

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

John 6:1-14

Intro: We continue to look in the Gospel of John for evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Son of God, and we find it in the one miracle of our Lord that is recorded in all four Gospels. This shows its tremendous importance, not only with the Holy Spirit, the Author of Scripture, but also with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the men ordained by God to give these records of the life and ministry of Christ on earth.

So we have this account, not only in John 6, but also in Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44, and Luke 9:10-17.

But it is John alone who shows us how this led to our Lord's teaching that He was the bread of life. He not only gives life, but He sustains life. Without Him neither life nor living would be possible. And that applies to natural life as well as to spiritual life. We saw in the healing of the nobleman's son that the Lord is perfectly capable of intervening when otherwise death would be certain. We saw in the miracle where the water was changed into wine, that the Lord is capable of changing one part of His creation, water, into that which is the product of the grape vine, wine. And we also saw that what the Lord produced in a moment of time was far better than what men were able to produce over a period of months, and often of years.

This story is a reminder of a truth which we are inclined to forget, a truth which is a part of our lives every day. It is that the food which we grow, or which we purchase at one of our markets, is a gift from God. It is evidence of the omnipotence of God. We read, for example, in Psa. 145: 15-16

15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

That applies to all living creatures – the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the living creatures of earth, and every human being.

In Psalm 104 we have the same teaching where the Psalmist gives us these revealing words,

24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou

made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

31 The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being (Psa. 104:24-33).

- The story we are considering today is a story of bread and fish – barley loaves and fish. Barley has to be grown, the seeds have to be milled, and then the loaves have to be baked. The fish were caught mainly by nets in our Lord's time here on earth. Then they had to be cleaned and cooked before they were eaten. But our Lord, being God, and possessing omnipotence, by-passed all of the regular preparation of food, and taking a boy's lunch, instantaneously provided food for 5,000 men, but when you add to them, the women and children, it is probably no exaggeration to say that close to 10,000 people were served food that day. And they ate until they were saying, "No, thank you," because they were full. And after the feast each apostle had a whole basket of fish and barley loaves for himself. MATT. 14:21

Talk about evidence of Deity, this certainly was what the people were able to see on that day.

- This was not the first time that God had provided bread for His people in a most miraculous way. The children of Israel saw this happen every day for forty years! God faithfully provided for at least a million and a half people every day by the manna which the Lord provided for them every

morning. There was no manna on the seventh day, but on the sixth day each week the Lord gave them enough for Friday and Saturday.

— And you may remember the story in the days of Elisha how one hundred men were fed on twenty barley loaves and some newly ripened grain which a man brought in his knapsack.

So what the Lord had done in different ways in OT times, here He did it in Person! And after it was all over there seemed to be a general consensus of opinion among the men that the prophet that Moses had predicted would come into the world, had come. And in verse 15 you can see that they were ready then and there “to take Him by force, to make him a king.”

This story of the feeding the five thousand is familiar to anyone who has read the Gospels, but now let us go back over the account in John’s Gospel to pick up the important lessons.

I. THE SETTING OF THIS MIRACLE (John 6:1-4).

— In chapter 5 our Lord was in Jerusalem. As chapter 6 begins He is back in Galilee. Picking up some information from the accounts in the other Gospels, we see that the Lord had intended to go away with His disciples to rest for a time. They crossed the Sea of Galilee in a boat, but the people of the area were aware that the Lord was there, and so they went around the sea on foot until they came to where the Lord and His disciples were. The Lord spent a large part of the day teaching the people, although the people had been attracted to the Lord primarily by the miracles which He had performed.

We don’t know why John mentioned the Passover, but Brown in the JFB commentary said that this was probably the third Passover since the Lord had begun His public ministry. If that is true, then the Lord was approaching the latter part of His ministry on earth.

II. THE NEED OF THE PEOPLE (John 6:5-10).

— It seems that this visit by the Lord and His disciples was totally unexpected by the people because it seems that in their hurry to get to where the Lord was, most of them had forgotten to take any food with them for the

day. The Lord did not want to send them back home on that long trip around the Sea of Galilee without anything to eat. And so He asked Philip, “Where shall we buy bread that these may eat?” (v. 5b).

And then the Apostle John, looking back on that occasion, said, “And this He said to prove him,” i.e., Philip, “for He Himself knew what He would do” (v. 6).

