Glorify Your Son
John 17:1-5

Good morning, it is great to be with you today as we open God's Word together.
- I am grateful for the opportunity, Lord willing, to spend the next three weeks together considering John 17.

There was a pastor years ago who was well-known for opening his sermons sometimes by saying, "This is the most amazing passage in the entire Bible."
- Over the years he said this so many times, that his congregation came to believe that either he wasn't telling the truth (because there can't be multiple most amazing passages in the Bible)
- Or, he was simply describing how he felt that week about that particular passage.
- Of course, we know that all Scripture is God-breathed and is good.
- But there are times when the Lord speaks to you through His Word in a particularly compelling way.

I feel that about John 17
- This is the most amazing passage in the entire Bible.
- As I've studied in preparation for this series, I've come to realize that in me trying to get a grip on this chapter, that this chapter has gotten a grip on me!

That really is the only fitting response.
- The Lord does not intend for us to fully exhaust what is going on here.
- Rather, I believe he wants us to be gripped in awe and wonder at Jesus's prayer to the Father.

So, I hope that as we go through this series together, you too will be caught up in awe and wonder at what God speaks to us through this most amazing passage in the entire Bible.

ILL: Every year, various dictionaries publish what they call the word of the year.
- They choose one word that they think describes our cultural moment.
- In 2013, The Oxford Dictionary decided that the word to best capture that year was the word – "selfie".
- If you don't know, a selfie is when you take a picture of yourself with your phone, most likely to post it online for others to see.

Now, it reveals a lot about our culture that the "selfie" would be a defining reality.
- That was 13 years ago already, and we've only continued further down the same road.
- We live in a culture that is dominated and controlled by glorifying the self.
- We are constantly told to look inward to ourselves to determine what is true and good.
- People become rich and famous and influential by promoting themselves to others.

Yet, deep down, we all recognize that there is something deeply troubling about seeking glory for ourselves.
- It's one thing to be given honor by others
- It's another thing to seek honor for ourselves.

So then, what are we to make of it when Jesus seeks glory for himself?

- In John 17:1, Jesus prays to the Father and says, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son…"

Jesus asks to receive glory from the Father.

- Although this might seem like an inappropriate request at first glance, we are going to see today that…
- Jesus deserves the glory he asks for.

Jesus prays, Glorify your Son.

- It is good for Jesus to ask this.

CONTEXT

Before we get too far into what Jesus prays, we have to consider the reality that Jesus prays.

John 17 takes place on the night before Jesus was crucified.

- It's part of a larger section of John's gospel called the Farewell Discourse from John 14-17.
- Jesus has just finished the Last Supper with his disciples, where he washed their feet.
- Jesus tells his disciples that he will soon go to the Father.
- He promises to send the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples in ministry.
- Jesus also tells his disciples that they will face trouble in this world, but they should take heart, because Jesus has overcome the world.

The aim of this Farewell Discourse is to encourage the disciples right before Jesus goes to the cross.

- The final thing Jesus does is pray.

Now, Jesus prays often throughout his earthly ministry.

- We learn many times that Jesus withdrew himself from the crowds to be alone with the Father.

What makes this prayer of Jesus unique, is that…

- 1) It's the longest prayer of Jesus recorded.
- 2) And… we know what he prayed for

Jesus prayed intentionally so that his disciples could hear him.

- He knew they were going to face discouragement
- He lets them overhear his prayer to the Father as a source of deep encouragement.

I've heard some people ask the question – If prayer is talking to God,

- If Jesus is God, then why would he need to pray?

The purpose of prayer is not merely to share information with God.

- Prayer is part of communing with God in relationship with Him.
- We are changed through prayer just as much as, if not more, than our circumstances change as a result of our prayers.
- God is never surprised by what we pray – it's not as though he learns something new that he didn't know before.
- He wants us to pray as an overflow of a vital relationship with Him.

If prayer is part of a vital relationship with God, then prayer is perhaps the most natural thing that Jesus could ever do!

