

## THE HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER

- (2) He prays for the Disciples (6-19);
- (3) He prays for the whole Church (20-23);
- (4) A fitting epilouge which brings this great prayer to a close (24-26)

### I. Christ Prays For Himself -- 1-5

He had come to earth to give men eternal life, which consists in the knowledge of God, v.3. Now he asks to be GLORIFIED.

Having glorified the Father by His life, He now desires to glorify Him by His death, knowing that beyond death He will receive from the father the glory he had with the father before He laid it aside by humbling Himself.

There is a discernible order in this section: It contains but one petition, Father glorify thy Son. v.1, which is repeated in v. 5. Then follows the reasons why the petition is offered: 'That Thy Son may glorify thee'. v.1; and, 'I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou has given me to do.' v.4

First, the PETITION: It begins with the word 'Father.' This is a gracious word which occurs 6 times in the course of the prayer. In 4 instances the simple title 'Father' is used. 1,5, 21, 24. Verse 11, 'Holy Father' and in verse 25, 'righteous Father'.

Twice in this first petition Jesus addresses God as 'Father.' Not our Father, nor my Father, but simply 'Father.' This reminds us of the simplicity, the confidence, the holy familiarity which characterized the sacred fellowship between the Father and the Son in the incarnational life of Jesus. Even in the agony of death it was the blessed word 'Father' that sprang from the heart of the Lord (Luke 23:46).

The phrase "the hour is come" in v. 1 should also be noticed. On three separate occasions we are informed that Christ's hour had not yet come (2:4, 7:30, 8:20).

What was this HOUR that loomed so large in the mind of Jesus? It was the Passion that was now about to begin. It was that long dark hour into which were compressed the anguish of Gethsemane, the shameful mockery in Pilate's hall, the unspeakable agony of the Crucifixion, and the nameless horror of the descent into Hades.

And yet it was in this hour of shame and apparent defeat that Jesus was to be glorified (12:23f; 32,34)! This is plain also from 17:1, where "the hour" is the appointed hour for the glorifying of His Son, and from the petition that follows, "Glorify the Son."

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This can only mean that the phrase "the hour has come," far from being a death knell, was a shout of victory!

How deep the mystery that by divine alchemy the hour of defeat and shame may be transmuted into an hour of victory and glory. How deep also is the mystery that Christians shrink from the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, by which they may be made conformable to His death.

The words "glorify me" (1,5) may be taken to mean, "Take me to be with thyself." Christ, having finished the work the Father gave Him to do, now prays to be translated to glory; but since this glory was to be reached through a sin-bearing death, as well as by resurrection and ascension, Christ in this petition, as the one and only Mediator, is asking for the glory that was His by right, and for the strength not flinch from all that the entering into that glory would involve.

Two Reasons Why Jesus made this Request:

1. "That the Son also may glorify thee" (v.1) There are three things to notice here-

(1) The Father's glorifying the Son was not an end in itself. It was a means to a higher end -- the glorifying of the Father; and the Son glorified the Father by manifesting the Father's glory, because to reveal God in His holiness and mercy is to glorify God. The glorified Son does not detract, but contributes to the glory of the Father. See Phil. 2:9,10.

(2) But more specifically, how was the Son to glorify the father? The answer is in v. 2. The means by which He was to glorify the Father was the power or authority which the Father had given Him, probably at the Incarnation, because the Greek tense in v. 2 implies a once-for-all giving of authority; and in the manner in which the Son was to glorify the Father was in His giving "eternal life" to as many as the Father would give Him. But the Son could give eternal life only after being glorified, i.e., only after fulfilling the Father's will and completing the Father's mission of bringing life and immortality to light through death and resurrection.

it was by His death that he was to bring renown to His Father. That is why the Cross is glory. That was how the Cross became the medium through which the glory of the Godhead shone. The Cross was glory because it revealed the triumph and the perfection of divine Love. [the perfection of God's love -- He loved them in spite of the way that had treated them.

(3) But what is this eternal life? It is the knowledge of God as the only true God, and Father v. 3.

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And this knowledge is not only intellectual; it is supremely a spiritual apprehension of God. Knowledge here means recognition; and it is in essence eternal life because it is the knowledge of God the Father and Christ the Son. In our present existence this knowledge is a matter of faith, but in the world to come it will be vision. In this present world knowledge is the faith that God, the one true God, is Father, and that Jesus Christ is the Son and the Sent One. Naturally, this spiritual apprehension stirs the heart to desire a closer fellowship with the Father whom the Son reveals, and a more consistent conformity to the Father's will. As v.3 implies, this knowledge is fellowship with a Person.

