

The High Priestly Prayer - Part 3

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Date: 11 February 2018

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[0 : 00] Open up your Bibles to John 17. So we've been on a three-week journey that kind of ends today. Thank you for the encouragement that many of you have given me over the last few weeks! Just in how you've been blessed just through John 17, which is known as the true Lord's Prayer, and also really the high priestly prayer of Christ.

And I've just sort of emphasized every week that this prayer that Jesus prays has just blessed my life so much.

And so for quite a while I've wanted to delve into it, just to pass it on in hopes that it would just really strengthen your heart and refer to as the high priestly prayer.

It's just really only about 600, roughly 650 words. It takes a couple minutes to read, but as I've been saying, you could spend an eternity just diving into the words and phrases and implications that are made in this prayer.

And I've been really blessed, just even in the study time of it. One of the commentaries, I just try to narrow it down to a few good commentaries.

[1 : 19] I have three that I've been looking at for the most part. I try to get some more current, modern-day guys, as well as some of the old dead guys who kind of speak to a lot of these things.

But Calvin, John Calvin, has a great commentary on the Gospel of John. And this is something he says about the high priestly prayer. He says, This prayer of Christ is a safe harbor, and whoever retreats into it is safe from all danger or shipwreck.

For it has Christ in it, and he has sworn solely that he will devote his care and his diligence to our salvation. Let the world then condemn us a thousand times, this alone not to satisfy us, that Christ acknowledges us to be his heritage and pleads with his Father for us.

So this prayer really does stand out as preeminent in many ways in God's Word. It's, again, toward the end of what has been referred to as the upper room discourse, or the farewell discourse of Christ in the Gospel of John.

It starts in chapter 13 and ends right here in chapter 17. And he is preparing himself to go, to be arrested, to be betrayed, and to die.

[2 : 42] And this is what's on his mind. His followers are in many ways very anxious. They're afraid because he's saying, I'm about to leave you, and I'm going back to the Father.

So he's been encouraging them with the thought of the Holy Spirit, how he will come and comfort them and lead them, and even saying it's better for you than for me to go away, and for the Father to send the Spirit.

And he's contemplating heavily the events of the cross. And farewell prayers are very common in Hebrew culture. And it sounds like the prayer of Moses in Deuteronomy as he's praying to God before he's departs from this world.

And I've been giving you just sort of a rough outline of the whole chapter every week just so you can go back. But it's been traditionally broken up in about three different ways. But if you look at verses 1 through 5, you see that Jesus more or less is praying for himself.

And the focus of that is his Father's glory, and then in return, his own glory. Secondly, as we looked at last week, verses 6 through 19, Jesus is specifically praying for his disciples, the apostles, the ones he was about to just leave behind.

[4 : 03] And he really just prays for their mission and their protection, their preservation. That they would remain steadfast. And then today, we're going to look at the last part of it.

And I just find this part so humbling, that Jesus prays in verses 20 through 26 for future believers, which include us.

That's me and you. And I've often given the thought of, I know there are many people in your life that when they pray around you, or when they pray for you, you just feel like you could just face anything because of the depth of that person or the relationship that person has with the Father. And you feel like you could just go out and take on the world after a certain person just intercedes for you. But how much more, I think, you know, that Christ himself, if he prayed for us, if he interceded for us.

But that is the reality. He is praying for us. And he says, if you look at verse 20, here's sort of our context. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

[5 : 13] So this is us. So with that, let's just go ahead and read verses 20 through 26. Praying to the Father, he says, I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that 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 have sent me.

The glory that you have given me, I have given to them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and loved me, even as you love me.

Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me, because you love me before the foundation of the world.

O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Let's pray together. Father, I just want to take a minute to just say thank you for your grace, and thank you for the chance to gather with your people this morning.

[6 : 53] Lord, I just pray that you would work in and through me, knowing that there is nothing of value I can bring to the table this morning, only what you convey through your word and by your spirit to our hearts and our minds.

So Lord, just please help us in this time. May we just walk away from this place changed, built up, encouraged, challenged. And I just pray your word would have its desired effect on each individual this morning.

