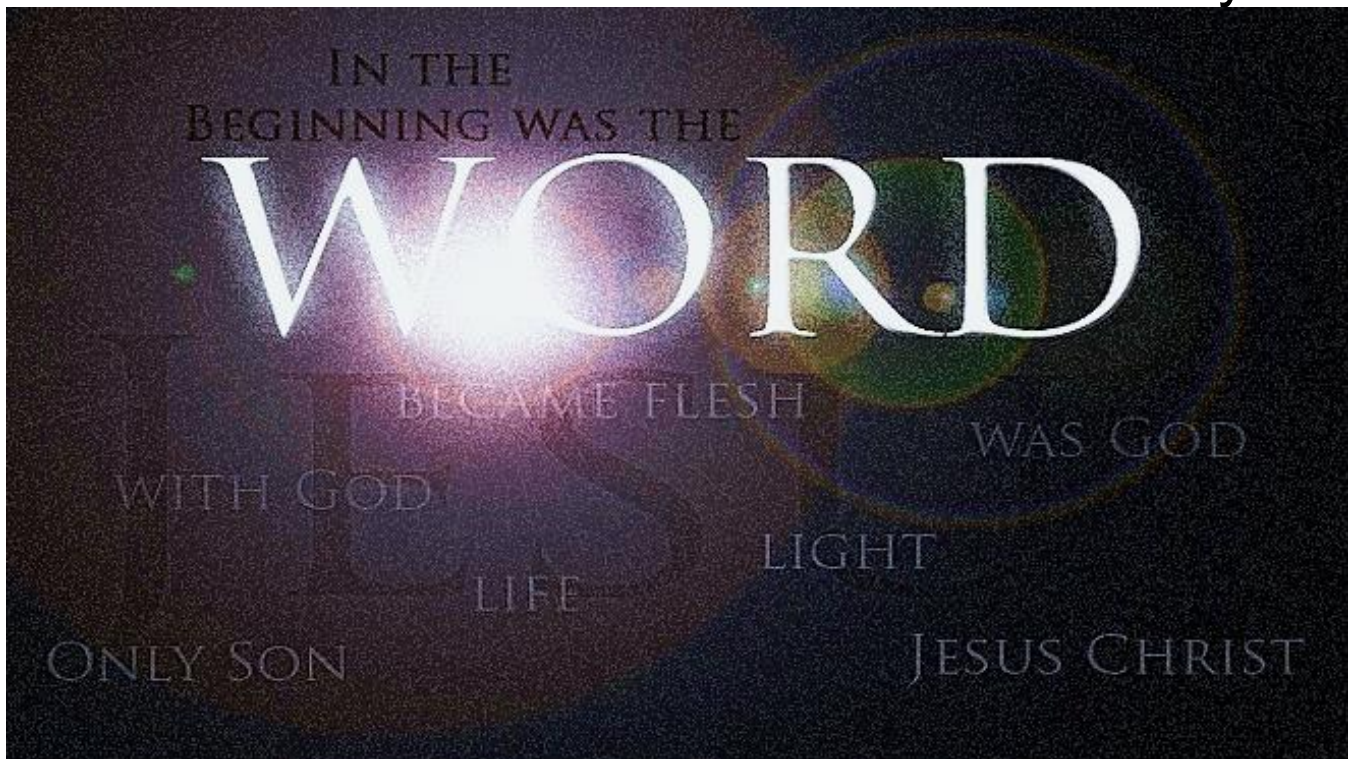


The reason is that they are so self-serving that they detest putting God and others ahead of themselves. They are too full of themselves, too self-focused, too self-protective. Too much self is to think of yourself more, which also means to think of yourself as more important than others, which is pride. Not really the pride that we normally think of with that word. Not necessarily pride in your beauty, strength, reputation, or accomplishments, but pride that to you, you are the most important thing that there is.

Such a person is chock full of fear even though they may seem brave. Such a person is unable to love others and also unable to receive the love from others for that very reason. Such a person may seem to be loved and loving, but as with their underlying fear, it is only an act.