- That's why this chapter is so significant
- We get a glimpse into the inner life of God – into the relationship between the Father and the Son.
- Nowhere else in Scripture do we get such a clear window into God's heart to see Him for who He is.

So, thank you Lord that you prayed so your disciples could overhear, and that they recorded it for us to hear as well.

There are three distinct movements in Jesus's prayer.

- He prays for himself in verse 1-5
- He prays for his 11 disciples in verses 6-19
- He prays for all future believers in verses 20-26 (including you and me today)

This morning, we are going to focus on the first section, where Jesus prays for himself, that the Father would glorify the Son.

- We are going to see the request Jesus makes
- Then, the work Jesus completes
- And finally, the life Jesus gives.

1) The Request Jesus Makes

Look with me at verse 1 and then also verse 5, as Jesus makes the same request twice.

John 17:1, "When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you…'"

John 17:5, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."

Jesus has been speaking to his disciples in the Upper Room after the Last Supper.

- Judas has gone out from them, and Jesus will soon be arrested and put on trial.
- Jesus spends the evening encouraging and teaching his 11 disciples.
- When Jesus had spoken these words to his disciples, he closes in prayer.

He begins by praying, "the hour has come."

A. Jesus's Hour

Throughout the gospel of John, Jesus mentions his hour several times.

- In each instance, "the hour" refers to Jesus's death.
- Early on, Jesus says that the hour has not yet come.
- But here, Jesus recognizes that his hour *has* come.

So as he prays, he has in his mind the cross.
- The very next day he will be beaten, mocked, spit upon, and crucified.
- This hour weighed heavy on Jesus as he knew what was coming.

It's during this hour, that Jesus prays for glory.

He asks the Father to glorify him, so that he might glorify the Father in return.
- This isn't the only time in John's gospel that Jesus asks for glory in connection to his hour.

Earlier, in John 12, Jesus says this, John 12:27-28, "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

Jesus asks in John 12 that the Father would be glorified in the hour of his death.
- But in John 17, Jesus asks that he would be glorified by the Father in this hour.

B. Jesus's Glory is God's glory

There is a reason Jesus asks for glory for himself
- And it's so that he might return the glory to the Father.
- Glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you.

ILL: Now, deep down we know that asking for glory for ourselves is wrong.
- When an athlete makes a spectacular play and wins the game for their team,
- There are some athletes that try to shed the glory off themselves and onto the team – "It was a team effort, I couldn't do it without them. I'm glad we won the game."
- But there are also some athletes that give glory to themselves – the focus is not on being a team player, but on gaining personal recognition.
- We all recognize that the humble athlete is more in the right than the arrogant athlete.

This is because glorifying ourselves steals glory from God.
- You cannot glorify yourself, while also giving glory to God.
- If any of us were to pray like Jesus does here, it would blasphemy.

But when Jesus asks for glory, it is good and right and wholly appropriate.
- **Jesus's glory is not at odds with God's glory, but it's one and the same.**

That's why Jesus says, glorify me, so that I can glorify you!
- There is a kind of glory exchange going on between the Father and the Son.

ILL: Like a screw driven into a piece of wood.
- Each turn of the screwdriver forces the screw deeper and deeper as more threads catch and hold.
- As the Father gives the Son glory the screw turns
- The Son glorifies the Father, the screw turns again.
- And deeper and deeper it goes as the glory bounces back and forth and increases between the Father and the Son.
- Because Jesus is God's Son, his glory is not opposed to the glory of God, but is the glory of God.

C. Jesus already had this glory

This glory that Jesus requests for himself is not new to him.

- It's not that the Father is now sharing glory that he has been keeping to himself.
- But the glory Jesus asks for is what he already had in the past.

Again in verse John 17:5, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."

The glory Jesus requests is the glory that he had in the presence of the Father before the creation of the world.

- This teaches us something about the nature of God.
- We believe there is only one God, who created heaven and earth.
- We know this God as 3 distinct persons.
- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- All three persons are God, yet each are distinct in their personhood.
- We call this a tri-unity. God in 3 persons, blessed Trinity.
- This is what Christians have believed for thousands of years about Jesus, and this has been articulated through many different creeds, confessions, and statements of faith across the centuries.

