

## Structure Of John 17:1-5

### The Purpose Of John 17:1-5

The ultimate glory of God is found in knowing Him through Jesus Christ!

### Key Verse ~ John 17:3

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

#### **John 17:1**

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,

#### **John 17:2**

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

#### **John 17:3**

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

#### **John 17:4**

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

#### **John 17:5**

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

*The Glory Of God Is The Glory Of Christ*

*Obedying God Gives Him Ultimate Glory*

*The Ultimate Glory Of God Is Found In Knowing Him Through Jesus Christ!*

# Before The Beginning

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**FOR THE WORD OF THE CROSS  
IS FOOLISHNESS TO THOSE WHO  
ARE PERISHING... BUT WE PREACH  
CHRIST CRUCIFIED, TO JEWS  
A STUMBLING BLOCK AND TO  
GENTILES FOOLISHNESS...**

**~ 1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 1:18A & 23 (NASB)**

## **1) The Scandal Of The Cross**

- A) The crucifixion of Jesus Christ (John 19:16-30) was well documented\* as being a scandalous issue for both Jews and non-Jews alike (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:18-31).
- B) It almost goes without saying, but the cross has lost any kind of "offense" in our 21<sup>st</sup> century culture. It is popular as decoration, as jewelry and is more often seen as an accessory than as a symbol of shame.
- C) Part of John's effort in describing Christ's 'thoughts and prayers' is to show Christ's glory in contrast to the horror and embarrassment of the crucifixion (John 17, popularly known as Christ's "High Priestly Prayer").

## 2) Jesus' First Prayer -- Glorify The Son

- A) The first section of Christ's prayer (John 17:1-5) is for Himself. Jesus asks God to "glorify" (give rightful honor) Himself, so that Jesus can glorify God (17:1). There is a synergy between God and Christ which magnifies their glory.
- B) Jesus prays that this glory would come, because "the hour" (the time for His suffering and death) has arrived. There is a sense that the moment of Christ's greatest agony is the moment of His greatest opportunity to give God glory (17:1).

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\* It is worth our while to quickly recap the essential events related to the intertestamental period (400 years where there were no prophets in Israel, after Malachi, but before Jesus Christ). You might remember, from our study of the Festival of Lights (Hanukkah) from John 9-10, that Judas Maccabee restored temple worship after a violent guerrilla war against the Selucids. Judas Maccabee (nicknamed "The Hammer") had the specific support of the Sadducees (who controlled the temple and sacrifices, even in the time of Christ), but did not have the support of the Pharisees (who, leaning on Hosea 6:6 & Micah 6:6-8, contended that obedience to the Law was more significant than sacrifice in the temple...). The Maccabean line of rulers was known as the Hasmoneans (from their ancestry), and they fought with the Selucids for much of the intertestamental period (until 63 B.C. when Rome, under the leadership of General Pompey, would take over Jerusalem). Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.) served as both king and high priest of the Jews. He was strongly Hellenistic and lacked scruples in his leadership. The enemies of Israel (Selucids), which had most recently been defeated by his grandfather (John Hyrcanus), came to fight against King Alexander with a group of Pharisee rebels supporting the Selucids, and the Selucids defeated Alexander. However, when the Selucid leader (Demetrius) attempted to enter the temple, the enemies of Alexander suddenly switched sides, choosing piety over revenge. Alexander, for his part, took gruesome revenge against his Pharisee traitors and their supporters, crucifying 800 men on crosses while having their families butchered to death at the foot of the crosses. This introduction of mass crucifixion had a terrifying effect on the Jews. When Rome came to power in 63 B.C., the horrible deaths by crucifixion were still fresh in the psyche of the Jews. It was into this context which Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, Samaria and Idumea came in 26-36 A.D. Rome used the fear of crucifixion to reinforce its power and assert its authority over the Jews and the surrounding peoples. You can see, from this brief (and hardly sufficient) history, why there were ongoing tensions between the Sadducees and Pharisees, and why their desire to see Christ crucified was the ultimate horror and condemnation. The religious leaders were convinced that such a disgusting public death would put an end to the teachings of Jesus Christ (from various resources, esp. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, by Everett Ferguson & *Crucifixion*, by Martin Hengel).

- C) Jesus recognizes that God has been the source of all that Christ has accomplished (17:2). Christ connects that if God glorified Jesus with the authority to call the chosen for eternal life, then God would be further glorified in "the hour" (17:2).

## 3) Ultimate Glory -- Eternal Life

- A) Jesus Christ defines eternal life as "knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ" (17:3). There is a clear "center point" understanding here that to know Christ is to know God.
- B) Further, in Christ's prayer, is that to know God through Christ, is the ultimate glory to God (17:4). A sinner who is saved gives the greatest glory to God!

## 4) Returning Back To Before The Beginning

- A) Echoing the same theme as John 17:2, Jesus notes that He has glorified the Father in His obedience to accomplishing what God gave Him to do (17:4). Clearly, obedience to God gives Him glory.
- B) Again recapping the first few verses together, Christ asks that God glorify Christ with the glory which Christ had "before the world was" (17:5). This is a clear statement of both Christ's deity with God, and unity with God.
- C) The beginning of the 'High Priestly Prayer' is clearly set against the backdrop of the horror and embarrassment of the crucifixion to show God's plan in Christ for glory and victory.