

"SO THAT YOU WILL BELIEVE"

JOHN 17:1-5

SUNDAY, 1 MARCH 2009

2ND STREET COMMUNITY CHURCH

GREGG LAMM, pastor-teacher

.PPT 1 ...

It's good to be together again this morning. Wasn't last Sunday a powerful revelation of what God is up to here at 2nd Street? God is alive, and putting back together the broken pieces of our lives. It was an amazing experience for me, and from what you've told me, for many of you as well. And I hope you've continued to give some thought to what your own "Cardboard Testimony" is ... and how God has changed you, is changing you, or how you're hoping and praying God will change you. A video of the service will be up soon on the Teaching section of our new website. Oh, and what about 2nd Street's new logo, to go with our revised *MISSION STATEMENT*?

Gang, God is more than willing to bring us to maturity in our life with Him the easiest way we're willing to come ... and that's why our life with Jesus Christ is all about *surrender* ... and why *surrender* is the key that unlocks the door to the life of transformation and maturity God has for us.

ILLUSTRATION ... THE STORY OF THE MAN TOURING HEAVEN AND BEING SHOWN THE ROOM WHERE GOD STORED ALL THE THINGS HE WANTED TO GIVE US THAT WE NEVER ASKED HIM FOR.

As we move on into JOHN 17 this morning, one of the things we're going to do is focus on the difference between *LIVING LIFE FOR OUR OWN GLORY*, and learning to *LIVE LIFE FOR GOD'S GLORY*. There are some epic differences between the two. And I believe that when we begin to see the differences in the motivation between these two choices, we'll begin to see the differences in the long-term fruit of these two choices, and we'll begin to see the relationship between the "**eternal life**" Jesus talked about with Nicodemus back in JOHN 3:16 and the "**abundant life**" He talked about in JOHN 10:10. So please take out your Bibles and turn with me to JOHN 17 ...

God's heart for us is that we'd come to Him and say, "God, my life is in Your hands. *TEACH* me. *FORM* me. *USE* me. *POUR* Your desires into my heart and mind and make them mine." And one of the things that draws us into this kind of life with God is when you and I come to the place where we're willing to humbly say, "God, I'm willing to do whatever You ask me to do. And I'm going to give You all the credit for what You choose to do *in me* and *through me*."

ILLUSTRATION ... When Billy Graham first preached in NYC in the 1950s, a reporter from *The NY Times* asked, "Reverend Graham, what did you think when you pulled up to Madison Square Garden and saw your name in the lights up on the marquee?" And Billy replied with words that would shape the focus of his ministry for the next 50 years ... he said, "I shuddered when I saw my name up in those lights - because I know that my God doesn't share His glory with anyone."

And gang, Billy Graham nailed a truth that you and I have got to understand. *OUR GOD SHARES HIS GLORY WITH NO ONE*. And if we're going to mature in our life with God, we've got to let go of any desire we might have to try and steal the glory for what happens with our lives ... and give all the glory to the God Who is at work in us.

When you and I don't choose to live lives of *surrender* before God, we'll always remain spiritually immature. *Surrender* is about humbling ourselves before God, and letting Him have His way with us. Yes it's a choice that brings us to our knees - but that's where God can begin to shape us into what the Apostle Paul called in ROMANS 8:29, the "**family-likeness of His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.**"

.PPT 2 ...

ILLUSTRATION ... Composer Johann Sebastian Bach wrote, "*All music should have no other end and aim than the glory of God and the soul's refreshment; where this is not remembered there is no real music but only a devilish hub-bub.*"

This is why Bach always put the initials "J. J." ... which stood for "Jesus Juva | Jesus help me" at the beginning of his compositions. And why he always ended them with the initials "S. D. G." ... which stood for "Soli Dei gratia | To God alone be the praise."

As we come to JOHN 17 the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is just hours away. And in the 26 verses of JOHN 17, as Jesus pauses to talk things over with God the Father, He gives a report of what He did during His three years of public ministry here on earth.

John Knox, the great 16th century Scottish reformer, and founder of the Presbyterian Church, called JOHN 17 the "*Holy of Holies in the Temple of Scripture.*" In fact, Knox loved this chapter of God's WORD so much that when he was on his deathbed, he had his family read it to him over and over and over again. I guess Knox figured that if these were the words Jesus prayed as His own death approached - that it made sense to have them prayed over him as his death came closer. Note to self. Right?

With what Jesus said in JOHN 16:33, He uttered His last words of *instruction* and *encouragement* to His disciples before His arrest, beating, crucifixion, and resurrection. Here's the last words He spoke before praying the prayer of JOHN 17.