When Jesus came into our world, he set aside his glory for a time in order to accomplish the work he was sent to do.

One passage at the beginning of John's gospel captures this well,

- John 1:14, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

So, Jesus set aside his glory for a time, but now is asking the Father to glorify him, so that he can glorify the Father.

- Jesus deserves this glory because he is the eternal son of God.
- His glory is one and the same as God's glory.

<Jesus deserves the glory he asks for because of who he is.

- But Jesus also deserves glory because of the work he completed>

2) The Work Jesus Completes

Look with me again at verse 1-2, and then verse 4:

- John 17:1b-2, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him."
- John 17:4, "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do."

A. The Cross is Jesus's work

ILL: in the early 1900s Henry Ford revolutionized the assembly line.
- The idea was instead of having one worker or team build an entire car by themselves from start to finish, it would be more efficient to have many workers along an assembly line who specialized in just one part of the process.
- This would reduce unnecessary movements and optimize the number of cars they could build in a day.
- So, there would be workers whose only job was to attach one part to the car.
- They would repeat this same task over and over again every single day.
- They had one job.

In a similar way, Jesus had one job.
- Not that he repeated this same task many times over.
- Rather, Jesus had a singular mission when he came into this world.
- One thing he came to do.

That was to go to the cross.
- That was the work the Father gave Jesus to accomplish.
- Through this work he would grant eternal life to all those who believe in him.

Jesus prays that the Father would glorify him, because he complete the work he set out to accomplish.
- Which is why one of the last words of Jesus on the cross was, "It is finished" – John 19:30
- Jesus's work is as good as done, even though when he prays it was still a few hours away.

Now, what was it about the cross, that Jesus says this is the reason he deserves glory?
- It seems rather odd at first glance that the death of Jesus would be the reason for his glory.

B. The Cross is Jesus's glory

ILL: I'm originally from the east coast, so I appreciate good pizza.
- Now that I've lived in Chicagoland for a while, I've also come to appreciate deep dish pizza, even though I would consider that more like a Midwest casserole than actual pizza.
- If you have a problem with that you can let me know after the service.
- It's very rare to find a good NY style slice around here.
- So, I've dabbled in trying to make pizza at home from scratch.
- I've learned it's a very nuanced skill to make a good pizza.
- I'm by no means a master at it.
- You have to use the proper ratios in the dough, you have to use good quality toppings, and you have to get the oven temperature and cooking surface just right as well.

So, I got a pizza stone to put in our oven to help get a good crust.
- Whenever you use a pizza stone, you have to launch the pizza onto the stone using a certain utensil called a pizza peel.

One time a few weeks ago I was making some pizzas and went to go launch a pizza into the oven

- And instead of sliding nicely onto the stone, the dough got stuck, the toppings fell off into the oven, and my beautiful looking pizza looked more like a pile of cheese and dough.
- So, I tried to salvage as much as I could
- It still tasted good, it just didn't look very good.

It was an unfortunate situation that turned out okay in the end.

- I think sometimes we view the cross in a similar way.

We think that God had a good plan for the world and for us.

- But then, when we sinned, God was surprised.
- He didn't know what to do.
- And so he was left to pick up the pieces and try and salvage whatever he could.
- So, Jesus going to the cross is an unfortunate event, that God just so happened to be able to turn around and use for his glory.

Jesus is showing us that the cross was his intention from the beginning for sake of his glory.

- the cross was not God's back up plan.

Earlier in John 12:23-24, "And Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.'"

Again, Jesus describes his hour to be glorified, and he says that unless he dies, he won't receive this glory.

- The grain of wheat must die in order to bring new life and more fruit.

So, Jesus's death on the cross is the revelation of and the reason for his glory.

- He deserves the glory he asks for because of the work he completed on the cross.

Now, this might seem counterintuitive to us.

- Because the cross was the most shameful and humiliating thing Jesus could do.
- To be God in the flesh, and stripped naked, beaten, mocked, and crucified.
- His disciples abandoned him.
- The only time Jesus prays and doesn't address God as his Father is when he cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- The Son of God forsaken by his Father
- The Author of life died.
- How is this for his glory?