In Christ's name, amen. So, does that not sort of wow you that Jesus is now not just praying for his disciples, then he turns and he's like, I'm praying for them, those who will believe in their word, knowing that the apostles were going to go out, and they were going to preach the gospel, and the church was going to conquer, really.

The church was going to advance. It says early on in Acts that the church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. Right? So they were, in many ways, how God started the church.

Kickstarted, I'd almost said, but not really kickstarted. Not the way you want to phrase that. But it's a confirmation for us to know that our faith is founded on the gospel that the apostles taught.

[8 : 19] And they learned it, as we know, from the Lord himself. But just before we get back into this, I just want to emphasize that this is called, again, the high priestly prayer of Christ.

And it's because he fulfills one of the roles in our lives that we desperately, desperately need. As sinners that are unclean, guilty, and unholy, we need someone to stand in the gap for us, for someone to intercede for us to a holy and righteous God.

If any of us, on our own accord, by ourselves, tried to enter into the holy presence of God, we would all be just consumed. We cannot stand before God.

So Christ, as I spoke of last week, he became the final sacrifice for our sins. But he also gave us his righteousness to stand clean before God and now intercedes for us as our great, eternal, sympathetic high priest.

Amazing. We are in all need of that. I've only been to court a few times in my life. And a few years ago, I went to traffic court to battle a, how do you say this all respectfully, highest respect for law enforcement, but a piece of junk ticket that I got.

[9 : 45] And needless to say, I represented myself. Like I was my own lawyer. I was just like, this is my desk. That's my jug of water. I can, you know, I want to speak into the judge.

Got the cross examined, the witness kind of thing. So, but I mean, needless to say, I took the cops at the cleaners. In Jesus' name. Legally, I knew that I was justified.

The law justified me. Like I had not broken the law. And I could prove that. And he could not prove that I didn't. But I'm just telling you that I don't have that confidence at all to enter into the courtroom

of the Most High.

I have zero confidence. Negative confidence. Very confident that I would be condemned apart from our advocate, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

You're in desperate need of someone to stand in the gap and to intercede for you. So Christ pleads his sacrifice. He pleads mercy.

[10:53] And we are given it. And I just find it astonishing that, I mean, think about what is in front of Jesus at this moment. Just how terrifying that would be.

Not just the physical pain, but the spiritual torture he was about to endure. Anytime your face is something like that, it's usually just a prayer of like, God help me. God help me. Please help me. And I find it amazing that more than two-thirds of this prayer is devoted to praying for other people. He's not praying for himself as much. And so he's interceding for you and for I, as we see like in our text today.

There's not many places for you to turn today outside of John 17. I've tried to cut down the turning, but I want you to look at Isaiah 53. So hold your hand in John 17.

But it was prophesied about hundreds of years before Christ came that he would have this ministry of intercession for his people.

[11:57] Isaiah 53. And if you just look at a little part of it, look at verse 11. And this is talking about Jesus. It's talking about the suffering servant who would come.

And see if you can pick up on the intercessory work of Christ in these verses. It says, Out of the anguish of his soul, he shall see and be satisfied.

By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous. And he shall bear their iniquities.

That's what I just mentioned a minute ago. Therefore, I will divide him a portion with the many. And he shall divide the spoil with the strong. Because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors.

Yet, he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors. That's what we have. We have a great eternal high priest making intercession for us.

[13:01] And before we start unpacking the text, I just thought it would be good to reread this short but very profound quote that Robert Murray McShane shared in the 1800s on a sermon from John 17.

He says, And that's kind of like how I want you to think as we walk through this text.

But there's only two real big things that we want to hit on as we walk through what we just saw in John 17. First off, number one, we see that Jesus is praying for the true unity among believers.

He's praying for the true unity among believers. It stands out all over, but just look at verse 21. He says, he's praying that they may all be one.

And this idea of oneness, togetherness, not split up, not, you know, divided. And so, have you ever heard, I used to kind of talk this way in my earlier Christian life.

[14:25] And like many people, I think I meant well, but I also was just very ignorant about what I was saying. And most of my earlier Christian life can be characterized by ignorance a lot.

But it goes something like this. You've heard people kind of say this. College students say this a lot. Christians just seem so divided. We're so mad at each other all the time.