.PPT 3 ... JOHN 16:33 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

³³ These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Three years earlier, when Jesus started His ministry here on earth, the cross seemed like a distant reality. But as each minute, each hour, and each day passed, the cross kept coming closer - and, the reason Jesus stepped out of heaven was now right at hand. And very soon the *comfort*, the *beauty*, and the *intimacy* the disciples had known in *The Upper Room* would be replaced with *fear*, *discouragement*, and *confusion*, as they scattered after Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

And so if there was ever a time when the disciples needed Jesus Christ to be their *intercessor*, the One lifting them to God in prayer, it was now. And that's exactly what Jesus does. JOHN 17 can be divided up into three main teaching sections.

.PPT 4 ...

vv. 1-5 | *Jesus prays for His own needs.*

vv. 6-19 | *Jesus prays for the needs of His disciples.*

vv. 20-26 | *Jesus prays for the needs of His future followers.*

And so this is how we will go through JOHN 17 today and in the next two Sundays. Listen to what *The New Testament* Bible scholar Merrill C. Tenney writes about JOHN 17 and the prayer Jesus prays to His Father ...

.PPT 5 ...

"These three sections are like three concentric circles, the second of which is larger than the first, and the third of which is larger than the second, and inclusive of all three. All, however, have a *common center*. The prayer as a whole is keyed to one central idea, *eternal life*; for it is Jesus' prayer that He may be glorified in order that eternal life may be made available to everyone." - Merrill C. Tenney, *John: The Gospel of Belief*

Since JOHN 13 we've been reading and studying together about the last evening Jesus spent with His disciples, and the important words of instruction and encouragement He's offering to them - teachings that will prepare them for the difficult days, nights and weeks ahead. And I see a **FAITH LESSON** for us here ...

.PPT 6 ... FAITH LESSON ...

Friends, the *good times* in our lives aren't just for putting our feet up on the coffee table and having fun. The *good times* are the time to spend time with Jesus, worshiping Him at deeper levels, learning to hear Him with greater clarity, and training our hearts, our minds, and our actions to follow Him with greater *determination* and *consistency*. The *good times* are the time to learn the Word of God, so that during the *hard times*, we can apply the Word of God.

Because just like the disciples were about to find out, the *hard times* are usually not too far behind the *good times*. And so it's in the *good times* that God wants to *prune, encourage, equip, and prepare us*.

Jesus and His disciples have headed out of the city of Jerusalem now, and walked down through the Kidron Valley, and up the Mount of Olives. Nighttime is approaching, and now that they're in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus goes off by Himself to pray. The other three Gospels tell us more about this, but John gives us an in-depth look into the actual words Jesus prayed ... a prayer commonly referred to as the "*High-Priestly Prayer*" ... and by others as the one, true "*Lord's Prayer*".

.PPT 7 ... JOHN 17:1-3 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

¹ Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,
² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.
³ This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

God the Father **sent** Jesus Christ into the world. It was a volunteer mission. Jesus didn't get tricked into coming. He didn't lose a bet or come begrudgingly. Jesus loved you and me so much that He came, at the will of His Father, but of His own volition. And when He came, He knew He was going to die on a cross, to pay the price for our sin. Here's how the Apostle Paul talks about this in [PHILIPPIANS 2:6-8](#) ...

.PPT 8 ... PHILIPPIANS 2:6-8 (CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION)

⁶⁻⁸ Jesus Christ was truly God. But He did not try to remain equal with God. He gave up everything and became a slave, when He became like one of us. Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even died on a cross.

Jesus could have stayed in heaven, and enjoyed all the benefits of being God. But instead, He looked at us, saw that we needed a Savior, came to earth, emptied Himself of much of the glory He'd known in heaven, and became a servant to the very people He'd created. Jesus Christ's coming to earth wasn't an afterthought, or *PLAN B*. It was God's *PLAN A* ... and it was conceived before the creation of the world.

I've shared this with you before, but it bears repeating again this morning. The prophecy of Jesus Christ's life, ministry, death, and resurrection here on earth was prophesied for the first time in the genealogy found in [GENESIS 5:1-32](#).

.PPT 9 ...

Adam	means	Man
Seth	means	Appointed
Enosh	means	Mortal
Kenan	means	Sorrow
Mahalalel	means	The Blessed God
Jared	means	Will Come Down
Enoch	means	Teaching
Methuselah	means	His Death Will Bring
Lamech	means	The Despairing
Noah	means	Rest

God's *Plan A* was spelled out by Moses in this genealogy. On the surface this genealogy only seems *HISTORIC*, not *PROPHETIC*. But through the *MEANING OF THESE TEN NAMES*, from the first one to the last one, Moses prophetically wrote out the story of *JESUS CHRIST*, the *SON OF GOD*, our *MESSIAH* and *SAVIOR* ...

