

## THE GOSPEL OF

## JOHN

The Glory and  
Love Jesus  
Shares with Us

## INTRODUCTION

John 17:20-26

Historically, it was your talent that got you noticed; today that talent is to get noticed. One vital skill in the digital age is to get noticed — and preferably by cameras.

If we simply pull the plug from the buzz of self-glory — as we saw in Part 1 — we are met with a reality that is not only frightening, but legitimately dangerous. If we simply expose the vanity of our self-glory, we would be met only with despair. The only safe way to expose the vanity of self-glory in our social media feeds is to offer a greater glory in return. And for that greater glory, we turn to John 17.

To find our footing in the age of reality TV, hoaxes, and self-glory in our social media feeds, we need to turn to “The Book of Glory,” a synonym for chapters 13–21 of the Gospel of John. Specifically, to Jesus’ “High Priestly Prayer” in John 17:1–26.

The cross is imminent. Christ turns his attention to his Father, in prayer. We are invited to listen into God’s triune communion.

Throughout John, and especially in John 17:1–2, Jesus has been stiff-arming human popularity. Why? He wasn’t ready to go big yet. Now he is. The moment has come for God to be glorified in Christ. Jesus’ relatively localized Palestinian ministry is about to step on a cosmic stage in the cross.<sup>1</sup>

## OPEN IT

1. What’s one aspiration your mom or dad had for your life?

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<sup>1</sup> Reinke, Tony. Glory-Finding in the Gospel of John: The War in Our Social Media Feeds (Part 2). May 7, 2020. <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/glory-finding-in-the-gospel-of-john>

# READ IT

John 17:20-26

# EXPLORE IT

2. For whom does Jesus pray near the end of this prayer? (Verse 20)

3. What gift has Jesus regifted to believers? (Verse 22)

4. What does Jesus want the world to know? (Verse 23)

5. Where does Jesus want his disciples to be? (Verse 24)

# APPLY IT

## ***What Jesus Prayed about Glory***

What is this glory? We have yet to answer the question of this conference — glory-seeking and glory-finding. As we saw last time, we do know where this glory is not found: in vainglory. And Jesus has made it clear, he himself has zero interest in human glory. He outright rejected human celebrity culture. He's only really concerned with the glory that comes from his Father, and now we know what that means. Here's what we know about the glory from Jesus' prayer:

- Verses 4–5: Christ glorified the Father on earth and now asks the Father to glorify him on earth — that is, on the cross.
- Verse 10: Christ is glorified by the new church.
- Verse 13: Christ is soon going to the Father after the resurrection, ascension, enthronement. And from this place of glorification, Christ's joy will be given to the church.
- Verses 22–23: The glory of the Father has been given to the Son, and the Son has given that glory to the church to stabilize her unity. To live for the glory of God is to be hated by the self-loving world. And so, the divine glory will hold together the church in her pressures.
- Verse 24: Christ prays that the church will one day behold his fully manifested glory, a glory that existed forever in the past, and will be, for the bride, on display for her delight in eternity future.<sup>2</sup>

**6. In your own words, do your best to define the glory of God.**

**7. Revisit John 1:14. How did God show His glory through the incarnation.**

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**8. How should the people of our church interact with the glory of God?**

***What Jesus Prayed about Love***

Christian love is anchored in the Godhead, anchored in eternity, anchored in Christ, anchored in the cross. Other New Testament Christians, apart from the initial readers of the Gospel of John, understood these things, of course. “I live by faith in the Son of God,” Paul writes — and then he cannot restrain himself, but adds, “who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Again, we read, “We love, because he first loved us.”<sup>3</sup>

**9. What examples of unconditional love has God shown to you in your life?**

**10. Read the full verse of Galatians 2:20. Of the many life-changing phrases in this verse, which one has personal significance for you? Why?**

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<sup>3</sup> Carson, D.A.. The Supremacy of Christ and Love in a Postmodern World. September 30, 2006. <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-supremacy-of-christ-and-love-in-a-postmodern-world>

**11. Have you seen any stories of genuine love unfold in your small group or at your campus?**

***What Jesus Prayed about Heaven***

With all of the wonderful blessings we enjoy as Christians, I often wonder why people aren't beating down the doors of every evangelical church to beg, "What must I do to be saved?" Even when we face difficult trials, we have Christ's presence in the flames to comfort us, as He was with the three men in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3). He is there to comfort us when we lose loved ones. He is there to sustain us when we face death. And when we leave this life, we are with Him in glory forever, with eternal happiness. What is there about the Christian life not to love! The fact that unbelievers are not actively seeking to know God only confirms their spiritual blindness and hardness of heart, as the Bible declares.

As our Lord wraps up His high priestly prayer, which we are privileged to listen in on, He reveals the blessings that all who believe in Him enjoy in this life, plus the incomparable blessing of being with Him in heaven forever. He's saying: If you have come to Christ as Savior and Lord, you have wonderful blessings now plus the certainty of being with Him in heaven to see His glory.<sup>4</sup>

**12. Have you ever talked with someone who was eager to be with Jesus in heaven? How could you tell they were excited?**

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<sup>4</sup> Cole, Steven J.. Blessings Now Plus Heaven Ahead! May 17, 2015. <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-92-blessings-now-plus-heaven-ahead-john-1724-26>

**13. What are some ways our church fosters a healthy anticipation to be in God's eternal presence?**

**14. Read Philippians 3:20-21. What are a couple things you're eager to experience in Heaven?**

The Heidelberg Catechism begins: Question: What is your only comfort in life and in death?

Answer: That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

As those whom the Father gave to His Son, we enjoy the blessings of salvation now and the joys of heaven ahead! What more could we ask for!<sup>5</sup>

**15. Write a short prayer asking God to give you an eternal perspective on life this week.**

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.