Now let me remind you that *a disciple is a learner*. The Lord had chosen twelve disciples to be with Him, to learn from His teaching, and to learn from the miracles that they had seen Him perform. We know from reading the Gospels that they were like we often are – slow learners! And so to show them how much they had learned, or how little they had learned, He often tested them. This is what John meant when he said that the Lord knew what He was going to do, but He asked Philip “to prove him.”

This is the Greek verb *πειράζω*. It means *to pierce into*, or *to search into* some person or thing. It came to mean “trying intentionally, and with the purpose of discovering what of good or evil, or power or weakness, was in a person” or that thing being tested. See Trench, p. 280. But in a case like we have before us, where the Lord was trying or testing or proving Philip, it was so that Philip would discover how much he had learned about the Lord and from the Lord, or what he had failed to learn.

How did Philip respond? Now remember that he was being questioned by the Son of God whom Philip had heard teaching numberless times, and He had seen the Lord perform more miracles than he could possibly have counted.

How did he respond?

Well, he responded like he would have if I had asked him that question. Or if you had asked him that question. Expositors have “guesstimated” that the amount he mentioned might have fed two thousand people, but now five thousand, or ten thousand. Besides, we can be sure that none of the disciples had that amount of money with them, and probably couldn’t have come close to that if they had pooled their resources.

Since the Lord asked the question that he did, it wouldn’t have been so bad if Philip had said what he said, but then if he had only added, “but

Lord, you are the Lord, the Christ, the Son of God, and You can provide for this whole crowd even though we don't have the resources to feed them."

But he didn't say that, did he? In Philip's mind there was no way that they could provide food for a crowd like that.

Andrew helped a little, but then he backed off. (Read vv.8 and 9.)

I would venture to say that there have been times in all of our lives, and with most of us who have known the Lord for many years, many, many times when we have faced situations which overwhelmed us, not realizing that the Lord was proving us. And we have reacted just like people would react who do not know the Lord! Isn't that true? I am not talking about expecting a miracle. Sometimes the Lord does perform a miracle. But I am talking about seeing the Lord's hand in our circumstances, and recognizing that we are in over our heads, not able to cope with what we face, but trusting the Lord and resting in Him.

I have failed the test so many times that I hate to think of them. We know the Lord. We are sure that He is the Lord. There isn't a word in His Word that we doubt. We believe it all, and we can recite the lessons well. But then the Lord puts us in a testing situation because He wants us to see the needs in our lives which He sees. He always knows what to do, but He wants us to see that there is a lot of truth that we have in our heads that hasn't gotten down yet into our hearts to change our lives.

How do we react to trials and testings which the Lord places before us? Do we react like people in the world react? Or do we react in faith, and trust, knowing that when we are in a situation that is beyond us, we have a Savior Who has put us there to show us what He knows about us, and to bring us to see how much we need Him? We can't do without Him.

Don't you wonder how Philip and Andrew, too, thought back over their reaction to what the Lord said, and perhaps went to the Lord to ask His forgiveness for their lack of faith?

Well, at that point the Lord prepared for the miracle. (Read v. 10.)

III. THE MIRACLE (John 6:11-13).

Andrew had called the “lad” who had the lunch a παιδάριον, which means *a little boy, a child*. This ought to be an encouragement to all of our children here, that the Lord often uses little children as His instruments of blessing even to adults. This little boy’s mother had no idea when she made that lunch that day that the Lord was going to make such a great means of blessing to so many people.

What was the first thing that the Lord did when He took the lunch in His hands? *He gave thanks!* Think about this! Here is the Lord of glory, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, stopping to give thanks to the Father in heaven. Our hearts are really cold if that doesn’t touch us deeply. The Jews in their Talmud say, “He who enjoys aught without thanksgiving, is as though he robbed God” (Trench, *Miracles*, p. 289). That includes everything we have. What an example our Lord set for all of us here! The Lord provided breakfast for you this morning. He gave you the desire to come to church. He gave you the strength to come. He provided your transportation, and the money to put gas into the tank in your car. Think your way through your day, and you have to recognize the Lord in every step that you take. I do, too. We ought to be thanking the Lord all day long every day. He is taking care of us all of the time. The Lord saw the hand of His heavenly Father in all of the circumstances of that day, including that little boy’s lunch. The Lord could have performed the same miracle without the lunch, but He took the lunch that a mother had prepared to feed her little boy, *and He fed approximately 10,000 people with it!!*

Psalm 79 rehearses the goodness of the Lord to the children of Israel on their journey from Egypt to Canaan, and also the wicked unbelief of the people in spite of all that the Lord had done for them. Listen to these words:

- 12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.
- 13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.
- 14 In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.
- 16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation (Psa. 78:12-22).

