



John 17
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles to the seventeenth chapter of John. As I mentioned this morning, as we come into chapter seventeen, it is like entering into the holy of holies as Jesus is praying to the Father.

These words spake Jesus, and He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come (17:1);

From the first part of John's gospel, Jesus was aware of the hour that was coming. When at the beginning of His ministry, He was in Cana of Galilee at the wedding feast and it ran out of wine and His mother suggested by the statement, They're run out of wine, that He may correct the situation, He answered and said, Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come (John 2:1-4). Premature.

In the seventh chapter, the thirtieth verse, it said, "They sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come" (John 7:30). The eighth chapter verse twenty, "These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come" (John 8:20). John 12:23, "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." Of course, this was at the passover meal with His disciples there on the same evening.

John 12:27, "Now is My soul troubled; what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." John 13:1, "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of the world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end," or to the uttermost. And now in John 17, "These words spake Jesus, as He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come."

Jesus has had His final words with His disciples prior to the cross. He finished those words in the sixteenth chapter of John as John in the last verse makes mention. "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you will have tribulation: be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). That was His final words. They were words of comfort. They were words of peace. They were words of encouragement, "Be of good cheer." They were words of victory, "I have overcome the world."

Now He no longer talks to His disciples but now He is talking to the Father. "These words spake Jesus, as He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come."

glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee (17:1):

This prayer of Jesus that the Father would glorify the Son is really a prayer that He might go to the cross. It isn't praying that He might receive the glory that He had before the world ever existed. He will pray for that presently. But in this first petition, He is praying about the cross. It is through the cross of Jesus Christ that God's love is to be manifested to the world.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "For God has commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:8). And God will be glorified through the cross because there is God's manifestation of the extent of His love for you. "If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). So in the cross of Christ Thy glory.

Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14). Jesus is praying now concerning the cross. "Father, glorify Thy Son," through the death upon the cross so that "Thy Son also may glorify Thee." In verse four, He said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth" (17:4). And now He is praying for this that He might glorify Him.

As thou hast given him power over all flesh (17:2),

Jesus in the last part of Matthew said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). "As You have given Him power over all flesh,"

that he should give eternal life to as many as You have given him (17:2).

Jesus gives us eternal life. "This is the record, God has given us eternal life, this life is in the Son. And He who has the Son has life" (1 John 5:11,12). John said, "He that believeth on the Son of God

hath everlasting life” (John 3:36). Notice that He makes mention of those that “Thou has given Him.”

Throughout this seventeenth chapter as He is talking to the Father, over and over again He makes reference to those that the Father has given to Him. In verse six, “I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and You gave them Me; and they have kept Your word” (17:6). Verse nine, “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me” (17:9). Verse eleven, “And now I am 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 hast given me” (17:11). Verse twelve, “While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept” (17:12). And then in verse twenty-four, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me” (17:24). Over and over again He is referring to those that the Father has given to Him.

Jesus said, “No man can come to Me except the Father draw them” (John 6:44). If you have come to Jesus Christ, rejoice. Because it means that you are one of those that the Father has given to Him. This age-old debate concerning divine election, the sovereignty of God and the human responsibility of man is one that will never be resolved in argument. People usually take one side or the other. And then they argue that side ad infinitum. Goes on and on and on. It has been a very divisive argument in the church. There are those today who are pursuing the argument to tearing down the body, lashing out against anyone who does not agree fully with their position. And their attitude is totally wrong. It goes all against what Jesus is praying for the church here in the seventeenth chapter.

His prayers that we might be united, that we might be one, and yet they are willing to bring the division by their insistence that theirs is the only correct position. I will frankly confess that after years in the ministry and the study of the Word, I cannot reconcile in my mind the sovereignty of God with the human responsibility of man. I am convinced that the Bible teaches both. I cannot understand how they both can be true but I believe they are because God did not call me to understand, only to believe. And so He understands and I’m satisfied with that. And so Jesus is speaking here and as He speaks here, He is speaking on the aspect of God’s chosen, God’s sovereignty, God giving them to Me. “All that You have given to Me.”

Someone asked me this morning about the verse, “Many are called but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14). I believe that God has called all men to repentance. I believe that God is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to salvation” (2 Peter 3:9). I believe that God has opened the door of salvation to every man. I don’t believe that anyone who has ever come to Jesus Christ has been rejected. I believe that the door is wide open for every man to come. That “whosoever believeth in Him will not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Jesus said, “And he that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). And so though I believe that the invitation is to all men, I realize that all men have not accepted the invitation. Not all men have responded to the love of God. Not all men have submitted their lives to Jesus Christ. I also realize that God being omniscient knows those who will and those who will not. So those that will respond, Jesus refers to those as those that Thou hast given Me.