The 2. reason for the petition "glorify thy Son" is in v. 4: "I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." The words "on the earth" for the moment to that of revealing the Father to men; a knowledge of which revelation is, in essence, eternal life. This was a work Jesus accomplished prior to the cross. The Son has accomplished on earth the Father's will and mission perfectly; and now what is uttermost in His mind is the continuance of that work in glory, because in v. 5 He goes on to ask the Father to glorify Him with the glory that was His before the Incarnation.

It has already been noted that the petition in v.1 is repeated in v. 5: now that this work is all but completed, "Father, glorify thou me." The words "with thine own self which follow, mean, "in fellowship with thee," and are significant for the doctrine of the deity of Christ. In v.4 the Son is, in Person, distinct from the Father; here in verse 5 the Father and the Son are one, and co-exist in eternal glory.

In this first petition Jesus is praying for complete restoration to His pre-incarnate glory in which He existed in fellowship with the Father (1:1, 14). If, therefore, the phrase "Father, glorify me" signifies "take me to be with thyself", it recalls to the believer's mind the entrance of the earthly high priest into the holy of holies to offer the blood of the lamb for the sins of the people. The recollection is strengthened by the two phrases "with thine own self," and "with thee" (v.5), which mean "into thy presence". Undoubtedly then, the language of v. 5 is that of the merciful and faithful High Priest who is about to return to the Father's presence with blood and wounds, the infallible tokens of His victorious death and our redemption.

### II. CHRIST PRAYS FOR THE ELEVEN VV. 9-19

In this section Christ's prayer for His disciples does not begin till v. 9. What precedes is an enumeration of the claims the disciples have upon their Father's benevolence (6-8).

- i. Their election by the Father
- ii. Their disposition, which is evidence of that electing grace of the Father.

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- iii. Their having been given to Christ by the Father, to whom they came by faith
- iv. Their reception, through Jesus' teaching, of the revelation of the Father, which had involved a recognition that "all things" that Christ had were from God, that His word was divine, that He himself was from God, and that His mission was divine.

In verses 9,10, the needs that will arrive as the Apostles fulfill their mission to make Christ's intercession for them essential. Then in vv. 11-16 it is their need of Jesus' assistance during His absence from them that is uppermost. And finally in vv. 17,19 it is their equipment for their fulfillment of the mission that is the subject of Christ's prayer for them..

The first part of v. 6 marks the transition from the first to the second section of the prayer. Jesus had been thinking about the work the Father had given Him to do, that of making the Father known to men; therefore, since He is about to intercede for those every men to whom He had revealed the Father, He says, "I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world."

The particular "name" in question here is the "Father." In the Son, God had revealed Himself as Father, had called upon men to address Him as Father in prayer, and thus had brought to an end the fear toward God that had possessed men's minds under the old covenant; a fear that prevented men from pronouncing the sacred name of God in private prayer, in public worship, and in the reading of Scripture. And to whom had Jesus Christ revealed the Father? To those who had been able to apprehend that revelation: "Unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world."

And who were those men to whom the Son had manifested the Father's name, and for whom He is about to intercede? (1) They belonged to the Father.....and by leading them to Christ.....(ii) They had proved unswerving in their loyalty, and faithful to their high calling: "They have kept thy word" (v. 6) This "word" which the Apostles had "kept" was Christ's revelation of the Father, hence the Son here described it as "thy word".....And to keep this word means to store it up in the memory, to obey and fulfill it., to keep it in the heart in order to impart it to others that they might come to know God who has revealed Himself as Father through the Son. (iii) They had persistently believed in Christ and had accepted His words as the very words of God.

.....and as Christ had not been able to make God known as a holy and loving Father to everyone He met on earth but only to those whom the Father had given Him, so today not all who hear the Good News respond. Not that the Eleven had fully understood all the words that Jesus had spoken to them. Dull hearts and dark minds made that impossible; but what they had taken serious hold of, in spite of blindness, was this: Jesus of Nazareth had come forth from the Father (John 6:69, 16:30). .....Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; and it was upon this impregnable rock of the deity of Christ that they were to build in the future. They had come to this conviction because Jesus had given them the Father's words (v.8).....The recurrence, then, of the fivefold solemn reaffirmation in this prayer that the Father had sent Christ (vv. 8, 18, 21, 23, 25), now

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assumes greater significance. When Jesus could say that they “knew of a truth that I came forth from thee,” they no longer doubted the divinity of His mission or the reality of His Messiahship.

