

Gospel of John (2nd Yr Study 15 of 19, Chap 17 Start)

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God and experiencing the joy and love of God in our lives, as revealed in Jesus' actual prayer in the 17th chapter of John.

Duration: 58:57

Scripture: Matthew 5:27-28, John 16:33 - 17:1, John 17:12-15

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of truly believing in Jesus and allowing that belief to transform one's life. He highlights the difference between living in the Old Testament versus the New Testament, where God's love is demonstrated through giving. The preacher encourages the audience to overcome worldliness and to strive for a deeper understanding of salvation, which involves sharing God's gifts while on earth. He also emphasizes the need for believers to actively work and finish the tasks that God has given them, not to earn salvation, but to increase their worthiness and receive commendation from God.

Transcript

Thank you, Lord, for loving us, being so wonderful as we have discovered thee to be, being gracious toward us. Your first thoughts toward us are love. Bless thy name.

There is none like thee, and we praise thee for it. Thou art that unique one, therefore we seek thee, that we may receive the prize as well as the gift, and this day we pray that thy grace shall overtake each one of us in our thoughts, and thy love be our perfect aim. We bless thee, Lord, for thy grace.

Thank you for ever wanting us, sinners that we were. Thank you you saw something in us worth saving. Our heart's love are just us, Lord.

We just glory in thee. We praise thee that thou hast gathered us unto thyself, that at thy feet we may learn of thee and glorify thee this day and forever. Amen.

Now, today we're going to approach and enter into, by God's grace, that which I consider to be the greatest chapter in the Bible. This is the Lord's prayer. It's not the prayer that the Lord gave his disciples.

If I've made this clear before, at least I've mentioned it. It is his own actual prayer. A sample of what you would find in the Lord prayed, and remember once, going back to Luke's gospel, they heard him pray, those disciples, and they realized they couldn't pray.

Though undoubtedly they'd said prayers of some sort during their lives, they said to him, Lord, teach us to pray. They couldn't pray. You know, don't you, that prayer has to be you.

You mustn't fancy yourselves. You mustn't think you're great. Just to enter into this, may make you say, Lord, teach me to pray.

It's a very wonderful thing, and I pointed out, when we were last together, that he prayed it because he brought his followers through at last to the place where they had to come. They never really properly believed him. Of course, they believed the things he said, but how would you have liked to face up to that, what's called the Sermon on the Mount, which you find in Matthew, when he took the Ten Commandments of Moses and showed them that they were but shells of the inner meaning of God.

He said, for instance, you heard that Moses said, as we said, thou shalt not commit adultery. So on, wonderful commandment, thou shalt not but I say unto you, if you look upon a woman to lust after her, you've already committed adultery in your heart. Boy, what do they think of that? Or thou shalt not kill.

He said, I'm, he says to you, you mustn't even say to your brother, you're a fool. That's how he took these things. He took Moses apart.

And finally, this may shock you, but he said to his disciples, he said, I shall not accuse you to the Father, you have one that accuses you, Moses, in whom you trust. So don't trust just because you keep the Ten Commandments, will you? Now Moses said, of course God spoke to him relevant to their spiritual situation in those days. But you and I are to enter into much, much more than the children of Israel have.

Therefore the commandments are different. They don't differ from the essential truth that was uttered by Moses. They were explained in fullness.

Not just that you should hold yourself back from stealing things, thou shalt not steal, you see. But that you want to give it all to people. You see what it is? God so loved that he gave.

This is the whole difference. And don't you live in the Old Testament. You live entirely in the New.

Keep that very, very clear. You can learn lessons from the Old, of course. It was a marvellous thing to meet Jesus.

And I don't know whether you really met him if I listen to you and observe you. And that's it. But because at last they said, by this we believe that thou cam'st forth from God.

Jesus said, do you now believe? What do you believe? And at what depths do you believe things? Enough to change your life? Enough to make you like that? Of course the argument could come, well you ask, well what do we believe? We wouldn't be here if we didn't. But we have to learn, we've got to believe much, much more than we've ever believed. Much more.

So this is how we approach this 17th chapter. These words, that is, Jesus said, you're going to be scattered if you want your own, leave me alone, and all those kinds of things, told them to cheer up because he had overcome the world. Now notice what the one who overcomes the world does.

He had lived for 33 years in this world and he had overcome it. The thing that overcomes Christians is worldliness. It's very easy to get into mere worldliness and excuse it of course.

But what a tremendous thing is this. I've overcome, then he talked to his Father. He's on his way now to Gethsemane.