What an example we have in our Lord Jesus Christ Who recognized the goodness of His Father at every turn, and was constantly giving Him thanks!

After thanking God for the food, the Lord gave to His disciples, and His disciples gave to the people, and everyone ate until they had enough. Just when the loaves and the fish were multiplied, we are not told. I like the statement of one writer who said, "It is true wisdom, to leave the indescribable undescribed, and without so much as an attempt at the description" (Trench, *Miracles*, p. 290). So we will leave it there, and worship the Lord Who was sufficient for the great need.

IV. THE RESULT (John 6:14).

They apparently were convinced that the Lord was the Messiah. And they would have taken Him by force to make Him their King. But the tragedy is that they did not recognize their need of a Savior.

Concl: The Lord's glory was very evident again – the omnipotent Son of God Who multiplied five loaves and "two small fishes" so as to provide for approximately 10,000 people. And in doing it, He showed at least two of His disciples that they still thought as men, and had not yet taken the truth that they knew and applied it to a need which they faced. I trust that the Lord will help us to learn from this wonderful story that we, too, need to trust the Lord more as we face our needs from day to day.

LAZARUS, AN INSTRUMENT OF CHRIST'S GLORY

John 11:1-16

Part 1

Intro: For several weeks I have been considering with you, mainly from the Gospel of John, the miracles which show plainly *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And since it has been four weeks since I have ministered to you on Sunday morning, let me remind you that when the Bible speaks of the glory of Christ, it is speaking of *the Deity of Christ*. Whether or not the Lord Jesus was the Son of God in human flesh, was the issue that was raised repeatedly by our Lord's enemies while He was here on earth. The Jewish leaders charged Him with blasphemy because He claimed that God was His Father, which meant that He was claiming equality with God. And it would have been blasphemy if it had not been true. However, the evidence is overwhelming in the Gospels that there is no other way that we account for the life that Jesus lived while He was here on earth, nor for His teaching, nor for His miracles, except that He was the Person He claimed to be – *the Son of God!*

I hope that you remember how the Apostle John began his Gospel. After referring to the Lord as “the Word” in the opening verses of this Gospel, saying that He was in the beginning, and that He was “with God,” and that He “was God,” then moving down to verse 14 of the first chapter of his Gospel, the Apostle John said this:

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 1:14).

In saying this, the Apostle John have given us as strong a statement of the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ as any statement that you will find in the Word of God.

Now, since we are reviewing, let me take you to the last two verses in John, chapter 20 – verses 30 and 31. In these verses the Apostle John stated his purpose in writing this Gospel. Let me read those two verses for you as you follow in your Bible:

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20:30).

So, as we learned from our recent survey of the Bible, the Gospel of John was written to prove that Jesus Christ was God, and while John included many of the Lord's teaching to show His Deity, yet His main line of proof was in the miracles that we have recorded in this Gospel. And it is generally taught that there are seven of them – although if we were to be really technical in looking for the “signs” which John spoke of, we could add a few miracles to the list. But the main miracles are these:

- 1) He changed water into wine (John 2:1-11).
- 2) The healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54).
- 3) The healing of the impotent man (John 5:1-15).
- 4) The feeding of the five thousand (John 6:1-14).
- 5) Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee (John 6:15-21).
- 6) The Lord gave sight to the man who was born blind (John 9 – the whole chapter).
- 7) The raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44).

So I am passing over the miracle where the Lord walked on the water, and also the miracle the Lord performed when He gave eyesight to the man who had been born blind. And I am not doing this because they are not involved in the evidence John has given us of the Lord's glory, but because I do not want to extend this series too long, and it is in connection with the raising of Lazarus from the dead that our Lord said about Lazarus' illness,

This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby (John 11:4).

It is true that in connection with giving sight to the man born blind, the Lord said when He was asked, “Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”, He responded by saying,

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him (John 9:3).

And the Lord eventually asked the man, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” (John 9:35). And the man asked the Lord to tell him Who the Son of God was. Then the Lord said to him, “Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee” (John 9:37). Then the man believed in the Lord, and worshiped Him. So again the glory of God in Christ was to be seen. But I move on this morning to John 11, as I have said, because of the Lord's words in John 11:4. (Repeat.)