The words “For the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them” (v. 8) are of great importance for us today .....and now these very same words are being heralded forth still. The conviction that these words originated in the mind and heart of the Father should impart an authority that is divine to all proclamation of the gospel.

.....The word rendered “pray” here should be noticed. It is *erotao*, which, in the fourth Gospel is used only with reference to Christ’s prayers to the Father (cf. 14:16; 17:9, 15, 20). The other word used for prayer in John’s gospel is *aiteo* but it is confined to prayers addressed to God by men (e.g., 14:13, 14). In his *New Testament Synonyms*, Trenchard says that *aiteo* emphasizes the sense of inferiority in the petitioner (as e.g., in Acts 12:20, 3:1); whereas *erotao* emphasizes the equality of the person making the request with the one from whom the request is being made.....When Jesus prays the Father on behalf of the disciples He never petitions, He makes request, as One fully conscious of His equality with the Father.....notice how the Lord uses both words in John 16:26 but the distinction is carefully maintained: “In that day ye shall ask (*aiteo*).....I will pray (*erotao*)....”.

It was natural that Christ should claim the Father’s exclusive regard for the Eleven. Upon this handful of men the future of the Church reposed. They represented the main results of the Lord’s earthly ministry. The winning of the world for Him depended upon them.....it had to be penetrated by the gospel. But this could be done only through the witness of the Eleven: therefore, it is for them that He must pray just now, not for the world.

Before doing so the Lord gives three reasons why He should pray exclusively for the apostles. (i) “They are thine” (vv.9-10); and because they were the Father’s it was the Father’s responsibility to keep them.....(ii) “I am glorified in them” (v. 10) by means of their perseverance in faith when others fell away. The words imply that Christ’s honor, the success of His cause, the purity and preaching of His gospel, were in their hands: how necessary, then, that the Father should keep them. (iii) “I am no more in the world” (v. 11), and they, therefore, would be left alone in the world; alone in a world that would scorn and hate them because they were Jesus’ representatives. In an altogether special sense, then, He must commit them to the Father’s safekeeping.....The “things” which are said to belong equally to the Father and the Son probably refer to the men for whom the Son now prays, as the conclusion of verse 9 suggests.

.....the Lord goes on to present three requests on their behalf.

(i) **Preservation.** “Holy Father, keep them in thy name” (v. 11). A name in Scripture often tells not only who its bearer is, but what he is. The name Jesus Christ explains not only what He is in terms of His divine nature and attributes, but also who He

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is in terms of His relations with us. But now it is the name Father that is referred to, the name which God gave to the Son to reveal to the disciples; and to that revealed name the Son prays that the Apostles should be kept true. They are to be preserved in the knowledge of God's name as Father, As His sons they call Him Father; in virtue of that relation they are His possession, and therefore nothing can harm them. As they live under this divine protection in an antagonistic world they bear the Father's name as His witnesses.

The title "Holy Father" occurs only here in Scripture. Its use is appropriate at this point because the Son is asking the Holy Father to keep the disciples in an unholy world (cf. v. 15); and they would be kept through the Son's holiness, which the Father will be asked to give them (v. 17), holiness being the divine attribute above all others by which the apostles would be protected from the corrupting influences of an unholy world. In a sense this petition is the most fundamental in Christ's prayer.....but, it is as Holy Father that He does this; therefore those who are drawn must also be holy. Holy love is the supreme trait in the divine character, so Christ asks the Father to keep vigil over the Eleven and hold them secure in the embrace of that holy love. The world would be a dangerous place for them without the companionship of Jesus Christ, but with the protection of the Father's name about them they would prove that "the name of Jehovah is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe" (Prov. 18:10).