These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. Now he is walking, he's not kneeling on his knees, he's not sitting down praying, he's walking to Gethsemane and you notice his eyes were wide open and lifted up to heaven. That's how he's going.

Do you ever pray while you're walking? Do you? What goes on inside you? I wish I could hear it. I only hope that if I heard it I would not be offended or disgusted by it or shocked. For it is that which goes on inside you, isn't it? That's the great glory.

He says, glorify thy Son, Lord, or he's talking to his Father, thy Son also may glorify thee. If you were here yesterday morning, perhaps you all were, I don't know, I never spotted all of you. And anyway, my eyes are not so good as they used to be.

It's something related to what I was talking about yesterday morning, whether you are born, translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love. That's what the difference is. When you're born again, you're translated into that kingdom immediately.

You can't be born again outside that kingdom. Keep it clear. It is the birth that translates you.

What a marvellous thing that's so true. I want to glorify thee, he's praying, as thou, Father, has given me authority. That's the word in the Greek, thou has given me authority over all flesh.

The Son is given authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him. Speaking of himself in the third person here, the exaltation is to bring the Father. He's exalting us to know the Father, thou should give him authority over all flesh.

He has been given that authority, but the cross to which he was going was going to give him greater authority still. Marvellous. And this is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

You do know the only true God, don't you? And why do you think he called his Father the only true God? The only one. Because when you get to heaven, when it's all over, we shall see the invisible one who never once became a man. You understand that? Jesus was God in the flesh.

Father was the truth. He came from the invisible Jesus into the visible flesh, the hearable. But that really isn't the true God, he wasn't talking about nature's now.

And we shall see him. Very wonderful. I long for the day when I shall see him.

See the Father. You know, the real rock bottom of all the trouble in this world is that fathers have not been fathers as they should be. And you may look back upon that kind of a life even in the flesh.

I don't know. If your father, I mean your physical father, had really been a father to you. How often I have heard this, is my father was a gambler, drunkard, or something like that.

And if all the fathers had kept right, the world would be right. I know there's mothers as well. And if they go wrong, usually they're worse than men.

But here's the wonder of it all. All right, I could just stop on that and preach about a father for another two hours, but I want to go on. But this is what Jesus was longing for.

He wanted to go home to his father. And you know finally on the cross he said, Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit. I wish you knew my father.

That sums up all his ministry, preached ministry on this earth. Wish you knew my father. The love, the true love, nothing to do with male or female things.

Just the true glorious love. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a love, John, without the nuisance of our flesh, which intrudes often, too often, into people's thoughts and lives. This is a marvelous thing for us to understand what it's all about.

You've given me authority over all flesh to give eternal life, but only to those that you've given me. You understand that? Did you know that you can't come to Jesus and say, Father draws you to him. Did you know that he said it in this gospel? It's not been in our studies this time.

No man can come to me except my father himself draws. If you haven't seen the attraction of Jesus, or you think some film star or person who walks the catwalk is the one that draws all people on. I hope it's not Field Marshal Montgomery that, oh sorry, some of you won't know about him, but there he is, draws you to his self, or Oliver Cromwell or someone.

You'd love to be like him. You'd love to be like her or something. Poor, poor you.

If you've never seen the loveliness of Jesus, I hope this chapter will introduce you to it in all its fullness and loveliness. And life eternal is this, to know God. That's life eternal.

When you know God, then you know you have eternal life. Which isn't sufficient to say, well I believe the Bibles. Do you know this? That the devil believes the Bible? Do you know that? Keep that very clear.

But you see, he is damned, because he led men and women into sin. Started a rebellion in heaven when his name was Lucifer. And of course, that's why we had to have a saviour from heaven.

Sin started in heaven amongst the angels, rebelling against God. Alright? So we had to have a heavenly person named Jesus come down to deal with it. Simple.

It's all very reasonable, understandable. And now it's loyalty to the Lord. Listen to him as we go through this prayer.

Time's forsaking me already. It says this, Jesus says, I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Now understand, he had finished the work that Father gave him to do in his preaching, nationwide ministry on the earth. He'd finished all that. He had one great work now to do, and that was to die on the cross.

And it was on the cross he finally said, finished, or shouted it out. And then he yielded up his spirit to God. His Father.

I'd done it. I'd done that. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self.

He glorified him, Jesus glorified his Father, as a man amongst human beings. Now I want to be glorified with thee in thy wonderful, invisible self. The glory that we enjoyed together, Father, before I became a man.

