

Sermon Notes on Jn. 17:1-5, Trinity VII

1. Jesus' final sermon to His disciples (Jn. 13:31-16:33) is followed by His high-priestly prayer (Jn. 17:1-26). This sermon is a beautiful summary of the Gospel which He had taught His disciples and this prayer is for Himself (vss. 1-5), the disciples (vss. 6-19), the church of all ages (vss. 20-23), the everlasting security of all of His children (vss. 24-26). Jesus is the great High Priest, the Mediator between God and man. Hebr. 7:25; 9:24; I Jn. 2:1; Rom. 8:34; Is. 53:12; Lk. 23:34. The Bible does not tell us to pray to the saints nor does it say that they pray for us. But Jesus does pray for us.
2. Six times in this prayer Jesus says "Father." (vss. 1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25). Twice on the cross He said "Father." (Lk. 23:34, 46). And because of Jesus we can say "Our Father."
3. Jesus here says "The hour has come." Which hour? The hour for Him to suffer, die, rise and ascend into heaven. The hour to save mankind. Previously He had said that His hour had not yet come. Jn. 7:30; 8:20. But at Jn. 13:1 Jesus knew that His hour had come. And He repeats it here.
4. It is His hour to be glorified, that means His selfless service to His Father and all people. It is His hour to glorify the Father, to serve Him by saving all people. It is His hour to glorify sinners, to die for them and take them to heaven. The word "glorify" or "glory" appears five times in these five verses. As true God Jesus had this glory from eternity (vs. 5). As the incarnate God-man Jesus' human nature received God's glory to save mankind. Now He is sitting at the right hand of the Father in glory and will glorify us when we die.
5. In vs. 1 where Jesus says "Glorify" He must mean "glorify My human nature" because He had the glory of God before the world began (vs. 24). Likewise in vs. 5 when He says "glorify ME" He must mean His human nature because the divine nature already had this glory before the world began. And the word "Son" in vs. 1 refers to His divine nature. Therefore, both natures, human and divine, are mentioned side by side. The same is true in many, many passages. For example: Jn. 1:14; Acts 3:15; I Cor. 2:8; Gal. 4:4; I Tim. 3:16. The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) spoke of Christ this way: "One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably." He is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary.
6. How does Jesus glorify the Father? He answers that in vs. 2: the Father has given the God-man rightful authority over all of mankind so that everything which the Father has given to the God-man may have life eternal. The Father gave me to the Son as a gift. And the Son gives me eternal life. I did not choose Him. He chose me. I did not save myself. He saved me. Nobody makes a decision to be saved.
7. In vs. 3 Jesus explains what eternal life is. It does not begin when I die. Eternal life means to know God, the only genuine God now already. The verb "to know" is the same as Jesus used at Jn. 10:14: "I am the Good Shepherd and I know those who are mine and those who are mine know me." "To know" means the intimate knowledge between Redeemer and the redeemed. See also Jn. 10:27-28 and II Tim. 1:12.
8. In vs. 4 Jesus speaks about glorifying the Father, clothing the Father in splendor. The angels sang of it when they said: "Glory to God in highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Jesus glorified God by completing the work which the Father gave Him to do. What is that? Everything from conception until the ascension. He came not to be served, but to serve, to give His life as a ransom. Mk. 10:45. Men glorify themselves because of their sinful pride. Read Jn. 5:41-44; 8:48-50; 12:41-43. "The glory of men" is sin and sinful pride. "The glory of God" is salvation and everlasting life. We always say in the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever." Jn. 1:14 says: "We beheld His glory." Every believer has seen Jesus' glory and will see it forever in heaven.

Sermon Outline on Jn. 17:1-5, Trinity VII

Theme: JESUS' HOUR OF GLORY

Introduction: At Jn. 7:30 no one laid a hand on Jesus because "His hour had not yet come." The same is said at 8:20. No one killed Jesus. He died willingly. At Jn. 10:18 He said "No one takes My life from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have the authority to give it up and I have authority to take it again." In our text Jesus says: "Father, the hour has come." His hour of glory was the hour of death and the cross.

I-GOD'S GLORY IS THE CROSS. St. Paul said: "We preach Christ crucified." The cross was the center and consummation of His life. Christians identify with Christ by crossing themselves.

JESUS PRAYED "GLORIFY YOUR SON SO THAT THE SON GLORIFIES YOU."