That is the “pride that goes before the fall.” That is the pride that prevents a person from letting go of their fear of being hurt and being vulnerable enough to accept love... or to give love. It is because they cannot take a chance by placing faith in anyone. They cannot believe - they cannot trust. They are constantly working to protect themselves, which is the opposite of Agapê.

Heaven would be a menacing place to them... Even the notion of a Sovereign God is scary to them and so they remain under the curse of blaspheming the Holy Spirit by committing the one unforgeable sin... The sin of refusing to believe the Holy Spirit's testimony about Jesus and thereby refusing to believe Jesus' testimony about the Father. Many of them reside inside the church behind a mask that hides their insecurity.



Verse 5 ties us back into John's prologue. The glory that He possessed before the world existed speaks directly to John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Colossians chapter 1 speaks of Jesus as "the image of the invisible God," and goes on to state that "by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth,

visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” I could also mention the most compelling informal “I Am” statement in the Bible found in John 8:58, “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.’”

Make no mistake my friends, Jesus was either God made man, or He was a false prophet creating a false cult from the pits of Hell. There is no middle ground possible. We either worship Him as God the Son or we should run as fast as we can from Christianity.



Jesus prayed on... John 17:6–12, 6“I have revealed Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the

world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have followed Your word. 7Now they have come to know that everything which You have given Me is from You; 8for 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.

In this section the main thrust is revelation. Here Jesus spoke about His revelation of God in a future sense - they didn't get it then, but eventually they would. The Father gave Jesus the mission of saving those who could be saved. That was the mandate. Save all who can be saved. The concept was never for Jesus to pay for the sins of the world and then sit back and see what happened afterward.

The reality was that the Father, or Will of God knew before He spoke creation into existence through His Holy Word, propelled by His Holy Breath exactly who could, and who could not, be saved.

His plan of salvation is perfect. It will save to the maximum extent possible, and it will accomplish the greatest good conceivable and it will serve the greatest love imaginable. The Father has always known with precision the individuals who make up the total

population of Heaven to come because He exists in that place with all His saved children as we speak. He has always existed with us - from His perspective.



See that? It isn't like the Father has a crystal ball, or can see into the future, or is really good at calculating the effects of His initial cause.

What is past, what is present, and what is future are only so for those of us who are trapped in linear time, certainly not for the One Who spoke time into existence in this physical universe. How does God know each and every one of His children with accuracy and intimacy - how does He know all who will be saved and all who will not be saved? He's already dwelling with the former and He's already let go of the latter. If you

are His, He's already interacting with you in Heaven. It is we who must catch up to where the Father chooses to dwell. When He takes us home, in what is to us, our future, we, like Him, will not at all be bound by the physical time we presently imagine is so real and we will join Him in His true forever present.

The Word was sent to do one general thing and that was to provide Salvation to those who could be saved. We can think of that single revelation of God to man coming in two types.



Revelation that comes through word and through deed. Through action and through knowledge. Through the revelation of the Cross and the revelation of the knowledge encompassing the Cross. That's the two

parts. We can think of the revelation as what Jesus did by living a perfect life and then taking the sins of the world and paying the death penalty for them. We can think of the revelation as what Jesus taught which is just as important. Why? Well, the Apostle Paul alluded to it in Romans 10:12–15, 12For there is no distinction between Jew and non-Jew; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him.” Paul then quoted from the Prophet Joel (2:32) 13for “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” The concept occurs throughout the Bible - “Seek and you will receive,” “Those who seek the Lord will find Him,” “Seek the Lord while He can still be found,” and on and on. There is the idea in that there must be a personal broken humbleness to truly seek out God and that there is a window of time that will close, but that all who earnestly seek within the window will be saved. Paul went on for our point here by asking... 14How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? 15How can the preacher preach if he’s not sent?

That is the equally important part - the teaching - the Gospel Message. It does a person no good to win the 100-million-dollar lottery if they are never made aware

of their fortune. What good is the offer of eternal life if you don't know that the offer exists? For the physical sacrifice of Jesus to be personally effective the individual must accept the gift and they cannot do that without sufficient knowledge about the gift.