(ii) **Unity.** The second petition is in verse 11: "That they may be one." Here a new bond of union among the disciples is referred to. There was already in existence an organic unity based upon oneness of belief, but what was lacking was oneness of spirit, of will and of purpose, through union with Christ in the Holy Spirit. This spiritual union was about to be effected. Once it was established, and consequently the oneness which it in turn would introduce among the disciples, it would be seen to conform to the essential perfect spiritual union between the Father and the Son. (I Cor. 6:17), II Pet. 1:4; a unity without which their witness would fail (John 15:8, 12), because there is little difference between a divided church and a divided world. The great danger confronting the Eleven would be the disruption of the fellowship that bound each to each, and all to Christ. (Acts. 15:1-29), (Acts 1:36-41)

The Lord continues to think about the keeping of the disciples by declaring that He has been doing in the past three years what He now asks the Father to do. "I kept them in thy name" (v. 12). The word "kept" should be rendered "was keeping," the tense in Greek signifying Christ's continual watching over the disciples.....Christ did not lose Judas (cf. 18:9); Judas lost himself.

And in being kept the Eleven were to share Jesus Christ's own indestructible joy in the midst of sorrow (v. 13). "My joy" means "the joy that is mine" (3:29, 15:11). The construction is also used of Christ's peace (14:27, 16:33), Christ's judgment (14:15), Christ's love (15:10), and Christ's glory (17:24). The joy in verse 13 was that which Jesus experienced in fellowship with the Father (15:11), I John 1:4). It was also the joy that He derived from performing completely the Father's will; the joy that His mission

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was about to issue in triumph (15:11), and that He was about to bring the Church into being; the joy that was now sustaining Him as He moved forward to the Cross. Now He prays that the Eleven might be sustained and comforted by this same joy.

And this is the joy that He communicates to the Church still. The following verses in John 17 describe how the joy that is Christ's "is fulfilled" in the Church's experience. She finds this joy in answering the Savior's call to proclaim to the world the (I John 1:3f) word of life, she finds joy through the Spirit of holiness which differentiates her from the world and yet which involves her in responsibility to the world, she finds joy in being kept from the world's standards of judgment and modes of conduct and thus acts as the salt of the earth.

.....He lays down two further reasons why the Father should keep them -- (a) "I have given them thy word" (v. 14). As in earlier verses, "thy word" means the total revelation of the Father, and this self-disclosure of God as Father in the Son, Jesus had communicated to them. How supremely important, therefore, that the Father should protect them. (b) "The world hated them" (v. 14): therefore they would need to be kept by the Father. But why should the world hate those men so? Because "thy word", the revelation of God as Father (v. 14), had entered their hearts, and had made them the kind of men for whom the world has neither time nor patience. The entrance of this divine word had created within their minds spiritual values that condemned the values that operated in the world; therefore it hated the disciples as it had hated their Lord. It was because of this word that they were not of the world; neither in origin nor in character.

And now in verse 15 Christ explains what He meant when, in verse 11, He asked the Father to keep the disciples. The Father, was to keep them safe, not by taking them out of the world, but by keeping them from contamination while they continued in the world. The Father's protection does not mean that they were to be kept immune from enemy attack in the form of persecution or temptation, but that they were to be preserved from constant pressure from the enemy. Only thus could they do God's work, and be sanctified by God's truth. They were to be kept, not from moral conflict, but from moral evil.

But what made the Father's protection necessary at all? While the evil one had found nothing in Christ (John 14:30), he had, alas, found something in the Eleven. There was something in their nature that enabled him to gain a foothold and work his evil designs and create havoc in their lives.....When the Son, therefore asks the Father to keep the disciples He means, not only protection from contact with evil, but also liberation from the evil one, since evil is conceived to be personal.....The relation between the Christian and good and evil is personal, not impersonal; but he is "in Christ," and while he lives and moves and has his being in Christ he is, of necessity, kept "out of" (which is the force of "from" in v. 15) the evil one. Contact without contamination is what Christ asks for in this prayer. For the Christian to be *of* the world is unthinkable, but he must be *in* the world, to give his witness *to* the world. He is kept from *conformity* to the world, but not from *concern for* the world....."In the world but

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not of the world"; there we have what Archbishop Temple called the "dilemma of demarcation" between the Christian and the world. The hermit is wrong, but so also is the worldly Christian; but where to draw the line of true adjustment between the two! That is the crux of a problem that every Christian must solve for himself before God. All that Jesus does in this verse is to lay down the double principle--"in the world, but not of the world"--and He leaves us to work it out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

(iii) **Sanctify** The third request that Christ made on behalf of the Eleven. It is in verse 1. ....In verse 1 it is the basis of His request that the Father should sanctify them. The world's hatred of the believer necessitates not his removal from the world, but his preservation from pollution and his sanctification. The word sanctification has, of course, reference to personal holiness. To sanctify means to consecrate, set apart persons or things to God.