We're so, why do not, why do not denominations exist? Why, why are we just angry with each other? Why can't we just lay aside all our doctrinal differences and just be friends? Jesus is the main thing, right?

Like, he's really the main thing, so why can't we all just get along? We need to do something to create some unity, right? You ever heard that kind of language?

And again, again, usually well-intentioned and usually well-meant. Not always, but most of the time. And it's a good sentiment, but again, just misguided.

[15:27] And what I want to propose to you today is often people want to create unity, which is really a false unity that comes at the expense of truth and comes at the expense of sound doctrine.

And so two questions that I think will be good for us to examine our hearts as well as just people that we engage with in the church.

What are the first things that people talk about when they're asked about their church? You ever thought about that? We've met some people in our neighborhood and some great, great people in our neighborhood.

But one gentleman that I met, though, I do believe he's a brother, but I asked him about his church, and he just kind of went on about how great it was because of all the programs and kids' ministries and how friendly the environment was.

And in the span of about ten minutes, just said nothing about Jesus. It said nothing about the Word of God. And then secondly, this is a really sort of like litmus test, if you would.

[16:40] What is the gathering component of a local church? What is the gathering component? Often in contemporary evangelicalism, there are local churches that have a large range of gathering components.

They have an age demographic. So teenagers, singles, young adults, whatever you want to say, elderly people. That's like a certain age group.

They have an affinity demographic. You know, again, married, single, college students. That's a huge demographic.

Even just things like richer and upper class. I know some people that would not dare enter into a building that looked like it wasn't at least a million dollars because that's just their style.

It's like they want to. I know people like that. They feel like they have to stoop to go to a place like that. So there's that. There's this music demographic.

[17:44] If you'll say, like, how cool a band is or how contemporary a service is or how traditional a service is, and that's the gathering component. I go there because I like the music there.

The end. Then there's a... This one's huge. I would probably say this is probably the biggest one. A program demographic. We have a children's ministry, a youth ministry, a small groups ministry, a choir, a drama team.

You just got to find your place to plug in. We have more outlets than the place over there for you to plug in. So come here. Really, there's a facilities demographic.

Our building. Everything that we have that really offers comfortable, quote, worship environments. So there's even people, churches, that they send out polls.

I've seen them. I've actually just thrown them away and just said, dude, you don't need to be doing this, and just, like, threw it behind my back. But there are people that will even take polls to see what it would take for people to come to their church.

[18:50] Like, what do we have to do to get you to come kind of thing? And I heard on a local Christian radio station a few weeks ago, which isn't a terrible station, all in all.

But for 20 minutes, I listened to this, and I just wanted to jump to the radio and scream. But the question that they were having callers come in and just call about answer was, how do you do church?

Like, that was, like, the question. And in 20 minutes, I heard every preference under the sun, but not once was it like, what does Christ want for the church?

It was all those things. But the problem with focusing on demographics is, as the point of unity, is when that component is removed, the church falls apart.

Have you all ever noticed that? I was in charge of a part of a really big church that split early in my Christian life. And I could write a book on what I learned just through that experience.

[19:59] But they had an immense children's ministry, huge children's ministry. I mean, thousands and thousands of dollars, children's ministry, and all these higher staff people.

And it got to a point where they had to, they really felt like they needed to shut her down. I can't tell you how many people just went, just left because of that. As we would say, like, a golden calf inside the church, a certain component.

Or, again, I had people used to tell me, Clay, this is before I was married. Clay, why don't you go to a big, big, big church that has a ton of singles in it, then you can find a wife there.

And I'm like, no thanks. God will bring the wife to me. And he did. So, but I mean, like, yeah, like, go focus somewhere where there's a bunch of singles, or there's just a lot of people who look just like you.

This is such bull. And it's heartbreaking. And here's why. Like, look, if your gathering component is anything other than Christ, it won't stand.

[21:08] And, like, here's some of the questions I want you to think. Isn't it sad that the church of Christ that he bought with his own blood usually isn't the main gathering component of why many churches get together?