I believe that the glory of our Lord is to be seen in this miracle, not just in the actual raising of Lazarus from the dead, but in all that led up to His

resurrection. It is apparent that the Lord was not only dealing with Lazarus in this very trying situation, but He was dealing also, and perhaps even more so, with Mary and Martha, Lazarus' two sisters. But the events this chapter were full of instruction for all believers who knew this man Lazarus and his two sisters. And only when we are with the Lord will we know how many times this story has been an encouragement and source of spiritual strength to those, like we are, who have read and understood and been blessed in knowing more about the Lord and His ways, more of His glory, as He ministered to Lazarus and his two sisters. If we are looking for a good illustration of those two verses in Isaiah's prophecy which have become special verses to us here at Trinity Bible Church, we have an excellent illustration here. I am referring to Isaiah 55:8 and 9:

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Fifteen hundred years before Christ, which would make it some thirty-five hundred years ago for us, a man by the name of Moses prayed a very special prayer. And I doubt if even he realized at the time how far-reaching would be the answer to that prayer. Moses had been on Mt. Sinai receiving the Law from God, and when he came down he found his people worshipping a golden calf, and he learned that his own brother Aaron had played a major role in the idolatry of the people of Israel. It made him very angry to think that the Lord's people would do such a thing. But he loved the people so much that he could not stand it when the Lord said that He would destroy the nation, and make another nation out of Moses' descendants. Nor could he stand it when the Lord said that He would not go on with the people, but that He would give them an angel to go with them. If the Lord would blot out the nation, Moses wanted to be blotted out with them.

But in seeking the Lord, Moses made two specific requests of the Lord.

The first was, "Show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight" (Ex. 33:13). The second was, "Show me Thy glory" (Ex. 33:18). As it is with many of our prayers, we can be sure that at that time he did not know the full extent of those requests. But we can safely say that for the rest of his life Moses was learning the ways of the

Lord, and was seeing more and more of the glory of the Lord, that is, the Deity of the Lord, His power, His wisdom, His love and His grace, and all of the Lord's other glorious attributes.

We see the glory of the Lord primarily as He is revealed in the Word. We see His glory in the wonders of the created world around us. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Psa. 19:1). We learn more about the glory of God in His ways with us. And we see evidences of His glory in the work that He is doing in our hearts.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).

But now let us see evidences of the glory of the Lord in the Lord's dealings with Mary and Martha and Lazarus.

I. THE SICKNESS OF LAZARUS (John 11:1-3).

There are only two men in the Bible named Lazarus. One was the beggar in the parable the Lord told about Lazarus and the rich man. Incidentally, I believe I am right in saying that Lazarus is the only time a proper name appears in a parable. The other was the brother of Mary and Martha. It is a shortened form of the Hebrew name, Eleazar (which was the name of one of Aaron's sons).

These two sisters and their brother lived together in Bethany, a small village on the eastern slope of the Mt. of Olives, about a mile and a half from Jerusalem. Bethany was also the home of Simon the Leper. The Lord often spent time in Bethany, and Luke 24:50 and 51 indicates that it was from Bethany that the Lord departed from the earth and ascended back to heaven. The Lord spent much time there when He was in the vicinity of Jerusalem. It was a place where the Lord could be safe from His enemies.

The problem was that Lazarus was sick. We don't know what the sickness was, but it obviously was very serious because it resulted in His death. In verse 2 the Apostle John reminded us of Mary's great love for the Lord. In fact, Mary is mentioned three times in the Gospels, and each time she is at the Lord's feet. In Luke 10:38-42 we are told that she sat at

the Lord's feet to hear His Word. Here in our chapter, John 11, and verse 32, she came to the Lord for comfort. And in John 12 we find her at the Lord's feet again, worshiping Him. See John 12:3. And this is mentioned in John 11:2 to show how greatly devoted Mary was to the Lord. And it may be that the Apostle John mentioned her love for the Lord to indicate that if anyone was deserving of the Lord's help, it was Mary. John made it clear that it was Mary's brother who was sick.

