

## I. John 17:1-26 – After Supper Discourse: Episode Three

### A. Introduction

1. When Jesus finished teaching His disciples, He **prayed** in their hearing. This was a magnificent prayer, prayed just hours before the crucifixion.
2. This prayer by Jesus is considered by many to be a **priestly** prayer. It models the mediatory service done by the priests of the Old Testament. Hebrews 9:27 reads, “[Jesus] *who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.*”
  - a. First, the Old Testament priests would offer daily sacrifices for themselves for their **own** sins.
  - b. Second, the priests would offer daily sacrifices for the **people**.
  - c. Third, the priests would offer a yearly sacrifice for the entire **nation**.
3. From the perspective of priestly intercession, Jesus’ prayer is divided into **three** sections.
  - a. In John 17:1-5 Jesus offered a prayer for **Himself**.
  - b. In John 17:6-19 Jesus offered a prayer for His **disciples**.
  - c. In John 17:20-26 Jesus prayed for **future** Church Age believers.
4. This prayer immediately follows Christ’s declaration that He had overcome the world (Jn. 16:33) and reflects His position as **victor**. By praying in their hearing, the Lord certainly intended to encourage His disciples. This prayer reminds us of Jesus’ ongoing intercessory ministry at the right hand of God. He is indeed the final great High Priest. 1 John 2:2
5. Though He spent many hours in prayer, this is Jesus’ longest recorded prayer in scripture. The Bible records Jesus praying before major events in His life. Jesus understood the importance and power of clamoring to God for grace. If prayer was important to our almighty Lord Jesus, it should be that much more **important** to us! Luke 6:12, Mark 6:45-46

### B. John 17:1-5 – The Lord prayed for Himself

1. John 17:1 – This prayer proclaimed **victory**. Jesus was the true overcomer even when faced with imminent betrayal and violent death. John 16:33
  - a. John 17:1a – *Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said “Father ...”* Looking upward, Jesus **opened** His eyes toward heaven. Jesus did not say “Our Father,” He merely said, “Father.” This is because this was an intimate and personal interaction between Father and Son. John 5:18
  - b. John 17:1b – *“...the hour has come...”* The *hour* refers to the **prescribed** time for Christ’s suffering, death for our sins, and resurrection. The verb *has come* ERCHOMAI is in the perfect tense, indicating that His march to the cross was already in progress. We can be certain that the Lord had absolute knowledge of every detail before it developed.
  - c. John 17:1c – *“...glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You.”* Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross and subsequent resurrection would bring the utmost glory to God the Father. Jesus made the glory of God a foundational aspect of His prayer. He wanted the Father to have **preeminence** in and through His life. Ephesians 2:4-10
    - 1) Christ’s death for unworthy sinners brought immeasurable glory to God and continues to do so. God will forever be praised for His indescribable **gift** to us through Christ Jesus. Ephesians 1:3-14, Revelation 5:9-14
    - 2) As believers, we glorify God when we by **faith** present ourselves to Christ so that His glory shines through us in all we say and do. When others see the characteristics of Christ in our lives, God the Father is glorified. Matthew 5:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 1 Peter 2:12, 4:11
    - 3) As the song says, we boast in Christ alone: “When I survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride. Forbid me Lord that I should **boast**, save in the death of Christ, my God.” Jeremiah 9:23-24, Galatians 6:14, 1 Corinthians 1:29-31
2. John 17:2 – *“... even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life .”* Throughout His ministry, Christ emphasized that He came in the **authority** of the Father. John 4:34, 5:24, 7:16, 8:26
  - a. In His prayer, Jesus once again emphasized the authority given to Him by God the Father. He said that Father had given Him authority over all flesh (Gen. 1:26-29). Satan offered Him all this authority without the

# The Gospel of John

- cross (Luke 4:5-8), but Jesus firmly **rejected** him. Jesus overcame every attempt of the devil to get Him to submit. John 13:3, Philippians 2:9-11
- b. The Father gives to Jesus every individual who believes in Him (Mat. 11:28a, Heb. 7:25), and then Jesus in turn gives eternal life (Jn. 1:12) to each individual believer. Jesus' death on the cross authorizes Him to **offer** the amazing gift of eternal life to every person who believes. Matthew 28:16-20, John 10:28
3. John 17:3 – “ *This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent .*” In His prayer, Jesus voiced the essence of eternal life. Eternal life is described as knowing God. Only through the Son can God be **known**. John 1:17-18
- a. It may surprise you, but this is the **only** time and place in the Gospels where Jesus verbally referred to Himself as “ *Jesus Christ*.” This verbal declaration emphasizes that He alone is Messiah and that He alone gives eternal life. John 14:6, Acts 4:12
- b. A person gains eternal life through faith alone in Christ alone; then he or she can grow to embrace eternal life **practically**. 1 John 2:25, 5:20
- c. There are two **aspects** of eternal life. One aspect is a possession (unending life) and the other is experience (quality of life). Context helps us determine which aspect is in view. 1 John 5:11, 13, 20
- 1) Eternal life as a possession comes at justification (Titus 3:7); while eternal life as an **experience** comes through sanctification (Rom 6:22-23).
  - 2) Eternal life is a possession that is received at a moment in time (Eph 1:13); while eternal life as an experience becomes an eternal **quest** (1 Tim 6:12).
  - 3) Eternal life is a possession that can never be forfeited (Jn. 5:24); while eternal life as an experience is in **jeopardy** and can be mishandled or cast aside in practice (Gal 6:8, 1 Jn. 3:15).
  - 4) Eternal life as a possession comes by faith in the good news of Christ's finished work on the cross (1 Cor 1:17); while eternal life as an experience come through **daily** faith in the good news of Christ's inclusion of us in His cross (Rom 6:10-11, 1 Cor 1:18).
- d. Based on our decision to actively abide in Christ by faith, we go on to learn to live life in **companionship** with Him. Christ teaches us through His word, and we respond to Him in dependent prayer. Philippians 1:21, 1 John 1:1-3
4. John 17:4 – “ *I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do .*” Jesus brought the Father glory here on earth by fully completing the task the Father assigned to Him. Doing God's bidding brings Him glory. Jesus fulfilled this goal even in the smallest **details**. In every moment, He powerfully represented God to the world.
- a. The Father **chose** Jesus to bring salvation to humanity, and Jesus, at the price of His life, perfectly executed and fulfilled that plan. Philippians 2:8, 1 Peter 1:28-21
- b. Through His sufferings and sacrifice Christ planned to glorify the **Father**. When we depend on Christ by faith, just as Christ lived in dependence on the Father, then through the power of the Spirit, we come to bring God glory through our sufferings. 1 Peter 2:21, Philippians 1:29-30
5. John 17:5 – “ *Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was .*” Jesus did not ask for **new** glory. Jesus asked His Father to restore His pre-incarnate glory, which, except for His transfiguration (Matt. 17:2), had been veiled during the days of His lifetime.
- a. We know that God the Father answered His prayer because when He returned to His Father's house, He was granted His previous glory. When John saw Jesus in Revelation 1:12-17, he fell at His feet as if dead because of Christ's **splendor**. Acts 2:33, 34-36; Hebrews 8:1, 12:2
- b. Christ received this new position of honor because He completely **submitted** His will to the Father's plan. Philippians 2:5-9, Hebrews 5:8