Well, Jesus was the only one who could take our place on the cross.

- His glory is displayed in the fullest sense in our salvation.

Philippians 2:6-11, "…Christ Jesus, who was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should

bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The cross and the resurrection of Jesus reveal the character of God.
- His majesty that He would be in heaven with the Father
- His humility to empty himself of what he is due and become a human being.
- His love in going to the cross to pay for our sins.

But, Jesus did not stay in the grave.
- He rose again and conquered death
- Declaring victory over our sin
- And now sits enthroned in heaven at the right hand of the Father in glory.

Only Jesus could do that!
- That is how the cross is for his glory.
- We see his character displayed in the work he did.
- Because of the work he did he deserves the glory he asks for.

Jesus is right to ask for glory.
- Because he completed the work the Father sent him to do.

<so, we've seen the request Jesus makes, the work Jesus completes, and finally we see more clearly our role in this prayer as we consider the life Jesus gives>

3) The Life Jesus Gives

The final verse for us to consider is verse 3, right in the middle of his prayer.
- At first glance, it seems like this is an unrelated footnote about eternal life in this passage that is otherwise about glory.
- But as we will see, these two things are so closely connected that we cannot separate them.

John 17:3, "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

As we just saw, Jesus's glory is most fully displayed in the work that he accomplished.
- The result of his work is that we would have eternal life.

But I wonder if you've ever thought about what this eternal life is like?
- What will it be like to live forever?
- Does eternal life start when we die and go to heaven?
- Is there something now we can experience?

Well, in Jesus's prayer, he connects his glory to eternal life, and shows us a glimpse of what this life is like.

We see that eternal life is forever.

A. Eternal life is forever (hope for the future)

He prays, this is **eternal** life.
- Eternal means there is no end!
- It goes on and on forever and forever.

The most famous verse John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

This gives us hope for the future.
- We look forward to the day we live in eternity with Christ
- Enjoying him in his presence every day

Think of what Buzz Lightyear says, "to infinity, and beyond!"
- It's not possible to go beyond infinity.
- It's impossible to fully wrap our minds around it.

Eternal life is our hope for the future
- But eternal life is not only hope for the future.
- It's also hope for today.

Jesus also shows us that eternal life is knowing God.

B. Eternal life is knowing God (hope for today)

He says, "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

Eternal life is not only about how long we live, but the quality of life we live.
- Jesus went to the cross and rose again so that we would truly know God.
- Not merely to be saved from our sins, although that is a glorious reality.
- But to genuinely know him and be known by him.

This is really good news.
- We all long to be known.
- God despite all our failures and shortcomings chooses to love us and have a relationship with us through Jesus Christ
- This is not because of how awesome we are, but because of how awesome he is.

C. We glorify God by knowing Him

When we know him, we bring him glory.
- When we know him, we live within the reality that he set out to accomplish.

Knowing him is the proof of his character.
- His love, his mercy, his grace
- And his justice, and power, and holiness.

Knowing him is the proof that his work was effective.

- What Jesus did on the cross actually accomplished something.

If the Father and the Son and the Spirit have a loving relationship from eternity past that is marked by glory, then whenever we join him in a loving relationship we give him glory!

CONCLUSION

At the end of the gospel of John he writes about the purpose of his book.

- He says in John 20:30-31, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

God has given us this amazing chapter so that you would believe in Jesus and have life in his name.

- He deserves the glory he asks for because of who he is, because of the work he accomplished, and because of the life he gives to us.

So how well do you know him?

- What are some words you would honestly use to describe your relationship with God?
- Ponder this week how well you know Him.

He knows you far greater than you could know yourself.

- He sent his Son to the cross so that you would know him.

Just like another other relationship it must be cultivated

- Through the Word
- Through prayer
- Through relationship with other believers.

Make it your aim to glorify God by knowing Him more deeply.

If you are listening today and you realize you don't know him.

- My final plea to you is…
- Believe in Jesus, and you will have life in his glorious name.