There were many people who began to follow Jesus but not all continued. When He began to say some difficult things, they followed Him no more. So here is the one side of the coin. Those that Thou hast given Me. I’m still glad that the Father chose me and gave me to be one of the disciples, one of the followers of Jesus. “As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Me.” Fascinating scripture in Acts that says, “And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48). Again the sovereignty of God. And yet, there is that human responsibility. I must come. I must surrender. God is not going to save me unless I repent, unless I surrender my life to Jesus Christ. So how do you explain it, I can’t.

And this is life eternal [this is the path], that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (17:3).

That’s eternal life, knowing the only true God. That acknowledges that there are many false gods. Again God is not a name. God is a designation. Lord is not a name. Lord is a title. God is a designation of whatever it is that masters your life. That’s your god. Lord is a title of that one which rules over you. There’s only one true God. There are many false gods. The Bible says, “The gods of the heathen are many”. And of course, you get into some of the polytheistic religions and they deified everything. Even the emotions, they had a god for every emotion. The god of anger, the god of joy, the god of peace.

Every emotion they had a god for. But there's only one true God and eternal life only comes by knowing the One true God and His Son, Jesus Christ who He sent into the world.

Now Jesus said,

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do (17:4).

Back in the fourth chapter as Jesus is talking to His disciples at the well there in Samaria where He had just met the woman and she had gone back into town to get her live-in lover and the other people that come out and hear the words of Jesus, the disciples when they returned from town with the food, they offered to Jesus and He didn't eat and He said, "I have meat that you don't know about. My meat is to do the will of the Father, and to finish His work" (John 4:34).

We read in Genesis that in seven days or six days, God created the heavens and the earth and the life forms that are in them and on the seventh day, God rested from His work. But when man sinned and sin entered the world through man and death by sin, then God began a redemptive work. He first of all chose a family, the family of Abraham through which to send the Redeemer. Then later on, He narrowed it down to the family of David. But God's work of redemption to redeem the world back to God, to give redemption for mankind, that work God began right after man sinned, the plan of redemption. And Jesus came to finish the work of redemption so that man would not have to be a slave to the flesh or to sin but could be redeemed from the power of sin to serve the living God. Jesus is declaring here, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

We remember in the nineteenth chapter there as Jesus is hanging on the cross, it said He bowed His head and said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" (Luke 23:46). I've done it. He has accomplished it. He's talking about the cross in these first few verses: "Father, glorify Me that I might glorify You. I've finished the work that You gave Me to do."

And now, O Father (17:5),

Now He's referring to the heavenly glory,

glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was (17:5).

We can only imagine the glory that was His from the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the Word was made 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" (John 1:1-4,14).

We are told in Colossians that "He is before all things, and by Him were all things created, and for him: [the object of creation] And by Him all things are held together" (Colossians 1:16,17). We are told in Philippians that He was "in the form of God, and thought it not something to be grasped to be equal with God." The glory that He had with the Father before the world ever was. He's asking now for a return to that place. "Being in the form of God, thinking it not robbery or something to be grasped to be equal with God: He humbled Himself, or emptied Himself, and He took on the form of man: became a servant, obedient unto the Father, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore then God hath also highly exalted him" (Philippians 2:6-9).

He's praying now that He might again have that glory that was once His that He left to come to this earth, to be despised and rejected, to give His life as a ransom for sin. And now Father, allow Me to return to that place of glory. And we read that "God has highly exalted Him, given Him a name above all names: That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11). So God's glory, the Son's glory, that's what it's all about. Give Him glory, all ye people. For He said,

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, You gave them to me; and they have kept thy word (17:6).

He's talking now about the disciples. Those that the Father has given to Him out of the world. They were yours, You've given them to Me; and they have kept Your word.

Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee (17:7).

The disciples began to realize this relationship between the Father and the Son. Whatever belongs to the Father belongs to the Son. Whatever belongs to the Son belongs to the Father. They've come to know that whatever has been given to Jesus really belongs to the Father. We all belong to Him.

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and they have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that You did send me (17:8).