**Other aspects of Sanctification.** This work of sanctification is effected through the truth, the truth being both the sphere within which the work takes place, and the instrument with which the work is effected. In addition, there is the activity of the purifying Spirit within the Christian, and the external conflicts and afflictions to which the Christian is subjected. But in Jesus' request in verse 17 the principal agent in the Christian's sanctification is the truth, God's word, in its subjective inner power.

.....sanctification must also have reference to spiritual endowment and equipment for service, as indeed the context here suggests. It is conjoined with the witness that the disciples were to give to the world .....and it is the setting apart for mission that is prominent, as in 17:17. The mission of the Eleven was to represent Christ, and the instrument by which they would fulfill this mission was to be the truth, the Father's word, the revelation of God as Father. **The truth was to be the realm in which they were to live, and the instrument by which they were to work.....**"sanctify in Greek describes the dedication of a sacrificial victim, or the setting apart of a person for religious service";.....it is not the nature of the thing dedicated that is in view here, but rather the *act* of dedicating it for sacred use; although, naturally, that very act of dedication implies both fitness of character and ability for the sacred duty to which the person is dedicated.

"Sanctify them in the truth,".....This work in their characters had been effected through the purifying power of the word. Now that this work has been accomplished the Son requests the Father to sanctify (i.e., consecrate) them to the work they are about to undertake. In this sense the word "sanctify" has reference both to the Father's purpose for the Apostles and to the equipment necessary to enable them to fulfill their purpose.

That "sanctify" means "consecrate to or for service" is clear from verse 18, the subject of which is the mission which the Son came to perform and which the Eleven are now to continue: .....Obviously the sense of mission is very pronounced. And because the Son was sending the disciples forth, they would require the same equipment as He has received - divine illumination, wisdom, courage, and above all, the presence and



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power of the Holy Spirit. **They would require identical equipment because their mission was identical.....**Christ did not leave the Eleven in the world, He *sent* them to the world.

“Sanctify” in the sense of equipment for service occurs again in verse 19, where the Father’s sending the Son into the world on His mission is linked with the Son’s sanctifying Himself, or consecrating Himself.....but to His willing and implicit obedience to the Father for the fulfillment of the Father’s mission. We are probably justified, then, in understanding the Lord’s use of the word “sanctify” in this prayer, both of Himself and the Eleven, in the sense of equipment for service. This makes verse 17 more meaningful and verse 19 easier to understand. The latter verse would mean that Jesus’ consecrating Himself to His mission in the world makes possible the disciples’ consecrating themselves to their mission.

It is necessary, however, to underline the difference between Christ’s consecration and the Christian’s. The Son consecrates Himself, but He must ask the Father to consecrate the disciples.....The Christian’s sanctification, or consecration, necessitates what Christ’s never did--redemption and purification from sin. The Son consecrated Himself when the Father sanctified Him to the Father’s mission. Now while the Son’s personal consecration of Himself makes the Christian’s consecration possible, it can never take the place of the Christian’s personal dedication to God

### **(I can dedicate myself to that to which I have been set apart.)**

3. Jesus Christ in prayer before the Father on behalf of the whole Church (vv. 20-24). The main thoughts in this section of the prayer are; the necessity for the conversion of those who are still “of the world”.

In this part of the prayer the Lord intercedes “for them also that believe on me through their (the disciples’) word”.....The Eleven were only the first fruit, the “earnest” of the Church that was yet to be. “Through their word,” that is to say, through their preaching and witnessing, others were to come to faith in Christ. Since, then, the Lord has in view the whole Church throughout history we are justified in finding a place for ourselves and for those who will come after us, in this prayer.

Only one petition is made for the Church throughout the ages: “That they all be one” (vv. 21, 22). This is the design or intention of the Son’s prayer for the Church; and the urgency with which we should consider this prayer of Jesus lies in this, that it is through the witness of a united Church that men believe in Christ, and are in turn added to the Church. And how are believers to be “one”?.....The cause of oneness is personal union with the Father, through the Son, and through the work of the Spirit in the heart thus united with the Father.....That is the basis of the spiritual union for which Christ prays here. Those who are in the Father and in the Son through the indwelling Spirit are all one in Christ Jesus.