.PPT 10 ...

Man. Appointed Mortal Sorrow. (That's our part of the story.) *The Blessed God Will Come Down Teaching. His Death Will Bring The Despairing Rest.* (That's Jesus Christ's part of the story.)

How exciting to know that no matter where we look in God's WORD ... from nearly the very beginning in GENESIS, all the way to the end of REVELATION ... we see the testimony of *WHO JESUS CHRIST IS* and *WHAT HE CAME TO DO* staring right back at us - the testimony that Jesus Christ is the *SON OF GOD*, our *MESSIAH* and our *EMMANUEL - GOD WITH US*. Do you see it? Do you see it?

And then roughly 2,300 years later Jesus was prophesied in 740 B.C., by *The Old Testament* prophet Isaiah ...

.PPT 11 ... ISAIAH 9:6 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah also wrote the prophecy that Jesus Christ would be born of a virgin in ISAIAH 7:14. And the virgin birth had also been alluded to clear back in GENESIS 3:15 when God referred to the One who would crush Satan as being "*the Seed of the woman.*"

In the Hebrew language, and in the Hebrew way of thinking, the "*seed*" of life was from the sperm of the man, not from the egg of the woman. And so for God to prophecy in GENESIS 3:15 that the "*seed of the woman would be the One who would one day defeat Satan and His plans here on earth*" was a radical thing ... and it meant that God was talking about a woman having a child without the involvement of a man ... thus the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

In JOHN 15-16 John documents the *warnings*, the *teachings*, and the *words of encouragement* Jesus passed onto His disciples as they traveled out under that Judean night sky towards the Garden of Gethsemane, which was on the East side of The Mount of Olives. And, when they arrived to the Garden of Gethsemane, the three other Gospel writers tell us that Jesus asked His disciples to "*watch and pray*" while He went off on His own, a little further into the Garden to pray. And when He gets to a certain place - which was more than likely a place where Jesus had gone to pray many times before - He lifted His eyes to heaven, and began praying these words ...

.PPT 12 ... JOHN 17:1 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

¹ Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,"

The Bible is filled with many great and powerful prayers. Among them, Abraham's prayer in GENESIS 18. Moses' prayer in EXODUS 32. King Jehoshaphat's prayer in SECOND CHRONICLES 20. King David's prayers throughout the book of PSALMS. King Solomon's prayer in FIRST KINGS 8. And the many prayers of the Apostle Paul throughout his *New Testament* letters. But the prayer Jesus prays here in JOHN 17 is by far the greatest prayer recorded in the Bible. Because in this prayer we see the

nature and the heart of Jesus Christ at their most intimate level - as Jesus talks with His Father about God's glory, about His love for the world, about the truth that He was sent to earth, and about the truth eternal life is found in Him alone.

v. 1a ... **lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said** ... This posture of **looking up toward heaven** is one that we don't usually associate with deep prayer. We tend to picture someone bowing their head and closing their eyes. And I see a **FAITH LESSON** for us here ...

.PPT 13 ... FAITH LESSON ...

We should never confuse the *NON-ESSENTIAL CUSTOMS OF PRAYER* with the *ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF PRAYER*. Prayer is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the working of God in our lives. Or as Richard Foster has written in his book *Prayer: Finding The Heart's True Home*, "Real prayer is not about gritting our teeth. It's about falling in love."

.PPT 14 ... JOHN 17:1 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

¹ Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,

v. 1 ... **the hour has come** ... Jesus uses a general Greek term for of the word **hour** here that means **an appointed time**. In other words, at an **appointed** time, Jesus Christ was **appointed** by God the Father to become the substitutionary sacrifice for your sins and for my sins. And like the Apostle Paul tells us in EPHESIANS 1:4, this appointment had come **before the world was even created**. And this wasn't the first time Jesus had talked about this sacred **hour** (JOHN 4:2-4; 7:6; 7:30; 12:23; 13:1)

v. 1 ... **He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You** ... With our perspective on time, we tend to think that Jesus had been waiting for 33 years for this **appointed hour to come**, because at this point in time Jesus was 33 years old. Or we tend to think that Jesus had been waiting for 3 years for this **appointed hour to come**, which was how long it had been since His cousin John the Baptist had baptized Him in the Jordan River and His earthly ministry began. But Jesus had been waiting for this **appointed hour to come** since **before the creation of the world**.