That his life, his death, and his resurrection are not the central event that those people are coming around. It doesn't bother you that when it comes to doing church, everyone's opinions matter. But Christ, even though the church belongs to him and he is the head of the church, his opinion doesn't matter. Isn't it heartbreaking that thousands have flocked to local churches, even this morning, to get a quick fix, therapeutic, sentimental, pop psychology talk that has nothing to do with Christ or his word?

We just read that in the previous verses, Christ prayed, sanctify them in your truth. Your word is truth. He removed the instrument of sanctification.

You're on a bad course. And isn't it sad that the first thing that people think of is usually a pastor personality or a program that makes their life more enhanced, instead of really focusing on, like, the Son of God?

[22 : 33] Those are tragic things. And we don't need to meet these with... I'm more apt to be more hostile towards a pastor who kind of does this and just a congregator, but show mercy to people and love them and tell them, like, look, Jesus is the reason that we gather, to worship him, to be changed by the word of God.

And if that's not there, the church really won't stand. I've even seen, you know, churches will... The main component will be a certain ethnic group. Or the main component will be even a certain theological persuasion, that they think everybody else is not right there, is not where they are, and they can't fellowship with them.

It's... No. Jesus and the gospel are the main gathering components. But I shudder to think, like, if the Christ that we see in Revelation in the earlier chapters, the Christ that speaks to the seven churches, I would just tremble to hear what he would say to us as he comes at them and he says, this I notice about you, and I have this against you.

Repent. Right? It would tremble, make me tremble to think about what he would say to the American Western church today. We know that Scripture and history teaches us that unity itself is beyond human ability or innovation.

We cannot do it. We stink at it. Even the greatest empires in the world that lasted for hundreds and hundreds of years, they all eventually just fall. They can't survive. Because human unity can't winter.

[24 : 18] They can't make it. And so, we want to focus on our text. If you look at verses 21 and 22, 23, is that what is the source of true unity?

All right? We can see that in our text. What we see in our text, in verse 21, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they may all be in us.

Verse 22, the glory that you have given me, I've given to them, that they may be one, even as you and I are one. See all the emphasis here? To pick up on this, what we see in our text for the basis of the unity of the church is not something that we create.

It's not of human origin. It's within the nature of God himself. You see that? Unity of all believers is grounded in the love and oneness that exists within the Godhead.

It is the overflow of the relations between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are, if we study the Trinity, you will see that the Trinity is united in their motive.

[25 : 35] In all they do, they're devoted to the glory of the Father. Christ is devoted to the glory of the Father. Read the first five verses of this prayer, you'll see that. So they are together on the motive.

But then also the mission. You ever notice that? The Trinity is dedicated fully to the mission of redemption in a united way. So many observations that could be made.

But the spiritual unity comes from that reality of God's redemptive lives and our work. So the unity that we should be considering is not a physical outward unity, but a spiritual unity founded in the Godhead.

All right, so let's just unpack that a little bit. Turn to Ephesians 4. I'm the second place to turn today, but... And I'm going to read just six verses here, but Paul, writing to the church at Ephesus, he's talking about spiritual unity within the church.

And let's just make two observations particularly from this. verse 1, chapter 4.

[26 : 55] He says, I therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing one another in love.

You ever notice that when a church divides and fights that those are the things that are absent, those things that we just read? He says, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

So there's a person of the Trinity, the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope that belongs to your call.

One Lord, there's Christ. One faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

So you see in this text at least a couple of things. You see the unity of the Trinity in their work, but here's a couple of things, two observations.

[27 : 59] Unity is completely a spiritual matter, not physical. You see that? Our passage, indeed, the rest of Scripture doesn't at all define unity as a physical, fluctuating, visible unity, of outward unity of the church.

People just think if we just got all our money together and built one huge, huge building that could hold, you know, 50,000 people, we would be unified. We would not be unified. And we all could gather under one roof.

the physical, no. Spiritual unity comes to us from that reality of the Godhead and His redemptive work in our souls.

So, it's not a focus on a visible unity, but a focus on invisible unity that exists. And then secondly, we see in this text that unity is maintained or preserved and not created.

You see that in verse 3? We don't create unity. Why? Because it already exists in the heart of believers, of all believers.