That's what he's after. Now you labor, whoever you are, whatever you are, and however you are, to be in that. For that is the greatest thing.

Stop moaning and crying about going to heaven. Get your vision fixed on Jesus. Your heaven will begin on earth when you're purified from sin and Jesus reigns in your life.

It's got to start down here. Do you understand that? And Jesus never takes you to heaven to forgive your sins. He came down to earth, made himself available on earth.

Lord help us. Here it is. I want to comment on every verse of this.

It's so wonderful. And he says, I've glorified thee on the earth. Now you be sure that you can say that, if you're in consciousness and can speak before you finally leave this earth.

I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. You will remember that he claimed and said it and it's recorded on the earth.

He said, my father works hitherto. This is John chapter 5. And now I must work. He carried on in a wonderful way.

And that's how it all went on. You are here to finish some works. Do you understand that? You've got to work.

Now you don't get salvation by working, but you will increase your worthiness and commendation from God if you do. You can't laze your way into heaven. You've only got one life.

You've got to work. And if you work, and I've been working for many years, you see how well I look on it. Don't think you're going to be the other.

You're going to go on and go on and go on. Working for the Lord Jesus Christ, oh you may not be a preacher like I am. You may not be a missionary, I don't know, but you've got to work.

You women, if you get married, all of you, some of you, one of you, yes, but you've got to work for God in your family. The first mission field of a woman is her own family. That's it.

She's got to win her children for Christ. I wish we would get obsessed with this idea. I've manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.

Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things are connected with the previous chapter. By this we believe.

We know now, they said. All right. You see, it's fancy, laboring with those men for those years, they just got to the point where they could say they knew.

How much time has God spent on you? Just think. Three years. The time God spent working on me, years and years and years, not only working on me, but in me.

Come on, come out of all the other things and get into truth. It's Jesus praying, and you know what he's praying. You can read it.

Here it is. I've manifested thy name. He didn't manifest his own, he manifested his father's.

He was transparent glass, if I may use that term, through which men could see God, the father. Like when he went into that home where Jairus's daughter was dead on a bed. Now he spoke to the maid, she was dead, and then the words he actually said was, little pet lamb, I say unto thee, arise.

It's not translated, but this is the Greek, that way, on the Aramaic, which he spoke. Okay, Koine Greek, as it's called. Little pet lamb.

Sounds like a father speaking, doesn't it? He'd come for that, you see. Oh, I wish you knew my father. I wish you knew my father.

Glorify thou me with thine own self. With the glory I had with thee before the world was, I manifested thy name. To the man, notice he never had any women disciples.

Just notice that. Would it have been impropriety to have had women, because they had at times, and Jesus did more than you thought about him. He slept under hedges with his disciples.

He said, birds of the air have nests, foxes have a hole, but I haven't got a hole to go to. I'm putting it into language, it's understandable to us, I haven't got anywhere. He slept out in the streets.

He's great, he's a man I can admire. They've kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou has given me are of thee.

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. Listen, are your prayers anything like this? Not to usurp the unique position of Jesus, but are they in the same vein, are they of the same calibre? Do you think like this? Ah, God's got to get into your thought life. Right then and there you'll never do anything more than think about yourself when you're praying or something like that.

Listen to Jesus walking toward what would be called his execution, though not yet apprehended by the crowd. Alright, I pray for them, these men, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine thou art. Oh, it's all so wonderful, isn't it? All mine are thine, they are mine, thine are mine, and I am glorified in them, and now I have no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou has given me, that they may be one as we are. How about that? Have you had the faintest experience of that? Of course you would have read it. One as God the Father and God the Son are one.

Are you like that? Say with the person sitting next to you. Really one. Hallelujah.

Marvellous prayer. I thank God that at least one person prayed like this for me, and his name is Jesus. It's so glorious.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me, I have kept. None of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture may be fulfilled.

And now I come to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. All right? Now think of yourself. Focus your mind on yourself.

Not to worship yourself, and ask yourself, are you experiencing the joy of Jesus? That's what it's about. Have my joy fulfilled in you? Is that right? Or are you a constant misery? Or do you get it for a second or two in a church or something? This joy, you know the difference between joy and happiness, don't you? Happiness, like the word, it's included in the word, it depends upon what happens. Happiness depends upon what happens.

But joy is a quality of the soul that is the same under all circumstances. Because it's from God. It's not from this world, what some man or some woman said to you, or done to you, and all this thing.

There's a constancy which is very rare among Christians. You can hear it coming out of their mouths. A constancy of joy.