He's speaking of the disciples and of the faith that they had come to in believing that He was sent and that He brought to them the word of God.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world (17:9),

Remember "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). But here Jesus says, I don't pray for the world. That is, He's not praying for the world right now. I'm praying for them. The reason why He wants us to be one, that the world may know. His heart is still for the world. That the world may know that You have sent Me. But right now, Lord, I'm praying for these that You've given to Me, for the disciples. I'm not praying for the world generally right now.

but specifically for those which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them (17:9,10).

There is an interesting passage in Ephesians that speaks about "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Ephesians 1:6). Here Jesus said, I am glorified in them. They're Yours but they're also Mine, and they are Mine and they're also Yours. Again, the Father and the Son inseparable. But we become His and He is glorified in us. How? By our faith and by our trust and by our obedience to His word. By my faith and trust and obedience, the Father's glorified. He's just, Well that's My Boy!

You remember with Job how God was bragging about Job. Have you seen my servant Job? Good man, upright. He loves good, he hates evil. God was glorified in Job because of his commitment. To the praise of the glory of His grace. God has manifested His grace on you. God receives glory through your praise at the recognition of His grace. Whenever God manifests His grace, He does these wonderful, beautiful things for us and from our hearts, there just rises that spontaneity of praise and thanksgiving. O Lord, You're so good. Thank You, Lord. God, You're so wonderful. God's glorified through those praises that we offer to Him. In the spontaneous response to the manifestations of His love and His grace towards us. Here Jesus is praying and He declares in the prayer, I am glorified in them.

And now I am no more in the world (17:11),

His already committed to the cross. And so He talks of the cross as though it were a past fact. He speaks of it as "I have finished the work." He's committed and He speaks of it as though it was already done because He knows He's going to do it. "I am no more in this world."

but these are in this world (17:11),

I'm going to be leaving this world but they're going to be here.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are (17:11).

And so now He prays that the Father will keep us through His name. As I mentioned earlier, God is not His name, that's His designation. Lord is not His name, that is His title. Yahweh is His name. Today we use the term Jehovah. We are referring to the same but Yahweh is His name. And the name Jesus is one of those compound names of Jehovah. It is a shortened form of Jehovah Shewa, which means Jehovah is salvation or Yahweh is salvation. Yeshua in the Hebrew, and it's just the shortened form of Yahweh Shewa. Yahweh is salvation or we use the "j" pronunciation today, Jehovah Shewa.

"Keep through Thy name." We are kept through the power of Jesus Christ and the name of God. "The name Jehovah," in the proverbs, says, "is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and are safe" (Proverbs 18:10). In the time of temptation, have you ever run into the name of Jesus? Have you said, Oh Jesus? Time of difficulty. Time of danger. Have you fled into that name? How many I flee into that name! I see danger approaching, I say, Oh Jesus, help. The strong tower, the righteous right into it and are safe.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that You have given to Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled (17:12).

Those that You gave to Me, talking about the twelve disciples, I have kept, none of them is lost, except the son of perdition; which is a reference of course to Judas Iscariot. There's something interesting about Judas Iscariot. Jesus said, "Have I not chosen twelve of you, and yet one of you is the devil" (John 6:70)? It's interesting that here Jesus refers to Judas Iscariot as the son of the devil, son of perdition. Interesting inasmuch as that is also the title of the antichrist.

In Second Thessalonians chapter two, as Paul is talking about the antichrist, he refers to him as the son of perdition and those are the only two places where this title is used. Jesus referring to Judas Iscariot and Paul referring to the antichrist, which gives rise to the opinion of some that Judas Iscariot will somehow be the antichrist, the son of perdition. It's sort of a long shot but who knows?

And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves (17:13).

The fullness of joy, that they might be fulfilled, Lord in this joy.

I have given them thy word; and the world hates them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (17:14).

Back in the fifteenth chapter verse nineteen, you remember that Jesus said, "If you are of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19). In chapter sixteen, "These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended because they're going to put you out of the synagogues: the time is going to come, when whoever kills you will think that they're doing God a service. And these things they're going to do unto you" (John 16:1-3). So He speaks to the disciples about how that the world hates Him and of course, they're going to manifest that hatred on the morrow. Actually, it's on the same day in the Jewish reckoning. They would be manifesting that hatred by putting Him on the cross. He is now in His prayer for them. Praying that and He's making mention of them, "I've given them Thy word and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

I don't pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil that is in the world (17:15).