The latter part of John 10 indicates that the Lord was on the other side of the Jordan River where He had gone to escape from His enemies. Mary and Martha knew where He was, and so they sent someone to tell the Lord that "he whom Thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3). We could hardly call this a prayer, and yet in a very real sense that is what it was. They did not tell the Lord what to do. They did not request that He come to Bethany immediately. They just felt that if the Lord knew about the crisis in their home, He would come immediately to heal Lazarus just as He had healed so many others. They were counting on the Lord's love for Lazarus as all that it would take for the Lord to drop everything else to come to Lazarus.

Now we will have to say that there were not many homes in Israel at the time where the Lord was loved and trusted and worshiped like He was in the home of Lazarus and Mary and Martha. When trouble comes our way in any form, and we have a special need for the blessing of the Lord, it is quite natural for us to think about how much we have tried to please the Lord, how much we have tried to show our love for Him, how faithful we have been in seeking to do His will, as though these things somehow would obligate the Lord to do something for us. But the Lord's response shows that there is something greater that we need to be concerned about than deliverance from our problems regardless of how serious those problems might be.

So let us look at:

II. THE LORD'S RESPONSE (John 11:4-6).

Three things are important here:

- 1) What He said.
- 2) How He felt about Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

3) What He did.

A. What He said (John 11:4).

Even people who love the Lord get sick. And even people who love the Lord die. It is not always the Lord's will to heal us. *But the account here is meant to teach us that always our greatest concern should be that which will glorify God and manifest the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The sickness and death of Lazarus were not something that happened by chance. And in this case it was not something wicked that Satan had done to Lazarus. But it was in the plan and purpose of God that the glory of Jesus Christ might be revealed in an even clearer way.

We always need to put God and to put Christ ahead of ourselves or our loved ones. God is not capricious in what He does. He is not motivated by some whim, some arbitrary thought or impulse. There is always a divine purpose behind everything that touches our lives. And although what happens may seem severe and without any reason, yet God always is motivated by His own glory and for our good. So this sudden turn of events in Lazarus' life, and in the lives of his sisters, was all within the good and gracious will of God. This is what we always need to remember.

The Lord Jesus was concerned about bringing glory to the Father. The Father was concerned about the glory of the Son. So we see that what glorifies God, glorifies the Son, and what glorifies the Son, glorifies the Father. The glory of the One is inseparably linked with the glory of the Other. The Deity of Christ could hardly be clearer than it is in verse 4.

But there is a second important point here, and we find it in verse 5.

B. How Jesus felt (John 11:5).

The change in Lazarus' physical condition did not indicate a change in our Lord's love for them. The Apostle John mentioned this for every reader to understand. Sometimes God judges sin with sickness (and we have many instances of that in the Gospels), but that was not the case with either Lazarus, or Mary, or Martha. And so Lazarus' sickness was not punishment! Lazarus was being made an instrument for the glorifying of our Lord Jesus Christ even though it would mean that neither Mary, nor

Martha, nor Lazarus understood at the time what the Lord was doing. But one thing they could be certain about: the Lord still loved them just like He did before Lazarus got sick. This is a great truth that we must never forget.

But notice a third thing. And this is where two and two do not add up to four in our thinking. I am thinking about:

C. What Jesus did (John 11:6).

This is often where our faith fails. *Instead of dropping everything that He was doing, the Lord waited for two more days for no apparent reason.* We have trouble with this, don't we? We bring our burdens and our needs to the Lord, but He doesn't do anything! We pray, but it is just like we hadn't prayed. It seems that the Lord does not care. He says that He loves Lazarus, but He does not hasten to His side to help him.

This has always been problem with the Lord's people. Notice how many times in the Psalms we read those word, "How long . . .?" As we often say, "I am in a hurry, but God isn't!" The Lord often lets a bad situation gets worse. In fact, He lets a possible situation become impossible before He does anything. But this is where we need to be praying that He will keep us trusting Him even when it seems that it won't make any difference. Time is always of the utmost importance to us, but it is often clear that the Lord counts time in a different way from what we do.

At last we come to the Lord's decision.

III. THE LORD'S DECISION TO GO TO LAZARUS (John 11: 7-16).

But now another obstacle is to be faced. His disciples don't want Him to go back into the vicinity of Jerusalem because they feel that it would be walking right into the hands of His enemies who want to kill Him! So they begin to argue with the Lord, and this only adds to the delay.

The Lord's decision is stated in verse 7. (Read.)