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Now the **norm** of this spiritual unity between Christians in the unity between the Father and the Son: .....Not only is the unity in the Godhead the norm, it is also the ground of the Church's oneness; "That they also may be (one) in us (v. 21).

Obviously, then, the union to which Christ refers here transcends mere external unity. It's center of gravity is not earth but heaven. The world is not convinced that Christ came from the Father when the Church issues a statement of unity in doctrine, practice and purpose. And because this is a spiritual union that finds its counterpart in the union of the Father and the Son, no outward disunity can break it.....Where one, or all, of the marks of spiritual oneness is lacking, no external union, no matter how impressive, will convince the world. It is unity in one Master, one message, one mission, that convinces the world that the Father sent Jesus Christ into the world. Sectarianism is condemned by Jesus' request inverse 21; differences in forms of Church government and worship are not. These may be compatible with unity in the apostolic message and mission. Outward Union, or formal attachment, cannot produce spiritual union because spiritual union is "in", not "with" Christ; its unifying principle, as well as its ideal, is in the unity of th Father and the Son. This oneness, however, must manifest itself visible, and therefore every Christian is obligated to pray and work for a greater visible manifestation of this invisible union, that the world may recognize the Church's spiritual oneness, and may come to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son whom the Father sent into the world.

.....Christ now gives three reasons for the request, reasons which transcend any consideration such as the unity being highly desirable in itself. (i) "That the world may believe that thou didst send me" (v. 21). The oneness of the elect is not an end in itself. the Father sent the Son, the Son sent the Eleven, the Eleven sent their converts, and we are now being sent--all for one identical purpose; that the world might know, and then believe, that the Father sent the Son. ....but a disunited Church cannot give an effective witness to a disrupted world, because it is

....with a *scornful* wonder,  
Men see her sore oppressed;  
By schisms rent asunder;  
By heresies distressed.

(ii) The second reason for this request of Jesus is: "The glory which thou has given me I have given unto them; that they may be one".....Christ now refers to what He has done to make this union possible: He has given the Church the glory which the Father gave Him.....This glory Christ now gives to the Church. As communicated to the Church this glory is, in the words of H. B. Swete, "the glory of the divine character," of which love is the essential feature; or as Archbishop Temple puts it, "glory" here is "absolute love in perfect self-surrender." But however one may attempt to define this glory that Jesus Christ gives to the Church, it is manifested in the Church's union within herself, and in her love for the world; naturally, then, the manifestation of Christ's glory within the Church contributes in turn to Christ's glory in the world when, through the

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Church's unity and love, men believe in Him Here, then, is an added condemnation of a divided Church--she cannot contribute as she ought to the glory of her Lord.

But to what purpose is the communication of this glory if the Church is disunited?.....The Greek tense implies that the world may keep on knowing that the Father loves the world. Proof of the Father's love for the world is His having sent the Son into the world; and this love of the Father becomes in turn an illustration of how Christians ought to love each other and the world to whom Christ has sent her. Here, then, is yet another condemnation of a disrupted Church -- disunity slows down the work of evangelizing the world, because it is through her oneness that the Church convinces the world that Jesus Christ, and the Christian faith, are divine.....It is when the world *sees* the spiritual union of the Church in concrete form that it believes that Jesus Christ was the Son sent by the Father.

4. ....The Lord now brings His prayer to a close. This final division (vv. 24-26) is an epilogue thrown into the form of a petition which the Son addresses to the Father. It is in two parts: (i) Christ prays that the whole Church be reunited in glory with her Lord; (ii) He prays for the Church militant who, because her union with the Lord, is separated from the world. In addition, the epilogue underlines the uniqueness of Christ the Son of God, who reveals the Father's nature, who is the supreme object of the Father's love and in whom the Church will be gathered into the perfect eternal oneness in glory.

(i) **A look into the future.** For a brief moment, the Lord lifts His eyes to pierce through the gloom of the present hour to future glory. His use of the name "Father" brings into prominence the relation between Him the eternal Son, and the Father blessed forever. It is upon this blessed relation that Jesus Christ places His final request in this prayer.....What Christ wills in prayer here has already been granted in anticipation (v. 22); now He wills that it become a reality.