We are here in the world to fulfill the purpose of God and that's the reason why God leaves us here. If God did not have a purpose for us being here, He surely wouldn't leave us in this dark world. But He leaves us that we might be a light to this dark world. That we might be as salt. That is a preserving influence in the world. As Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13,14). And so that we might bear witness of God's love, that we might show the world through our love for each other and our love for Him that Jesus Christ indeed is the Son of God sent into the world to be the Saviour of all who will believe in Him. We are here for that one purpose, to glorify Him and give testimony and witness to the world of Jesus Christ.

God loves you so much, He really doesn't want to leave you in this mess, in the world. But it is necessary that He have a light in the world and so you are here for that one purpose of bringing light and bringing hope and bringing the word of God to others. Any other thing that you do is just really, I can't think of the word that I want to use, but it's superfluous or unnecessary. There's one necessary purpose for you and that's to bear witness of Jesus Christ to the world. That's it. So He didn't pray that God will take you out of the world yet. There's a purpose and a plan that God has for you and that you might fulfill that purpose. But in the meantime, that you might be kept from the evil that is in the world.

Our world is so fraught with evil. It is more prevalent than I think at any time in the history of man. Because of the modern means of communication, this generation is exposed to more worldliness, more sin, more evil than any other generation since Adam. Now the time of Noah it got so bad that the thoughts and the imagination of man's heart was only evil continually. But they didn't have the means of permeating their world so fully and completely as our world is permeated with evil. And so the prayer of Jesus is that you might be kept from the evil. Those forces of evil that dominate the world system.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (17:16).

Ever feel like you're sort of an alien? Have you ever said, I really don't belong here. When I read of stuff that's going on, I feel I can't believe this. It's so prevalent that the evil. Reading of this little girl having a party and waiting in the front of the house for the guests to arrive, and car drives up and they shoot her, kill her. And her friend that's in the yard with her is shot. And then drive off. I can't imagine that. I read of those things and I think, Where did they come from? These people that have such little regard for someone else's life. Senseless killings. Where do they come from? The world in which we live is a violent, corrupt place.

In the times of Noah, the earth was filled with violence, it said. Jesus said that when He comes, "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26). Surely the Lord is coming soon. Even as God judged the world of Noah's days, so He will judge this world because of its sin. "They are not of the world," thank God for that, "even as I am not of the world."

So set them apart through thy truth: for thy word is truth (17:17).

Set them apart from the world. Separate them from the world, Lord, through Thy truth. The word

of God that washes us, that cleanses us from the defilement of the world. How important it is. Jesus said, "Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).

As I was saying this morning, we're exposed all day long in the workplace or at school or whatever to the corruption of the world, to the filth of the world, till when we come home having lived in the world, corruption. We feel like we need a bath inside just to get cleansed. To sort of wash out the pollution that has been poured into our minds. The garbage that's been dumped on us. And thus we need to get into the word daily, into the word that it might have that cleansing effect in our lives. Jesus said,

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 [I set myself apart], that they also might be sanctified through the truth (17:18,19).

The truth of God that sets you apart, that frees you, washes you.

Neither do I pray for these alone (17:20),

The first petitions were concerning Himself. The next petitions were concerning His disciples. And these final petitions He goes out beyond just that immediate little band.

but to all of those who will believe on Him through their word (17:20);

So if through the reading of the Bible, you have come to a faith in Jesus Christ, then you are included in the final petitions of this prayer of Jesus. He now reaches out to all of those who will believe on Him through their words. And what is His prayer?

That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, that they also may be one in us (17:21):

How the divisions in the church, squabbles, the fightings, how they must hurt the heart of the Father and of the Son whose prayer is that we might be one. It doesn't mean that we have to agree on every point. Surely there is room for different interpretations of scripture. And surely there is a place for each of the denominations. And the gathering together with likeminded people.

I had a lady come up to me after service this morning who was quite upset because during the singing of the choruses, she decided she was going to stand up and one of the ushers asked her to sit down and she was very ungracious in her response but she came up to me afterwards and was really quite upset and angry. Why don't we allow people to stand up when we are worshipping? And I said, Because by your standing by yourself, it draws attention to you. We're not interested in the people having their attention drawn to you. We want their attention focused on Jesus Christ. And it is distracting. Well then, is it a rule of the church? Where do you find it in the Bible? Well, the Bible says if my liberty causes a weaker brother to be offended then I won't exercise that liberty as long as the world lives. And I said, it offends people when you stand up and draw attention to yourself. She went on.