[29 : 10] believers. So, that's why we're called to maintain it, preserve it, keep it, because we already have it in Christ. So, one of my greatest, I guess, things that I've seen that I think demonstrate this over the years is a conference that I've gone to about four times in the last eight years.

It's called Together for the Gospel. And it's in Louisville, Kentucky. And you have guys from from mainly three different denominational backgrounds.

You have guys like Mark Dever, Al Muller, John Piper, David Platt, who are all Southern Baptists. And then they have their best buddies who are really PCA guys, Presbyterian Church.

So, you have like Ligon Duncan and R.C. Spurl, who just passed away, but Kevin DeYoung. So, you have these Baptists and Presbyterians getting together.

Then you even have a few charismatic biblical gospel guys in that group as well. And so, and they joke about it. They, they're like, no, we have some serious differences on church government, baptism, like, oh, we'll debate each other on those things.

[30 : 32] They have to just kind of joke around and ticket each other about those particular topics at times. But here's the deal, they're best friends with each other. But they love each other. And they, they talk to each other weekly on the phone.

You know, you have a guy like Matt Chandler talking to a guy like John MacArthur on the telephone. Just encouraging and praying for one another. And it's because it was saying, like, look, we are united in Christ and we are united in the gospel.

And that, that, that goes over denominational lines. And so, don't think of denominations as necessarily a bad thing. It actually means that people have convictions about the Bible.

But don't allow it to divide to the point of this person does know Jesus, does believe the gospel, and I'm not their brother, and I'm not their sister because they go to this location. It is a spiritual unity that exists.

Then, another observation, this is the last one, under this idea of unity, true unity. You see it at the second part of verse 21 and the second part of verse 23.

[31 : 42] Why is he praying for unity? So that the world may believe that you have sent me. In verse 23, so that the world may know that you have sent me and love them even as you love me.

So true unity is evangelistic in its nature. Sin causes division and hatred. The fallen world has plenty of that.

But the church is meant to be the greatest ways that we display our love or the love of God for the world by being united as one, being perfectly one. Jesus is saying that as believers we have all things in common.

And when the world sees this, it's attractive because they can't create it. They can't maintain it. They don't have it. And so when they look at the church, they're to see the gospel made visible.

They're to see what things were meant to be like in human relationships before the fall. They see that and it's supposed to be attractive to the outside world.

[32 : 45] Jesus says that you are the light of the world. We are the city that is set on the hill to be a shining example of what God can do. And again, in the church, as believers, we have all things in common.

Many of you could give testimony to this, that Christ can bring together the most different, odd type of people ever. He can bring people that have nothing in common, at least in our earthly sense, together.

And I love that. One of my, I was definitely a lot more of a country good old boy in my high school college years for sure.

And when I first became a Christian, I went on a mission trip to Puerto Rico and a kid there recently, I think he was like 18, came to know the Lord named Joe.

He was more like your gothic punk rocker, like had long hair, but like, like that when he played the drums. And we had like zero in common. And he became one of my closest little buddies.

[33 : 51] Like we were so tight because we had Jesus in common and that's all we talked about was Jesus. Nothing in common in the natural. I have many other friends that are scattered over the globe.

I'm sure many of you do. You just have to bump into somebody who's another believer somewhere else in the world and you're like immediate connection. This person knows Jesus.

That spiritual unity that I'm talking about. So don't think of it in terms of the natural. Please don't. So that's the first thing that Jesus prays for is true unity among believers.

And then secondly and lastly Jesus prays for the future glory of believers. And I hope you're encouraged by this.

Verse 24 Father I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you love me before the foundation of the world.

[34 : 57] So at the outset of Jesus' prayer if you look back in the first five verses he's asking that the father would restore him to that point of glory that he had with the father before creation.

He's asking for that intrinsic glory that rightfully belongs to him as the son that's been in a way veiled while he was here on the earth. So he's asking for that but then he throws in there verse five where he says glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

All right so here's how we're going to do this. I want you just to think. I want you to ponder the most beautiful sight you've ever seen or the most beautiful noise you've ever heard.

Just think about what that could be. It could be a sunset over the ocean or the mountains, a stunning musical concert or a monumental sporting event.

