

The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus (Part 1)
John 17:1-10/#theheartofJesus

*Everything I have belongs to you, and everything you have belongs to me,
and I have been glorified by them. (John 17:10)*

When you hear someone pray, you get a glimpse right into their heart. It's like reading their diary -- it's their honest, open, passionate pleas before their Father of what's really going on in their heart.

John 14:31 tells us that the night Jesus would be betrayed, He and His disciples had left the Upper Room in Jerusalem and were on the move. They went east to the Mount of Olives towards the Garden of Gethsemane, where He would be betrayed by His own. In the Gospels, we get very small samples of Jesus' prayers. We hear a little at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11), but nothing compared to what we are about to hear. In John 17, John records the prayer of the Son of God interceding for His disciples to God the Father. Some have called it the "Holy of Holies" of the New Testament because of the sacred conversation we get to listen in on between the God the Son to God the Father.

What do we learn from the first part of Jesus' High Priestly Prayer?

**The glory of the Triune God is displayed in the salvation of those
the Father has chosen out of the world for the possession and
service of His Son.**

When Jesus had finished saying these things, he looked upward to heaven and said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you (John 17:1)

Over and over in the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "the hour/time has not yet come" (2:4, 7:6,30, 8:20, 12:23, etc). It gives you this feel like Jesus' life is on a certain path that has a specific destiny that will be fulfilled. In verse 1, Jesus finally says "*Father, the time has come.*" John makes it very clear throughout His Gospel that the death of Jesus is not martyrdom; it's not a defeat. Jesus is not a victim--*Having loved his own who were in the world, he now loved them to the very end.* (John 13:1)

In the Old Testament, Yahweh gave all kinds of signs and symbols of His presence and protection. In the Exodus, He gave the pillar of cloud during the day and the pillar of fire during the night (Ex.13:21-22). The Jews called the supernatural presence of God "the Shekinah", which means "dwelling"; it's the glory of God's presence. After the tabernacle was built and furnished, the Shekinah glory filled the tabernacle. When the Shekinah glory moved, they moved (Ex. 40:34-38). 500 years later, when Solomon's temple was finished and dedicated, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord (1 Kings 8:4-14). The Shekinah glory rested between the Cherubim over the Mercy Seat over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies (Ex. 25:22).

But Ezekiel describes the spiritual state of idolatry and wickedness of the Jews and the impending destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in 586BC. Ezekiel describes one of the worst scenes in the history of the people of God. He describes how the Shekinah glory of the Lord departed from the temple and Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:3, 10:18, 19, 11:22-25). For the first time in about 900 years, the Shekinah glory would not be with the people of God. After the Jews returned from their 70 year captivity to Jerusalem, Zerubbabel's Temple was completed in 515 BC. But this "second temple" was not like Solomon's temple and more importantly, the visible presence of God as the Shekinah cloud of glory did not return to the Holy of Holies.

One of the prophets, Haggai, knew the Jews were discouraged because Zerubbabel's temple did not compare to Solomon's Temple. Haggai says to Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest and all the Jews-- don't worry, for the Lord God is with you. God will shake heaven and earth and fill this 2nd Temple with glory. Haggai says, "*The future splendor of this temple will be greater than that of former times.*"(2:9) In 19BC Herod began to rebuild and expand Zerubbabel's Temple, but that is not what Haggai was talking about. The greatness of the 2nd Temple was the Person who would enter it and declare His glory.

Throughout out all this time, the Temple symbolized God's presence on the earth. When the Word becomes flesh and dwelt among us, we saw His glory, the glory of the one and only, full of grace and truth, who came from the Father (John 1:14). Jesus is the true temple; the place where heaven opened and the angels of God ascend and descend (John 1:51). He is the reality to which the Temple and the Shekinah glory itself points (John 2:19).

The great shock of Israel and the whole universe is that the glory of God would be put on a cross (Isaiah 53). It's the glorious cross of Jesus Christ that has united heaven and earth. And eternal life came because of the glory of God that was nailed to the cross, that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. From Philippians 2:6-11:

⁶ Who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. ⁸ He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross! ⁹ As a result God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth— ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

² just as you have given him authority over all humanity, so that he may give eternal life to everyone you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life— that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me at your side with the glory I had with you before the world was created. (John 17:2-5)

What was Jesus work that the Father gave Him? To make the invisible God visible in Him (John 1:18). To teach the will of God, to live the will of God, to die and rise from dead as the victorious Son of God (John 13:1). Jesus will complete the work of the Father soon; therefore, Jesus tells the Father, "Glorify Me". As Dr. Luke says in Acts 2, Jesus was handed over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, was executed by nailing him to a cross. (Acts 2:23)

⁶ "I have revealed your name to the men you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they understand that everything you have given me comes from you, ⁸ because I have given them the words you have given me. They accepted them and really understand that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am praying on behalf of them. I am not praying on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those you have given me, because they belong to you. ¹⁰ Everything I have belongs to you, and everything you have belongs to me, and I have been glorified by them. (John 17:6-10)

Notice that Jesus does not merely say that the Father gave Him authority only over His disciples and those who would later believe. Jesus says that the Father gave Him authority "over all humanity," but Jesus' preoccupation is with the ones the Father "gave me out of the world."

Who is He talking about? He's talking about Peter, Andrew, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Thaddaeus, Simon. These men believed. They believed His teaching. They beheld Him as the Son of God. Jesus has completed the deeds and words which the Father gave him to do. He has laid before his chosen disciples all that the Father has given him.

The Son and the Father hide nothing from each other. They know one another completely. The Son and the Father give to each other without reservation. There is no self-protection in the Triune God. Jesus says - everything I have belongs to you and everything you have, you have given to me. We hold nothing back. Our trust is perfect. Not only are they one in purpose and mission, but they are one in an area that is very important to you and me. They are one in affection towards Jesus' disciples and they are one in affection towards you.

To know the Son is to know the Father. To be at peace with Jesus is to be at peace with the Father. To hold Christ with contempt, is to hold the Father in contempt. There is one and only one hand of God and it is pierced for the sins of humanity. As Jesus is about to leave His disciples, there is not an ounce of fear because these disciples were given to Him by the Father. These disciples belong to the Father.

Infinite and irrevocable belonging rooted in the love of the Triune God

Many times in this John 17 prayer (vs. 6, 9, 10, 14, 16), Jesus says "they are yours" or "they are mine." Disciples of Jesus don't belong to the world; they belong to the Father and to the Son. That's a very peaceful and secure place to be, right in the middle of Trinitarian love.

What difference would it make if you operated from a place of belonging and security?

What would it be like if you were convinced that you had a seat at the table?