I said, Look, why don't you go to the Vineyard? Because they stand up there. That's where the practice sort of originated. So why don't you go over there and worship there? They're good people. They love the Lord. They do things that we wouldn't do. To me they're a little far out and weird but I love them and they love the Lord and they're a part of the body of Christ. But it's good that there is a place where if she feels she wants to stand up and all, that she can go. She doesn't have to come here. And so, God has a place for the different churches to attract and appeal to the different temperaments of people.

But we shouldn't be divisive. We should see the whole body. We should see the oneness of the body of Christ and we should seek to promote that oneness of the body of Christ by loving all that are in the body.

The Lord's been doing a real work in my life in this issue. I used to be a rabid anti-Notre Dame. I mean, anybody that beat Notre Dame I was all for. And it was the old Catholic-Protestant thing. Not any more. I share a lot of faith with the Catholics. Not everything, I have definite differences. But yet we share so much in our faith in Jesus Christ. And so God is helping me to, maybe it's age or whatever but, to mellow out and not to insist that everybody see it as I see it or believe it as I believe it. But to just see the oneness and the unity, and to seek for the unity in the whole body of Christ.

I would hate to be guilty of really bringing division in the body because then I would be working directly against the prayer of Jesus who is praying that we might be one.

that the world might believe that You have sent me (17:21).

That oneness of the body that we might be a witness to the world that Jesus Christ indeed is the Son of God, sent into the world.

And the glory which You gave me I have given them (17:22);

That's pretty strong statement. He is willing to share His glory with you. He wants to share His glory with you. "Come, ye blessed of the Father," He said, "inherit the kingdom that's been prepared for you from the foundations of the world" (Matthew 25:34). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 John 3:2), "and if sons, heirs; and if heirs, then we are joint heirs with Jesus Christ" (Romans 8:17). He is willing to share the glory, the inheritance with you. "The glory which Thou gavest to me I have given to them,"

that they may be one, even as we are one (17:22):

Even as the Father and the Son are inseparable, one thought, purpose, action, activity; so He wants us to be one.

I in them, You in me, that they might be made complete or perfect in one (17:23):

No one church, no one denomination is complete or perfect. We all need each other. We're all a part of the total. But it takes all of the parts to make the whole. And we need to recognize that and to see that and to acknowledge and to live by that.

that the world may know that You have sent me, and has loved them, as You have loved me (17:23).

"God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). Father, that they might know that You love them, just like You love Me.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory (17:24),

Father, I want them to be there. I want them to behold My glory. You remember when Peter and James and John were with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration, He was transfigured before them and His garments began to glisten like there were lights behind them. White and glistening. There appeared Moses and Elijah talking to Him. And so Jesus had said, Not all of you are going to die until you see the Son of man in glory. And then He took them up in the mountains and they saw Him glorified. His desire is that you might see Him in His glory. The glory of His reign, His eternal reign. The glory that shall be bestowed upon Him when He completes the work of redemption by laying claim to that which He purchased, the redemption of this world. "That they might be with Me where I am; that they might behold My glory,"

which thou hast given me: for You have loved me before the foundations of the world (17:24).

Always have loved me but that You've loved them, too. Like You love Me.

O righteous Father (17:25),

Earlier, "O holy Father." Now "O righteous Father."

the world has not known thee: but I have known thee (17:25),

Isn't it interesting so often the world thinks they know Him? Isn't it interesting all of the false concepts that people have concerning God? The wrong ideas that they have concerning God? Satan has surely been out working overtime to distort the truth of the nature of God in the minds of people. And they really don't know God. So often they think of God only in the terms of fierce judgment, harshness, hardness. And they don't know that He is a compassionate, merciful, gracious God. They really don't know You, Jesus said. "But I have known You,"

and these have known that thou hast sent me (17:25). And I have declared unto them Your name, and I will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them (17:26).

Sort of the final petition here. I've declared Your name, I will declare it. For what purpose? That the love wherewith the Father loves Him may be in us as Jesus dwells in us. What a beautiful, beautiful prayer. The prayer of our Lord for Himself, for His disciples, and for us who have come to believe in Him.

Father, we thank You for Your love. Your love for Your Son. Your love for us. And Lord, we thank You that we have this hope of being with You to behold Your glory, the glory that You had before the world ever was. To be there around the throne, to join with that innumerable multitude as they worship the Lamb and Him who sits upon the throne. Lord, how empty this world is. How shallow are its joys. How fickle is its fame. But Lord, You endure. Your word endures and the glory is Thine forever and ever. Lord, draw us into an ever, deeper and deepening relationship. Draw us to yourself. Fill us with Your love and with Yourself. In Jesus' name, Amen.