Man. Appointed Mortal Sorrow. (That's you and me, and every person ever born into this world.) *The Blessed God Will Come Down Teaching.* (That's Jesus Christ). *His Death Will Bring The Despairing Rest.* (The cross was near). **The hour had come.**

Notice here in v. 1 that as Jesus prays first for Himself, His prayer is anything but selfish. Instead, it's actually for the **glory of His Father**. And how will this **glory** come? Jesus knows better than anyone that it will come through His death on the cross. Because while, to the world, the cross is an instrument of defeat and utter humiliation, in God's eyes, it's an instrument of **glorification**. Gang, are we willing to

embrace the glory of God, even as the world sees it as humiliation? Listen to the words of Bible scholar Merrill C. Tenney concerning Jesus' words here ...

.PPT 15 ...

"The Son glorified the Father by revealing in the act the sovereignty of God over evil, the compassion of God for humanity, and the finality of redemption for believers." - Merrill C. Tenney, *John: The Gospel of Belief*

And in vv. 2-3, Jesus continues praying, and His words give us instruction concerning the **SOURCE AND THE NATURE OF ETERNAL LIFE**.

.PPT 16 ... JOHN 17:2-3 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.

³ "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Jesus has the authority God the Father has given Him. And the purpose of Jesus Christ's authority is to offer Himself as the exclusive channel of eternal life. Eternal life isn't found in karma, or in being reincarnated again and again until we get it right. And neither is eternal life found in doing good works to try and earn our way into God's favor and then eventually into heaven. Eternal life is only found in surrendering to the sacred and holy knowledge of God's plan as revealed in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

.PPT 17 ... JOHN 17:4-5 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

⁴ "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

⁵ "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

The word **glorify** means **"to honor, to praise, or to extol something or someone."** Here's how Eugene Peterson paraphrases JOHN 17:4-5 in *The Message* ...

.PPT 18 ... JOHN 17:4-5 (THE MESSAGE)

⁴⁻⁵ I glorified You on earth by completing down to the last detail what You assigned Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your very own splendor, the very splendor I had in Your presence before there was a world.

Jesus is saying, "God, My work here is almost finished. My cross is coming into focus. and what I came to do is happening right on schedule with Your plans." Friends, do you see how this prayer could not come from Jesus if He were not equal with, and eternally co-existent with God the Father? In ISAIAH 42:8 God proclaims that He doesn't share His glory with anyone outside of Himself.

I know that many of you have seen and heard this piece of video before, but that's okay, because it in it's words, Dr. Reverend Samuel Lockridge, in a sermon he preached in 1972, so rightly captures the power, the beauty, and the awe of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the One who wrestled with God in prayer and then surrendered to His plan to die for you and me on the cross, so that we could come home into relationship with God.

ILLUSTRATION ... " *THAT'S MY KING*" (MPG VIDEO ... 3:30)

.PPT 19 ... ISAIAH 42:8 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

⁸ I am the LORD; that is My name! I will not give My glory to anyone else ..."

And so if God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ **share their glory** ... like Jesus says here in JOHN 17:4-5, then Jesus Christ must be fully God. The Apostle Paul talks about the "**glory of the cross**" this way in GALATIANS 6:14 ...

.PPT 20 ... GALATIANS 6:14 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

¹⁴ God forbid that I should boast [or *glory*] about *anything* except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead. [*emphasis added*]

I find Paul's words very interesting. I mean Jesus willingly left heaven, and came to earth to die, and pay the price for our sin ... and so it would be natural for us to think that to **glorify Him** for doing all that would involve something like giving Him a big golden crown, or throwing a parade for Him, filled with trumpet-fanfare and more. But Paul says **that the glory of the Son** was most clearly seen and expressed in His death on the cross ... because that's why Jesus stepped out of heaven ... so that He could then step into our lives. I love what Bible teacher Wiersbe writes about this ...

.PPT 21 ...

"From the *human point of view*, the cross of Calvary was a revolting display of humanity's sin; but from the *divine point of view*, the cross revealed and magnified the grace and the glory of God."
- Warren Wiersbe, *Be Transformed: John 13-21*

You might remember back in JOHN 4:34 Jesus told His disciples that "**His nourishment came from doing the will of the Father and doing so until the work had been completed.**" And in this prayer in JOHN 17 Jesus is talking about **the work** that He'd been doing the past three years throughout His earthly life and ministry - and He's saying that the closer the cross comes, the nearer **this work** is to being completed. Jesus is saying that "Now is the time for everything to fall into place." And I see another **FAITH LESSON** for us here ...