Jesus taught His people - as we know, they didn't get it at that moment, but Jesus knew that once everything was accomplished and the Holy Spirit retaught them His lessons again, they would get it. They would accept that the teaching came from the Father through the Son and was illuminated to them by the Spirit. They would follow that teaching by doing what the teaching taught, which is to believe in its Object - to believe in Jesus. Jesus was sent by the Father as the preacher to those men, they heard Him, they believed what they heard, and so they called upon the Name of the Father - our verse 6 - and they were saved.

In order for salvation to be effective a person must believe. Faith is what is required because faith is believing and believing is trusting - fully trusting in the love of God for you as revealed to you by God through His preachers.

I am trying to convey that to you right now. God loves you. At His Own personal cost beyond comprehension,

He has provided for your eternal dwelling in Him, but you must believe what I'm telling you about Him.

In order to believe you must comprehend the Object of your faith, the One in Whom you trust.

That means knowing God the Father and God the Son Who reveals Him, and of course for us now, God the Spirit Who reveals the Son. As we already saw, knowing is relational. That means that it is personal, it is intimate, and it is reciprocal. To have that kind of knowing means that you believe unto salvation because you have heard and applied the Gospel Message concerning the accomplished action of Savior Jesus.

Jesus revealed the Father. Those whom the Father knew as His Own followed His Word both as Jesus Himself and as His teaching. The Christian community, starting with those 11 guys, receives that Word, understands that Word, believes that Word, and then because of that, knows God personally.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age”

Matthew 28:19&20



John 17:9–12, 9I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but on the behalf of those whom You have given Me, because they are Yours; 10and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11I am no longer going to be in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are. 12While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name, which You have given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. 13“But now I am coming to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. 14I

have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15I am not asking You to take them out of the world, but to keep them away from the evil one. 16They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. 18Just as You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world. 19And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

We could delve into all the amazing details of this passage and while worthwhile and fascinating it serves primarily to reinforce the things that we've been studying for months.

In this section the biggest takeaway is that just as the Father sent the Word of God to be a preacher of the Gospel - a revealer of God and His plan of Salvation, so Jesus sends all of those who believe in Him. Here it is specifically the 11 remaining Apostles. Preachers cannot preach unless they are sent. They cannot be sent if they are not in physical earth suits.

Why doesn't God just take Christians out of this fallen and depraved world, and take us home to be with Him at the very moment of our salvation? Why do we become Christians and then continue to struggle here

on earth for an indeterminable amount of linear time?
Why can't we get the party started right now?

We have all kinds of thoughts on the issue. Perhaps the most common one in our society is that God wants us to grow and mature as Christians. That He's got lessons for us to learn that can only be learned in an earth suit.