- 1-The incarnation glorified the Son. Jn. 1:14 says "The Word was made flesh and lived among us and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." God glorified His Son by giving Him as a gift to all men. As true God Jesus had the splendor and glory of God from eternity. Vs. 5. This glory was given to the human nature of Jesus to save sinners. People seek glory by getting wealth, power and a big name. God is glorified by giving His only Son. When He was born, the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace."
- 2-The work of Jesus glorified both the Father and the Son. Jesus asked the Father to glorify the Son so that the Son could glorify the Father. How did He do that? By giving the Son authority over all of creation, not to rule it, but, to give eternal life. In vs. 4 Jesus says: "I have glorified You on earth by completing the work which You gave Me to do." What was this work? Jesus revealed the true God to us, the God of everlasting mercy. Jesus took the sins of man upon Himself. Jesus became poor so that man might become rich. The God-man suffered and died, became a curse, to remove death and curse from mankind. In the person of Christ God died. The God-man, Jesus Christ, truly died and rose again.

II-OUR GLORY IS THE CROSS. At Gal. 6:14 we read: "God forbid that I should boast of anything except the cross of Christ through which the world is crucified to me and I am crucified to the world." Jesus' cross separates me from the sinful world and the sinful world from me.

A-The cross gives me knowledge of the only, genuine God. The works of nature give natural man a knowledge of His power and Godhead so that man is without excuse. Paul discusses this at Rom. 1:19-20. The invisible things of creation are clearly seen from the creation of God. But this knowledge of God does not save man. The unbelieving Jews at Jesus' time had a natural knowledge of God but they remained dead in their unbelief. Many people today have a natural knowledge of God but they do not have a saving knowledge of God. Why did Jesus come? Why did the Father glorify Him? So that people could know the only genuine God through Jesus Christ. Vs. 3. Natural knowledge of God frightens man. Jesus gives knowledge of God which comforts. He said: "I know My sheep and My sheep know Me. My sheep hear My voice and I know them and I give them eternal life."

B-The cross gives eternal life. Vss. 2-3. God gave His Son, God glorified His Son, so that everyone who believes in Him has everlasting life. Why does a Christian rejoice? Because he has life eternal now already. To know God and Jesus is to have eternal life. It's like a check which God has addressed to each of us and signed with Jesus' blood. The saved thief on the cross is a picture of every believer. The most important thing on Mt. Calvary was the gift of everlasting life to all men.

Conclusion: How are the Father, the Son and all mankind glorified? By the coming of the God-man, Jesus Christ, Who met death and conquered it, Who took away the sins of the world, Who says: "Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavily-laden and I will give you rest."

Sermon Notes on Mt. 17:1-8, The Transfiguration, Trinity VII

1. The Transfiguration of Jesus, recorded also by Mk. 9:2-8 and Lk. 9:28-36, occurred about a year before Jesus' death, north of Israel near Caesarea Philippi (now in Lebanon), on a mountain which cannot now be identified. It occurred six days after Peter's confession, Mt. 16:13-20. On that occasion Peter proved to be a hindrance to Jesus, Mt. 16:22-23. He and two other disciples were to be witnesses to the transfiguration, II Pet. 1:16-18, and to be strengthened in their faith.
2. The glory of the Lord appeared to Moses on Mt. Sinai, Ex. 24:13-16. But Moses gave the Law only. Elijah the prophet was victorious on Mt. Carmel, I Kings 18:19-46, but he only prefigured John the Baptist. In our text Jesus appeared with Moses and Elijah to Peter, James and John as a foretaste of eternal glory. Luke tells us that Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah about His suffering, death and resurrection.
3. The Transfiguration of Jesus proves that He is true God and true man. His divinity shone through His humanity on this occasion. But evidently Moses and Elijah strengthened Jesus for His suffering and death.
4. We do not know whether or not the three disciples heard the conversation of Jesus, Moses and Elijah. But the sight made them ecstatic. Peter wanted the occasion to last but Luke says that he did not know whereof he spoke. The three did hear what the Father said. This caused them to fall down in fear. Then Jesus approached them and said: "Rise up and quit fearing." Like the disciples, we are fickle. One moment we are in ecstasy. Another moment we are afraid. Then Jesus comes to us and says: "Quit being afraid."
5. Read II Pet. 1:16-21. The sight of the Transfiguration strengthened them for what lay ahead. But they always remembered what the Father said: "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Be hearing Him." The Father was pleased and satisfied with the person and work of His Son. He directs our whole attention to Jesus' Word. Jesus comes to us only through His Word, not in visions.
6. Moses and Elijah were prophets of God who showed people their sin. But only Jesus could cure sin and bring it to an end. Now we have the message of both, Law and Gospel. We use them for ourselves and to build the Kingdom of God on earth.
7. John, who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, wrote later: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Jn. 1:14.
8. Rev. 1:13-16 portrays Christ in the state of glory and is very likely a picture of what the three disciples saw. I Jn. 3:2 tells us: "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He appears we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is." No wonder Peter wanted to build three tents for Moses, Elijah and Jesus! He wanted this to continue. But the Father said: "Peter, you listen to Jesus' Word." Often we long for the glories of heaven. But the Father says: "Not yet. Just listen to My Son." The Bible assures us that when we die we will see the glorified Jesus. We will not be afraid because we too will have glorified bodies. We will be everything that Jesus is except that we will not be God.
9. Twice, on other occasions, a voice came from heaven about Jesus: when He was baptized, Mt. 3:17, and shortly before Jesus' death, Jn. 12:28.
10. A German theologian remarked that what the Father said in vs. 5 of our text contains three parts: the first from the Psalms (Ps. 2:7 Thou art My Son), the second from the prophets (Is. 42:1 In Whom My soul delights), and Moses (Deut. 18:15: Listen to Him).
11. Peter, James and John were Jesus' witnesses on three important occasions: Mk. 5:37; our text and Mt. 26:37.
12. The verb "appeared" in vs. 3 is used in the Bible of actual heavenly appearances. Also of God at Acts 7:2 and Jesus, Acts 9:17. It truly happened.