A second to love in the fruit of the spirit. Here it is, the fruit of the spirit in Paul's fifth gospel as I call it. It's love, joy, peace.

It's a wonderful place. Following hard on love next to it. Real joy, that it's the same, and it's maintained under all circumstances through life.

Can I tell you a story? It's very personal. I'm sure Doc will have heard this before. Or I might have told you here, I forget.

So if I preach the same sermon twice to you or something, you'll understand. It's my age. All right.

I buried my wife. I believe I have said it before. Excuse me, it's worth repeating.

To me, anyway. I actually buried her. I did the whole thing myself, except lower the body into the grave.

I don't see why you should say too close a relationship for me to do it. I read in my Bible that Abraham buried his own wife. All right.

He's called the father of the faithful, but quite faithfully now, like a flock of sheep, you always engage somebody else to do it now, instead of doing it yourself. All right. Here's the thing.

I walked following the hearse on my own. Behind me walked my daughter's son-in-law. And as I was walking along, my heart was flooded with joy.

You would have expected me to be weeping, wouldn't you? All right, I'm telling you the story. My heart was flooded with joy. Other people were crying and weeping.

I don't know where it all came from. It whirled up inside me. And I turned around to my son-in-law and I said, Dave, come and walk beside me.

So he stepped up beside me. And I said, Dave, I can't understand it. I said, I'm flooded with joy.

Flooded with joy. I had to examine my own heart. And he said to me, I think you do, dad.

I think you do understand it. Joy. Joy.

She gone home. I don't know. Of course, you have to go through things before you can experience it, you see.

I may tell you when you say, well, it's funny. Everybody else wept. My mother wept.

My father wept. My, I, I wept. You know, all that.

But I said, oh, this is the thing. Be of good cheer, he said. I've overcome this world and its ways and its mere humanities.

So don't go to university to learn humanities, will you? Go to the Bible and to God. Here is the great thing, beloved. Joy.

Joy. Glory to God. I won't say my eyes haven't gotten a bit wet since when I think back over it.

But here we go. God makes you wonderfully human and properly human. You taste of his joy first.

And the mere human thing follows after. Copy humanity and if you follow, copy humanity hard enough, you'll go to where the majority of humanity is going. What a marvellous thing.

Now, I've got to hurry up. I want to, you know, I've only got the rest of this week. Let's go on.

I would long to have a long time with you. Here it goes. I am glorified in them, he said.

Oh, my, my. When you can say that all I have and all I do and all I want to do is God's gifts and God's will, you'll begin to understand more and more what this mighty salvation is when you get it. It is not just a preventative measure to keep you from going to hell.

It is the sharing of God and God's gifts whilst you're alive on this earth. This is what salvation is. That's why, again, Paul writes, you work out your own salvation.

You work it out. If it's not in, you can't work it out. It doesn't mean work it in as you, when you first attempted to master algebra or something like that.

Not work it out up here. It means work it out from here. Your being.

Be a channel of blessing, you know. Anybody thirst, let him come unto me and drink. That's the wonder of it.

That's your calling. It's to be like Jesus. This is salvation.

Nothing else is. Being like Jesus. It's not, I'm not just quoting to you from books.

Jesus didn't. He used the Old Testament sometimes in reference. New Testament wasn't written then.

God gave them the New Testament in person. The person was Jesus. And your salvation is merely, if I may put it into these terms, Jesus sharing with you something of his experience, his love, his joy, his peace, his power.

That's what it is. Incorporation of these things. It's a marvellous place to be.

That's what it is. God didn't give us a lecture. And God so loved the world that he didn't send a television set or a radio or a printing press.

He gave us his son. Take it in, beloved. Take it in.

I tell you the most solemn truth. So, oh, let's go on. I'm going to gallop now.

In about a quarter of an hour I shall want a cup of tea. But let's go on. It says this.

While I was with them in the world, verse 12, I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me have I kept. None of them is lost.

But the son of perdition, and that was only because the scripture must be fulfilled. And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word, and the world has hated them, because they're not of the world, even as I am not of this world.

I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but thou shouldst keep them from the evil. That's the greatest proof. If you should be kept from evil ways, evil companions, evil thoughts, evil practices, evil habits, that's the greatest triumph of God in you.

They're not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

You understand this? Are you allowing God to sanctify you? Make you holy? Set apart by that wonderful new life that he's given you, that cannot feed on the world, nor feed on its ways, or its words, or its works. That's what sanctification means, or part of it. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify myself.

Oh, note that. Let this be a guide to the way you pray. But he was a sanctified person.