And when you get it in your head, let's just make two observations about that event. There's usually two things that happen. One, something in us long for someone else to be there with us to share that event.

[36 : 16] You ever notice that? We say, wow, this is so amazing, so glorious, so awesome. I wish, fill in the blank, so and so is here with me to see this or to hear this.

And especially the people that we love and we're close to, we want that to be the case. And I believe that's in a way what Christ is saying. He wants us to be there to behold his glory that he had with the Father before the world existed.

So that's amazing. That's the first thing that sort of comes to our mind is the longing for someone else to be there to experience what we're experiencing. thing. Then secondly, underneath that, we don't just want to behold something magnificent from a distance.

We don't want to just see it far off and just stare at it. We really want to be in the middle of it. We want to become a part of it. You ever notice that?

I remember the first time I was with Jonathan Laws, but Andy Truett took the same trip with me. But the first time I ever went to the Scottish Highlands, I was on a bus, and when I was looking out the window, I was like, this is awesome.

[37 : 31] I wanted to dive through the window, like drop me off now and let me get out there and be a part of that. Let me dive in that place. I remember as a little kid listening to the Braves win the World Series on the radio on my bed.

Braves won, Braves won. I was like, dang, I wish I was there to let me be a part of that celebration, to be in the middle of that.

And so when we see something magnificent, we just don't want to look at it from a distance. We want to become a part of it. C.S. Lewis said this about glory.

He said, we do not merely want to see beauty, though God knows that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words.

we want to be united with the beauty that we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, and to become a part of it.

[38 : 33] And that's what I believe heaven will be like forever with God, to behold the Father and the Son and all their glory and all their majesty.

We'll become there with it, a part of it, in it. God's love. And Paul wrote, I mean, how great is this? It's better than anything this world has to offer. It's greater than anything you can imagine.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2, what no eye has seen nor ear has heard for the heart of man imagined for what God has prepared for those who love him.

Just think about that, the immensity of glory that we will get to see and we'll be there with all the redeemed throughout the whole history of the church to take it in and we'll become a part of it.

Then another observation that we can make is this means we will have unhindered fellowship with the Godhead. The sweetest times of fellowship that you and I have had on this earth, just think about that time.

[39 : 40] It could be in the middle of anything and you've had these wonderful moments with the Father where he seemed to almost manifest his presence to you in a very unique way.

You just felt his nearness in an abnormal special way and your heart was just overwhelmed with joy and gratitude and you wished you could just kind of hit pause and stay right there.

You know what I'm talking about? And you just wished that that time would not leave. However, we get just glimpses of Christ here and there's interference.

There's always something that steps in to kind of end that moment. We have hours of contemplation but then our quiet time with the Lord is interrupted. We get hungry, hangry, for some of you.

You get tired. There's a knock at the door. There's a phone call. There's a stupid text message.

There's all kind of stuff that just distract us from that moment that we're enjoying with the Father.

[40 : 44] Naturally, so many things can just happen. And it's kind of like we're going toward heaven and then we're just like pulled back down, kicking and screaming. Like, no!

Leave me in this place. But, but, when we die, when this mortal shell is peeled off and our souls are set free and we go to glory to be with the Father, we will have uninterrupted, unhindered fellowship for all eternity with the Son and the Father.

Eternity will be spent, not by us trying to pay God back and give Him what He's due, but we will enjoy the grace of His kindness to us.

You won't be bored. Boredom is something that the human, fallen human nature struggles with. We get tired of the same thing. But the closest you could probably get to is those of you who have been around kids, have kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews, whatever, want something they love to do. They find something that they like and they want it done again and again and again. And it never ever gets tired, never gets boring. And I feel like that's how heaven will be for us.

[42 : 07] We will not grow weary of the glory that we are beholding. Rather, eternity we will be spending, as Paul says in Ephesians 2, that all this has been done so that in the coming ages, he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ.

I was debating on whether or not to read this, but if you're able to gird up the loins of your minds, just listen as the old term goes to this great quote.

I try to shy away from quotes because I know some people like three-quarters of their sermon are close. I'm like, you should have given me something to read. But, this is Spurgeon on John 17.