Sermon Outline on Mt. 17:1-8, The Transfiguration, Trinity VII

Theme: THE MEANING OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

Introduction: What happened on this occasion is unique in the history of the world. Many things in the life of Jesus are absolutely unique because He is unique. And all the uniqueness of Jesus has meaning for us. We wish to learn from this uniqueness.

I-IT TELLS US WHO JESUS IS

A-He is the One Who was prophesied. At the end of this occasion the Father from heaven said to all mankind: "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased. Hear Him." The voice from heaven came on two other occasions in the life of Jesus: when He was baptized, Mt. 3:17, and a few days before He suffered and died, Jn. 12:28. And these words are a summary of several OT prophecies concerning Jesus. Ps. 2:7 (a prophecy of Jesus) says: "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You'." (See Hebr. 1:5). Secondly, Is. 42:1 (also a prophecy of Jesus) reads: "Behold My Servant Whom I uphold, My elect One in Whom My soul delights." Thirdly, Deut. 18:15 (cf. Acts 3:22) says: "The Lord Your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me (Moses) from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear."

B-He is true God and true man. In many places the OT foretold that the Messiah would be true God and true man in one person. For example, Is. 9:6 where He is called child and God. Gabriel told both Mary and Joseph that He would be the God-man. His many miracles proved that. When Thomas called Him "My Lord and my God" Jesus did not deny it. On the occasion of our text Jesus' divinity shone through His humanity and even His clothing. Only His human nature was transfigured. It assured the disciples that the One Who would suffer was the God-man.

II-IT TELLS US WHAT HE DID

Six days before the transfiguration (Mt. 16:21-23) Jesus not only told His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem to suffer much from the elders, chief priests and scribes and that He must be killed and on the third day must arise from the dead. This was offensive to Peter. And, though he meant well, Jesus told Peter that his thoughts were of Satan. Jesus had to carry out His mission. Not even Peter was to stop Him. In this same account Luke tells us that Moses and Elijah spoke, on this occasion, with Jesus about leaving this life, which means His suffering, death and resurrection. Even in a moment of great glory on a mountain top, the Gospels direct our attention to the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus came not to be served but to serve, to give His life as a ransom for mankind. That's what the transfiguration is about.

III-IT TELLS US WHAT WE HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO

Rev. 1:13-16 gives us a glimpse of what the glorified Lord Jesus looks like. The dying Stephen (Acts 7:56) saw the glorified Jesus standing at the right hand of God. When Saul was converted He was given a glimpse of the glorified Lord (Acts 9:3-6). At II Cor. 12:1-5 Paul tells us of the glimpse of heaven which he was privileged to see. At Jn. 14:2-3 Jesus tells us: "In My Father's house are many apartments. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and take you to Myself so that where I am you may be also." And I Jn. 3:2: "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He appears we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is."

Conclusion: The transfiguration of Jesus tells us the important things: The Lord Who saves us by His Word now and promises to take us to Himself when we die. We can't stay on the mountain top. We still must suffer in the valley but the crown of life awaits us.