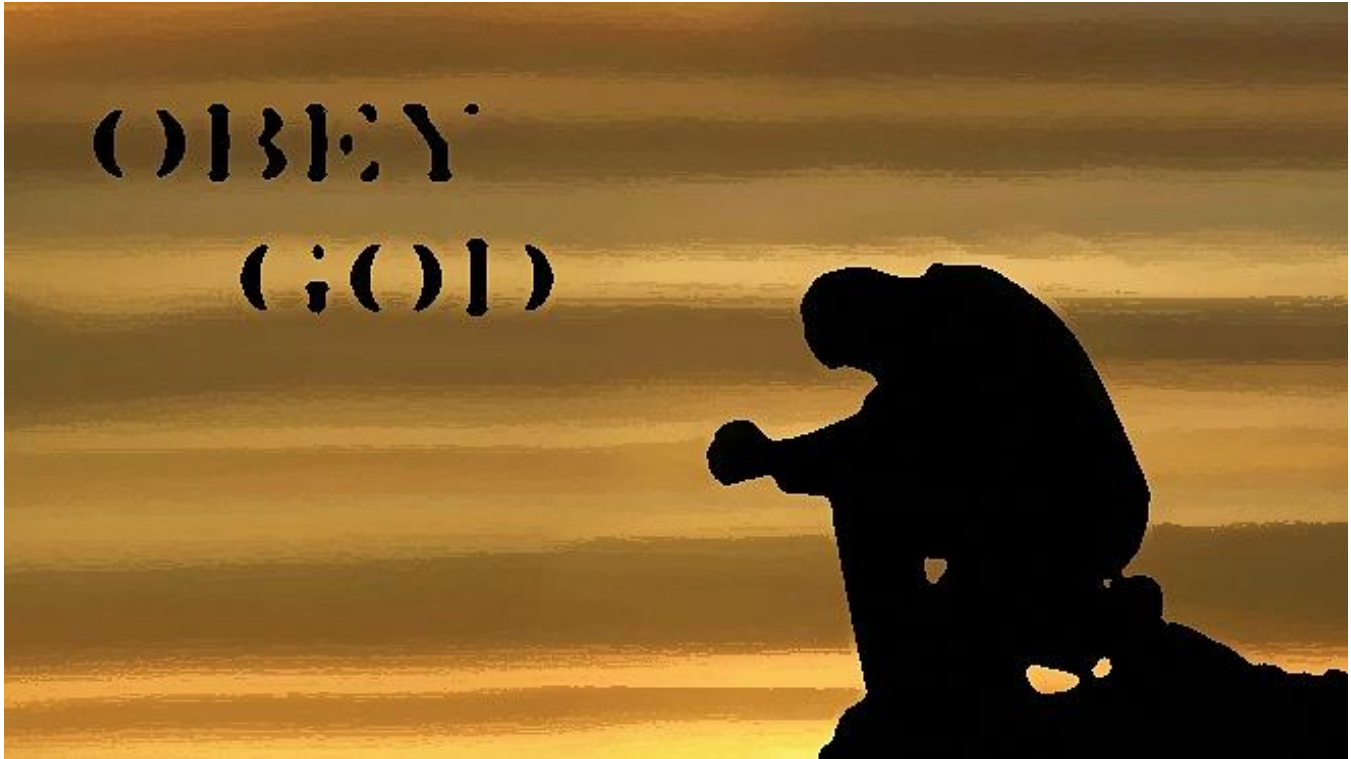
My friends, Christians remain alive on this pale blue marble for one reason and one reason alone. You are here because at the moment of your salvation you were sent to the world as a preacher of the Good News.

You have a commission - you have a mandate from Christ Jesus Who is only your Lord if you obey Him. No wonder Christians are such a mess - we don't even know why we're here and so we do not fulfill our mission. We make everything about us and in so doing diminish Jesus and then we wonder why Jesus is so small, and we're the ones who made Him that way. Start obeying Jesus by loving His church through actual self-sacrificial service and as a natural outflow of that you will not only be loving God, you will find yourself loving the lost.

Like Jesus you will speak Truth into their life both through deeds and through teaching. We American Christians act as though we despise the people who disagree with our sense of right and wrong. Aren't they the very ones to whom we are supposed to give the very Words of Life?

Well, Scott that was the mandate for the 11, or that is your mandate as a pastor - it has nothing to do with me. Jesus closed His prayer with this...

John 17:20&21, 20"I am not asking on behalf of these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, 21that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.





Aletheia
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
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Add the amen?

[אָמֵן (ä-mān) :הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (ä-mēn hä-lě-lü yä)].

Jesus prayed for His reunification, but He knew that the path to reunification was His sacrificial death (I John 2:2, Philippians 2:8).

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Those whom the Father has identified as being savable have been given to Jesus as He is the only Savior. They will believe in His completed work on their behalf, and they will be saved through Him receiving eternal life from Him.

Eternal life has very little to do with not dying. Specifically, eternal life means knowing the Father and knowing the Son.

Heaven is where Agapê flows unimpeded. If you are a person who serves yourself at the expense of others, you are going to hate Heaven. That's the "whatever reason."

JOHN 17:6-8 ~

The Father has always known with precision the individuals who make up the total population of Heaven to come because He exists in that place with all His saved children as we speak.

Revelation comes through the revelation of the Cross and the revelation of the knowledge encompassing the Cross. Knowledge is essential (Romans 10:12-15).

Faith is what is required because faith is believing and believing is trusting - fully trusting in the love of God for you as revealed to you by God through His preachers.

JOHN 17:9-19 ~

Why doesn't God just take Christians out of this fallen and depraved world, and take us home to be with Him at the very moment of our Salvation?

You are here because at the moment of your salvation you were sent to the world as a preacher of the Good News.

JOHN 17:20&21 ~

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
 Phone _____ Email _____