He says, I doubt not that there will be many joys in heaven which will amplify the joy that we have there. I feel confident that our meeting our departed friends, the society of the apostles, prophets, priests, martyrs, will amplify the joy of the redeemed.

So, yeah, we're going to enjoy seeing many of the people who have gone before us and after us in heaven. He says, but, still, the sun that will give them the greatest light will be the fact that they are able to see the glory of Jesus Christ.

[43 : 36] And now, there may be many other employments in heaven, but they are mentioned in this text, the chief one, that they may behold his glory. Let us pass as it is in a panorama before our eyes, the great scenes of glory that we shall see after death.

The moment the soul departs from this body, it will behold the glory of Christ. The glory of his person will be the first thing that arrests their attention.

There we will sit in the midst of the throne, and our eyes will be caught by the glory of his appearance, and oh, how the Christian will stop at the foot of his master's throne and look upward, and the tears could be allowed in heaven.

Tears of rich delight will roll down our cheeks when he looks and sees the man enthroned and says, I often used to sing of you on the earth, crown him, crown him, king of kings and lord of lords.

Then Spurgeon has a little verse that he writes, he says, millions of years our wandering eyes shall over our savior's beauty's grove, a myriad of ages will adore the wonders of his love.

[44 : 54] It's not going to get old. Psalm 16 says, in God's presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

It won't become boring. For the believer, that's where we all long to go and we long to be. so, another thing, and the last thing to mention here, you see in verses 25 and 26, that Jesus really also prays for, we have like a foretaste now of that glory.

See the beautiful words that he's used here, righteous father, it's this idea that he's having confidence in the one he's praying to, to bring these things about. But he says, the world does not know you, but the son does, and the son has made you known to those whom you gave him out of the world.

And you may say, like, yes, heaven sounds great, but it seems so far away. It seems like that's just such a far-fetched thing, like we're here on this earth, stuck on this earth.

Well, a couple things. First of all, that might not be true. Some of you could be a lot closer to glory than you think. None of us know the hour that the father may send the son back.

[46 : 20] None of us know when he'll breathe our last. We're just tempted to think that we're just going to walk around here forever. And some of you are already having problems physically, and you know why this can't be it.

I hope that that's a joy to you and not something to be afraid of. Because if what we're reading is true, that should be something that our hearts should long for. But here's kind of the deal.

The good news is that we don't have to wait to get a foretaste of that glory that's ahead of us right now. A foretaste. Christ initially, if you read in our text, he's like, I have made you known to them, and I will continue to make it known.

So, he's saying, I will continue to show them who you are. And this is true for us. We initially are shown the Father when we're born again in regeneration.

We initially get to behold him. We're created to be new. We have eyes to see that we didn't have before. And then the Father gives us the Spirit, and he continues to make him known throughout our lives and sanctification.

[47 : 35] And so, knowing Christ and walking with him, enjoying him is something that we can experience right now. Right now. He is with us every hour of the day, wherever we go.

He said earlier in John 10, I've come that they may have life and have it abundantly. He's not talking about the fancy new car. He's saying it like, this is the life that I will give you, that you are with me. And that fellowship you have with me is to have an abundant life. So in our text, even now, we get to experience that love of the Father, and we get a head start on eternity by going deeper into what Paul calls the unsearchable riches of Christ.

We get to start that now, and to taste and see that the Lord is good. We have that. God, and so I hope that many of you have experienced this.

I hope that you're seeing this prayer of Jesus answered in your life, that you can see the unity of the church, and see that really is something that you really possess with other believers, and that you are longing for the glory to come.

[48 : 52] You don't really want to stay here forever. That you want to go and behold the glory that the Son had with the Father before the world existed.

Many of you have been very close to crossing over into the next life. I have, and I can tell you, like, nothing brings you more joy and more hope and more comfort than knowing that that's what's waiting you on the other side, that Jesus is there, ready to receive you into glory.

so I pray that all of us, as Psalm 73 says, whom have I in heaven but you?
And on this earth there is nothing that I desire beside you, and that my heart and my flesh may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
So we conclude John 17 today, and I pray that it has been enriching to your heart. Continue to go
back and read over it and dive into all the riches that are there.
[50 : 05] Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.