His disciples object in verse 8. (Read.) Then the Lord explained that they would be safe in the daylight, finally stating what He is His sove-

reign wisdom knew: “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.”

— This seemed to add to the case the disciples were trying to make. But then the Lord told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.” This would seem to give the disciples their final argument. Why go now, if he is dead?

But then the Lord made the second really amazing statement of these first sixteen verses. (Read v. 15.)

You see, not only were Mary and Martha and Lazarus involved in what the Lord was planning to do for the glory of the Father and His own glory, but the disciples were involved as well.

What the Lord said that He was glad that He had not been there before Lazarus died, “to the intent ye may believe,” what did He mean? Believe what? It can only mean “*to the intent that ye may believe that I am the Son of God!*”

— *This grand truth about our Lord was truth that even the disciples were slow in understanding, but now they were going to have the opportunity to see great evidence that their Master was the almighty Son of God, the One Who can call the dead back to life again!*

But Thomas, reacting like a person would who felt that the Lord would not listen to reason, told the other disciples that they might as well go with the Lord, but be prepared to die with Him.

Concl: We can be thankful that this is not the end of the story, but I trust that we all will profit from what we have learned so far. Apply this to our own circumstances. It may not be a life or death matter with us, but let us believe that those circumstances in our lives which we don’t like and wish were different, are conditions which the Lord has brought about in our lives to teach us more of His glory, and that there are probably others looking on, watching our reaction, because God is teaching them too through what He is doing with us.

— The Lord willing, we will see more about this wonderful story next Sunday morning.

LAZARUS, AN INSTRUMENT OF CHRIST'S GLORY

John 11:17-46

Part 2

Intro: There is no subject in all of the Bible that is greater than that of *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. I say that because even the glory of God is confirmed by the glory of the Lord Jesus. Even the authority of Scripture is involved in the fact that Jesus Christ was God. And it is the glory of our Lord that is the very foundation of our salvation. If Jesus Christ is not God, then all that is left is that He was only a man like you and I are, and therefore is Himself in need of a Savior.

Just yesterday I was talking to one of our men who was telling me that one of his daughters was married overseas, and when she and her husband came back to the States they had their married confirmed in a *Unitarian church*. *What does a Unitarian believe?* They claim to worship God, but it is not the God of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So it is not the true God. Therefore, they are without a Savior, and without any real hope. They are just a pseudo religious organization, and really have no right to call themselves a church.

There is no doctrine in Scripture that is of any greater importance than the Deity, the glory, of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God Who became a Man. In Him we have the perfect and final revelation of God, and in Him we have the only Substitute Who died to save sinners from their sins. The people who claim that Jesus was only a man, but that He was a good man, and a great teacher, obviously don't know what they are talking about. How could He be good, and why would we trust His teaching, if His basic claim to be the Son of God was not true? But we can thank God that His claim to be the only begotten Son of God was true. It is true. And therefore He was and is good, perfect goodness, and His teaching the absolute and infallible truth.

So we are dealing with a very primary doctrine of Scripture when we deal with the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last week we considered together the first sixteen verses of John 11. We learned that there were two sisters and a brother who lived in Bethany, a little town about a mile and a half from Jerusalem, on the east side of the Mount of Olives. Their names were Mary and Martha and Lazarus.

— Lazarus was serious ill, and his sisters sent word to our Lord Who at the time had gone down to and across the Jordan River to get away from His enemies. When the Lord received word of Lazarus' illness, He spoke the words recorded for us in John 11:4. (Read.) Whether or not this was reported to Mary and Martha, we cannot say. Some think it was; others, that it was not. Whatever might be the truth about that, we are given that information right at the beginning of this chapter. And so we see that the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glory of God are bound together. Therefore, we are to look for ways in which we see the glory of Christ revealed in the events of this chapter.

— The glory of God the Father and God the Son is revealed in Their words, Their ways, and Their works – all of which are vastly different from man's words and ways and works. So, while it is very strange to us that the Lord did not drop everything and go immediately to Lazarus' bedside, or just say that word where He was to heal Lazarus. We find that the Lord purposely delayed going to Lazarus until Lazarus died – and yet the Apostle John stated very clearly in verse 5 of our chapter that “the Lord loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.” This definitely runs contrary to the way we think. But a part of our Lord's glory is that His thoughts and our thoughts *are different*, and yet, as Isaiah said years before the coming of Christ to the earth,

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9).