.PPT 22 ... FAITH LESSON ...

Timing is everything. We get ourselves into trouble by trying to rush things. And what messes we create when we wait so long that we stall out? Oh, that we'd learn to live life in God's perfect timing.

ILLUSTRATION ...

*It's been a long time since I've seen you.
What have you been up to?
I got a new job.
Oh really, what's your new job?
I'm a comedian.
That's great. What's the hardest part about being a comedian?
Timing.*

Gang, we need to learn to *LIVE* and *MOVE* in God's timing. We need to learn to come to God in prayer, ask God what He's doing, and then join God in what He's up to. This is the *LIFE OF PRAYER AND PARTNERSHIP* Jesus shows us in JOHN 17 and invites us into. And partnering with God in His timing is about learning to see things from His perspective. And when we begin learning to do this, we begin to see that just like the cross was a Roman instrument of death, that in the end brought us eternal life ... that God can take our greatest hurts and trials, and turn them into our greatest good.

We like to think that the greatest glory comes from winning an Olympic gold medal in front of 100,000 cheering fans. But could it be that in God's way of doing things, our greatest glory might actually come from our greatest tribulation, our greatest pain, or our greatest defeat? Here's how the Apostle Paul write about this truth in SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:7-10 ...

.PPT 23-24 ... SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:7-10 (PARAPHRASE)

7-8 So I wouldn't get a big head, God gave me the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel pushed me to my knees, so there's no danger of walking around all proud and arrogant! At first I didn't think of this limitation as a gift, and I even begged God three times to remove it. But God said, "My grace is all you need, because My strength comes alive in your weakness."

9-10 Once I heard that, I accepted my limitations. I quit calling it 'a handicap' and started seeing it as 'a gift'. Because Christ's strength moved in on my weakness, now I can take my limitations in stride, and even with thankfulness. All my abuse, accidents, opposition, and bad breaks, humbled me to the place where now I can let Christ take over! And the weaker I get in myself, the stronger I become in Him.

And I see three final **FAITH LESSONS** from the first five verses of this prayer Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane on the hardest night of His life ...

.PPT 25 ... FAITH LESSON ...

- **FIRST, JESUS PRAYED.** Jesus lived a life of connection and conversation with God the Father. Jesus' life with God was as real

as His own breath - and trying to get away from His life with God would have been like sitting down and trying to get away from His own lap. Prayer was His lifeline to God. It defined Him.

- Likewise, you and I need to become people of prayer. We need to understand that prayer isn't the way we get God to do our will in heaven. But that prayer is the way we become humbly willing to do God's will here on earth. And once we understand this, we'll begin praying in entirely different ways. With greater *confidence*, with greater *power*, and with greater *effectiveness*.

.PPT 26 ... FAITH LESSON ...

- **SECOND, JESUS LIVED HIS LIFE ON PURPOSE.** Jesus had a direction, and He stayed in step with God's timing ... even when the cost associated with His obedience was great.
- Likewise, without *surrendering to God's plans*, our lives will be defined by *wandering*, *missing-the-mark*, and *falling-short*. Sometimes our obedience to God's plans will cost us more than we thought it would. But God will be with us each step of the way, so we won't be alone, and won't be held captive by fear. There is great joy in surrendering to God's purposes for our lives.

.PPT 27 ... FAITH LESSON ...

- **THIRD, JESUS DIDN'T TAKE GLORY FOR HIMSELF.** Jesus always made sure that all the glory went back to God the Father. And because Jesus lived a humble, obedient life, He experienced the "abundant life" He described and invited us into in JOHN 10:10.
- We need to fall on our faces and admit that the King of Kings and LORD of LORDS, Jesus Christ, is the One Who is in charge of the universe, and in charge of our lives. As we develop lives of *prayer* with Him, and *surrender* to His purposes, and refuse to take the glory for what He's doing ... we'll be prepared and transformed to go through the hard things of life. Oh friends, do you see it?

The bottom line is that if we're not choosing to pattern our *thoughts*, our *words*, our *priorities*, our *actions*, and our very *lives*, after Jesus Christ, then we're failing in our mission as His followers and we'll only stumble into God's will by accident once in a while. Let's become praying, on-purpose, giving-God-all-the-glory Jesus followers. And let's make the choice to grow up in Him before we grow old!

.PPT 28 ... NEXT SUNDAY | JOHN 17:6-19 ...

*Jesus Christ calls us to be "in the world" but not "of the world".
What does this actually mean as we seek to live out our faith in the
day-to-day stuff of life?*