And what is it that the Son wills in His prayer? "That they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory" (v. 24). This is the grand purpose lying behind the creating of the Body of Christ. ....the whole church united together.....may be said to constitute this glory that the Father bestowed upon the Son. This is, so to speak, the completion of the glory the Father gave the Son in resurrection and ascension; that is why the Son prays, "that they may behold my glory." And yet not, "my glory," but rather, "my glory which thou has given me".....And speaking in anticipation here in verse 24 the Lord remarks that this glory has already been given to Him; and by an exercise of His will He desires that believers should share it with Him.....and now He wills that the first should be shared by the second.

The word "behold" in verse 24 implies not apprehension by faith, but the actual beholding by the Church of the glory of her triumphant Lord. What it will mean actually to share Christ's glory is summed up in II Timothy 2:12: "We shall also reign with him." And the effect of this beholding of Christ's glory is described in I John 3:2: "We shall see him even as he is," when "we shall be like him." The words, "where I am" (v. 24) mean

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to be with Christ in glory; to see Jesus honored and supreme is joy enough for the Christian, but to have a share in His glory will be joy unspeakable. The Church, blemished by imperfections and divisions today, will tomorrow be presented by Jesus Christ to the Father, without spot or wrinkle; and she, beholding the ineffable glory of her Lord, will be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory.

**(ii) A look back to the present.** In the second part of this concluding section of the prayer Christ turns his eyes back again from that still unfulfilled vision of future glory to the stark realities of the present. He looks at the Eleven upon whom so much depends....

.....in presenting His prayer to the Father the Son pleads two things: (a) The righteousness of the eternal Father: "O righteous Father,". Here the Son appeals to the absolute justice and truth of the Father, hence the title "Righteous Father." He appeals to the justice of the Father when asking that Christians may not share the fate of the impenitent, just as in an earlier section of this prayer He appealed to the holiness of the Father by using the title "Holy Father". (v) The Son, however, also pleads His own faithfulness in accomplishing the mission the Father had given Him to fulfill "I made known unto them thy name". We understand that in addition to the Father's righteousness, the Son pleads His own merits.

And what was this work that Jesus Christ has now accomplished? He says, "I knew thee". (v. 25), through direct vision, of course; but He is able to add, "I made known thy name unto them" v. 26. Notice the simple statements of fact in verse 25f; the world knew no God, Jesus Christ knew Him, the Apostles knew that God had sent Him, Christ has made God's name known to them. but while the Lord has made this revelation to the disciples, in another sense the revelation is inexhaustible, both in content and meaning; therefore, He adds "and will make it known". How? through the Holy Spirit, who will continue to instruct succeeding generations of Christians (14:26, 16:13). The declaring of the Ineffable Name to each generation is the great mission in which Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is perpetually engaged.... a mission that is identical with that in which He was engaged in His incarnate life (17:6)

As for the Eleven, the love with which the Father had loved the Son was to be in them; and the Son Himself, through the Holy Spirit, would dwell in them. the purpose lying behind the revealing of the Ineffable Name to each Christian is that the Father's love may dwell in the heart. There is a great interdependence between knowledge of the Father and love for the Father in that the knowledge depends upon the degree in which the love operates in the heart .

The three last words in the prayer, "I in them," are at once the crown and the summary of the entire prayer. The indwelling presence of Christ in the heart is the golden thread that links the upper-room discourses together; it is now the link that connects these discourses to the High-Priestly Prayer, and makes of both a glorious unity. The main conviction that would take hold of the mind would be that they and Christ could

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never be separated. Physically absent, yes; spiritually absent, never. His presence was unseen but it was real. Up till this moment they had known Christ after the flesh and were, therefore, outside Him; now they were to know Him after the flesh no more. They were to know Him after the Spirit, and were to have Him dwelling in their hearts forever. The indwelling of Jesus Christ in the hearts of the Eleven was to be the most outstanding evidence of His love for them.

This, then, is an example of Christ's prayers, and its main features should be a guide for all who are pupils in His school of prayer. It is direct in its method, and simple in its language; it is orderly in its design and practical in its intention; it is brief in its compass, and intimate in its approach; it is unselfish in its requests and profound in its principles. Its general theme is the oneness of the Church, and the glory of Christ, in which the Church will one day share.

Here in very truth the Lord Jesus Christ draws aside the veil to show us the nature of His communion with the Father. This prayer may be taken as part of His answer to our petition, "Lord, teach us to pray." When the great principles that came to expression in our Lord's prayers begin to operate in ours, then we shall begin to understand what prayer really is.