When he prayed, he says, I sanctify myself. What did he mean by that? For the next thing that lay ahead of him, the torturous experience in the garden of Gethsemane, and the fulfilment of the wickedness and consummation of all sin on the cross. That's right.

He set himself aside for that. Now no miracles now. He'd done his greatest miracle to date, and to wit, the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

That was his greatest. And now he was going home. Beloved, if Jesus Christ hasn't done enough for you to satisfy you for all eternity, I want to tell you, you'll go to hell too.

Keep it clear. He sanctified that holy man even more intensely, if it could be possible, sanctified himself. To this, to be the scapegoat, the bearer of all sin, the punishment that ought to have been given to me and to you, God punished his son with that.

He laid upon him the iniquity of us all. That's what you've got to do. God knew that you couldn't bear to pay for your sin.

You couldn't bear to have it. And if you insist on keeping sin in your life, you'll have to go to a lost eternity. Jesus sanctified himself, made himself holy, set himself apart.

That's right. He said, where I'm going, you will remember, you cannot follow me now, Peter. I've got to go alone.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which will believe on me through their word. This is one of my greatest concerns, that when God allows me to preach, some will believe on Jesus through my word. You don't have to get a swell head about it.

It's just a fact. Jesus said it. Those that are going to believe on me through their word, that they all may be one.

You know, when I went to Sunday school, another little solo for you, you can laugh about it. Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in his sight.

Jesus loves the little children of the world. I was brought up on that. I thank God for parents like I had.

Yeah, it's this universal thing. Those who should believe on me, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. What? Yeah.

Because we talk about receiving Jesus, taking Jesus as your savior, and all these kinds of things. But it will be the father who sent Jesus into your life. He is still obedient to his father.

You understand it is a gift of God. It's all the time the same. But listen, verse 22, the glory which thou gavest me, I've given them that they may be one.

Even as we are one. And here you've got different doctrines, different that separate this congregation. They only want to go to a Baptist church and these only want to believe what Wesley taught them.

They all may be one. That's humanity. It's not Godliness.

We're one. supposed to be. This is the greatness of it.

It's so marvellous that Jesus says you're to be one as he and his father are one and were one on the earth. That's something to aim for. Isn't it wonderful? The fulfilment of Jesus' prayer, me? That's how you should talk to yourself.

One. I in them, thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one and you will not be made perfect in God's sight as you are not one with each other. Nothing to do with cultural backgrounds, the practices of some lands, peoples that are entirely different from yours.

We've got to be one. The greatest chorus I ever heard in my life that came out of what shall we say, darkest Africa was this. Lord make us one.

Lord make us one. Do you know it? Lord make us one evermore. Lord make us one.

Lord make us one. Lord make us one evermore. One in Jesus' name and so on.

One in the Holy Ghost. The very words of Jesus, make us one. Three persons in one God.

Keep it right in your eyes and in your heart. I give them glory that they may be one I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one. The world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am. They may behold my glory which thou hast given me for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee and these have known that thou hast sent me and I have declared unto them thy name and will declare it.

The love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them. Now if you haven't got the love in you, wherewith the Father loved Jesus, he won't be in you. He cannot live except in love.

That's the truth. That's the sort of thing he's talking about. What are we spending our mind, our talk, our thought, our prayers, what are we doing if we're doing that instead of spending our whole being on love.

He won't dwell anywhere eternally except in love. He'll visit to say he only visited this world. You keep it very clear.

He will not because he cannot live for true life consists of love. John 3, you know, God so loved. That's what it's got to be, friend.

It's only a gift, don't worry about it. I'm gifted to be able to preach, I say. Okay, but if I preach to you without love, I'm your enemy.

Because you will begin to think, especially if you're young people and you're all young except me too. Alright, see, you will think it lies in preaching. You will think it lies in goofed.

You will think that. But it lies in love. I was advising a young man not so long ago, and I must finish this session anyway.

And he was talking about a certain young lady which we both knew. She's very sweet. But he said, I don't love her.

I said, don't you dare make any proposition of marriage unless you love her. You will begin a hell on earth, if I may say that, if you do that. That young woman, I say it to you too, don't you do it.

Just because she may have a pretty face and a nice figure, or just because he may look handsome and noble and I don't know what, got nothing to do with it. You've got to have love in you. And you, since you're professing to be Christians, you've got to have God's love.

And you've got to love her the same way as God would love her. Not according to the urges of your flesh or of your mind. That's what it's all about.

Now glory be to God.

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