

CCF Study Notes
Tuesday 7 AM Study
2 May 2006
John Chapter 17

Before beginning to read from John Chapter 17 let's spend time in prayer, considering why Jesus came and what He revealed of the Father. Let's ask God that we might:

1. **Glorify** the Father in all that we do;
2. **Embrace eternal** life that comes through knowing God and knowing Christ;
3. **Glorify** Christ for who He is and the work He has finished;
4. **Keep and treasure** the words of God that come to us through Jesus Christ;
5. Be **One** in Christ;
6. Have His joy **fulfilled** in us, being sanctified by His word, and
7. **Live** for Christ now, and be with Him forevermore.

Chapter 17 is a treasure, unique in all of scripture. In this chapter we enter into the very prayer life of Jesus Christ. We walk on sacred ground! There are requests here that only Jesus could make. There are requests which are an example for us as well. We must carefully identify those things which are unique to the relationship between the Father and the Only Begotten Son. Nowhere do we get a clearer glimpse into the heart of God than in this prayer. We learn the secret of powerful prayer – prayer that reaches into the very heart of God. We learn what it is that glorifies the Father and something of the glory of Christ. We understand what Jesus is seeking to accomplish and what His will for those who are His own. Have you experienced this kind of prayer that probes the depths of your being, exposing every part of your life to the light of Christ?

In verses 1-5 we see the eternal interacting with the temporal. Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before time began, has entered into our world and our times, so that now He speaks of the present, the future and the past. Yet through the knowledge of Christ temporal beings like us enter into eternal life. Jesus asks for glory. What was He asking for and why would He ask for such a thing? What is the most important aspect of the authority which is given to Christ? We often act as if healings or signs and wonders were the measure of Jesus' authority. But there is something much greater that He has authority to give. Does verse 2 present a problem for the "universalists" who claim that everybody is saved? Unless you know God and know Jesus Christ you cannot have eternal life. Neither the atheist nor the agnostic has eternal life. The one refuses to know God; the other claims to be unable to know God. Where are we going? The best thing we could ever hope to say as we finish our walk on earth is that we have glorified God and finished the work he gave us to do. Here Jesus has not yet gone to the cross – so He is most likely speaking of His public and private ministry. What Jesus would suffer after this point was

more of an "offering" than a "work". But Jesus saw beyond the cross to the joy of being reunited with the Father. So we must look beyond the troubles of this life.

We learn who God is through Christ – that's what it means to manifest God's name. The "I am" has been here! Jesus ministers to those who keep God's word. These belong to God. How do we know who we are? If we are keeping God's word then we are God's children – and that's all we need to know for now. When we receive the gospel of Jesus Christ as the word of God then we accept not only the One sent by God, but God Himself. When we treat scripture as something less than the word of God we are rejecting God.

Verses 9-12 speak of the present and past, that Jesus is glorified in His disciples and that He has kept all His disciples from the evil one. Jesus is able! Is Jesus glorified in you?

Verses 13-15 tell us what Jesus is asking for us, who are still in the world. Jesus doesn't ask that we should be taken out of the world. What does this say to the more extreme monastic movements in which Christians have withdrawn from the world? Are we doing the same thing when we restrict our social interactions to the church? Jesus asks that we be kept from the evil one. If you feel like the rope in a tug-of-war game you know the power of Jesus' prayer. God won't let you go no matter how hard Satan may pull you.

Verse 16-19 look to the positive side of this same issue. We are being set apart, since we are not of this world. It is the truth of God's word, abiding in us that sets us apart. Is it important for Christians to be in the word? What happens when Christians aren't in the word much? Now take verse 18 in hand and reread the whole of chapter 17 – it becomes a tool for interpreting this prayer. Jesus was set apart by His death and resurrection that we might be set apart for God.

Verses 20-23 explicitly refer to all of us who are believers in the church age. We believe through the word of the apostles. We are one in Christ, just as Jesus was one with the Father. Our unity in Christ is the evidence to the world that Christ was sent from God. So how important is it that we remain united in Christ? More than that, we are to be the visible expression of God's love. Wow! No wonder Jesus gives us His glory!

Jesus came to be with us for a little while that we might be with Him forever. Jesus' ministry grew to a climax as he spoke to great crowds, then shrinks to where He is ministering to one or two before His ascension in John 21. He's coming back for us! He's coming back to rule the world! In this we see the righteousness and love of God.

P.S. MP3s of recordings of these studies in John and copies of these notes are now posted at <http://www.apu.edu/~jstoker>. The MP3s are not streamed, and are 13-14 Megabytes in size. These will easily download via DSL connections but not via dialup connections. These studies are now available via podcast as well, for the really trendy folk among us.