

# OUR GLORIOUS UNION WITH GOD

In this sermon we will start by looking at the first few verses of John 17:

## FATHER

In the book of John, the Lord Jesus uses the word FATHER in reference to His Father over 100 times. This speaks of His relationship with the Father. Through His life and teaching, He brought revelation of the Father to the world. In John 17:25 the Lord Jesus says to the Father, "the world has not known You, but I have known You."

In John 17, the Lord Jesus describes the Father as righteous and holy. The Lord Jesus says that the Father loved Him before the foundation of the world, and that the Father has loved us as He has loved the Son.

The Father is the One whose word is truth. The Father sustains us, the Father sanctifies us, and the Father keeps us from the evil one.

We all need a revelation of God as our perfect, Holy Father. This comes from the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:15 says,

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

## THE HOUR HAS COME

Time and time again, Jesus talked openly about his death and resurrection. Jesus says in John's gospel a couple of times that His hour has not yet come. But when He arrived in Jerusalem ahead of the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that this was His time. We read in John 12:23-24:

But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

## GLORIFY YOUR SON THAT ALSO YOUR SON MAY GLORIFY YOU.

God is eternal and glorious. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are each described as glorious in scripture: we have the Father of glory (Ephesians 1:17), the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8, James 2:1) and the Spirit of glory (1 Peter 4:14).

## GLORIFY YOUR SON?

Nowhere else in scripture does anyone so explicitly pray to the Father to be glorified. But we know that the Lord Jesus Christ is different to anyone else. He is the Father's: only begotten Son (John 1:18)

Word (John 1:1) brightness of His glory and the express image of His person... (Hebrews 1:3) the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15) The Son also already knew that the Father already delights in Him! In Isaiah 42:1 the Father describes the Son as "My Elect

One in whom my soul delights!" When the Lord Jesus was baptised at the start of His ministry on earth, there was a voice from heaven which said: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!" (Matthew 3:17). This may well have been the first time that the voice of the Lord was heard by the people of Israel in a public setting for hundreds of years, going back to the time of Moses.

Whilst kings and prophets had heard God's voice privately, the audible voice of God in public was not recorded in scripture until Jesus' baptism. Similar words were spoken by God and heard by the disciples in Matthew 17 where Jesus was transfigured on the Mountain, and the disciples saw Him shining in glory.

These moments emphasise the significance of the Father's desire for many to know His love for the Son.

The Son is importantly also the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Revelation 5:11-12 says: [11] Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, [12] saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

The Lord Jesus is praised and glorified in heaven for laying down His life on the cross. However it is important to understand that He does not seek glory in order to somehow be better than the Father. John 3:16 is perhaps the most famous bible verse in the world, translated widely and spoken by many street preachers.

The Lord Jesus knew that this verse would be popular. In this verse, rather than talking at length about His sacrifice, He gives all of the glory to God the Father - to the One who lovingly gave up His only Son. [16] For GOD SO LOVED the world that HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

We can therefore understand that the Lord Jesus is perfectly justified in seeking glory from the Father - because it was the Son's ultimate desire to give glory to the Father.

## **AS YOU HAVE GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL FLESH**

John 18:3-6 illustrates the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in a striking way: Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am (He) ." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, "I am (He) ," they drew back and fell to the ground. Although the Lord Jesus was up against a group of men with weapons, it was they who all fell to the ground. The Lord Jesus' authority is demonstrated throughout the gospel accounts. He showed that He has authority to forgive sins, heal the sick, cast out demons and raise the dead.

## **THAT HE MAY GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO AS MANY AS YOU HAVE GIVEN HIM.**

Nonetheless, in this verse the Lord Jesus is referring to the authority to give eternal life. The Father was indeed pleased to give the Son this authority. John 6:37 reads, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."

## **AND THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE, THAT THEY MAY KNOW YOU, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, AND JESUS CHRIST WHOM YOU HAVE SENT.**

In this verse, the Lord Jesus makes it clear that eternal life is not a normal life that goes on forever. It's about knowing the One who gives us life in abundance. In Hosea 4, we read: Hear the word of the Lord, You children of Israel, For the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: "There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land" (verse 1). Verse 6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Despite being under the old covenant, King David demonstrated a life in relationship with the living God. Psalms 63:1-8 says, O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

Peter also spoke of the greatness of being in relationship with the Lord Jesus, saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

## **THE LORD JESUS' PRAYER FOR ALL BELIEVERS (John 17:20-26)**

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:20-26).

The Lord Jesus earnestly prays for us to enter into a glorious union with God - with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Not only does the Father love us, but the Son says that as the Father has loved the Son, so the Son has loved us. In John 15, the Lord Jesus calls us to abide in Him, warning us that the branches that do not abide in the vine and wither will be cut off and thrown into the fire. Nonetheless He comforts and reassures us, saying that we are clean because of the Word that He has spoken to us. He also reminds us of the Spirit of truth who comes as a Helper and dwells inside of us.

The Lord Jesus not only desires for us to be one with God but also to have unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This is a godly unity and is shown through our love for one another. The Lord Jesus says at the end of John 17 that the world will believe that the Father really did send His Son into the world as we demonstrate a life of godly unity for the glory of God.