So God's thoughts are not only different from ours, but higher and better! And we see that even in our lives when it seems that the Lord is so slow in answering our prayers.

But finally, after two days the Lord decided to go to Lazarus. This made His disciples very unhappy because they felt that He would be walking right into the hands of His enemies, and into certain death! But finally they all decided to go with the Lord.

— Now today we pick up the story at verse 17. I believe that there are four main ways in these verses, going down to verse 46, in which we see the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1) In how He revealed Himself to Martha. And here I am thinking of the

Lord's words in verses 25 and 26.

2) In the Lord's tears. See verse 35.

3) In His prayer, verses 41 and 42.

4) In the miracle which He performed in raising Lazarus from the dead. This is in verses 43 and 44.

I. CHRIST'S GLORY AS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (John 11:17-27).

One thing that this contact that the Lord had with Martha teaches us, is that the Lord uses all of the circumstances of our lives, especially our trials, to reveal Himself to us in a clearer and more personal way. Those of you who have known the Lord for any length of time at all, know that it is in the tough places in life that the Lord has made Himself a greater reality in your life, and you have been brought into a relationship of closer fellowship with the Lord. But this is not only true in what we call our trials, but as we seek His guidance, or as He brings unexpected blessings into our lives, we find ourselves being drawn closer to Him. We realize how graciously the Lord cares for us day after day.

If you had asked Martha before Lazarus died if she believed that the Lord could raise the dead, without any hesitation she would have told you that she did, that she had no doubt in her mind that He could raise the dead. She declared as much in verse 24, and this may be what she had in mind when she said the words recorded for us in verse 22. But it was another thing that she had not thought about when the Lord spoke the words found in verses 25 and 26. He could not only raise the dead, but our Lord is resurrection and He is life, "the resurrection and the life"! As Bishop Westcott said in his commentary on John,

He is both. He does not say "I promise," or "I procure," or "I bring," but "I am"(p. 168).

He did not even say "I will be," but "I am the resurrection and the life."

And our Lord went on to say that even though one who believes in Christ dies, yet he lives, "and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die." In the Greek this latter statement is very emphatic. It could be translated like this: *And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never* (a double negative) *die unto the ages*, meaning for all eternity!

The Lord was not denying that believers die. He had told His disciples

earlier, “Lazarus is dead” (John 11:14). We will die physically some day unless the Lord comes before we die. But if we die physically, we do not cease to exist. We simply pass on into the glory of life eternal.

Dwight L. Moody once said, “Some day you will read in your papers that Dwight L. Moody died. Don’t believe it, because at that time I will be more alive than I ever had been before.” Death is our enemy, but our Lord Jesus by His death on the Cross not only put away our sins, but He conquered death and the grave. That is why Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:57,
But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The disciples were given power to raise the dead. Elijah and Elisha raised the dead. But only our Lord can say, “I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me . . .”

But there was another way that the Lord showed His glory.

II. THE GLORY OF OUR LORD IS SEEN IN HIS TEARS (John 11:28-36, esp. v. 35).

Perhaps you have been told that this is the shortest verse in the Bible, and it is! But it also is one of the most wonderful of all the verses in the Bible. “Jesus wept.”

This means that the Lord Jesus actually *shed tears*. Others were weeping, and He wept with them. That is quite amazing, isn’t it? But someone might say, “This is evidence of His humanity, not His Deity.” And it is true that it does reflect His humanity, but it also is what you would expect from the Man Who was also God!

Listen to what David wrote in the last four verses of Psalm 86:

14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it,

and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me (Psa. 86:14-17).

— Or think of what Moses wrote about the Lord when the children of Israel cried out because they were suffering under the Egyptians: And Moses did not say that they were particularly crying out to the Lord, just that they were sighing and crying:

23 And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them (Ex. 2:23-25).

“Had respect” means that the Lord knew what was happening to his people. And immediately afterwards He called Moses.

— I could read verse after verse which tell of the tenderness of the Lord, how He is afflicted in the affliction of His people, that whoever attacks the people of God, attacks God Himself. The mourners who were weeping over Lazarus’ death interpreted the Lord’s tears as expressing how the Lord loved Lazarus. And they could have said that He loved Martha and Mary too, and His tears were for them.

And most of you will remember those wonderful words at the end of Hebrews 4 which have been such a blessing to us in our trials. Listen to those words again:

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:14-16).

— We see in the compassion of the Lord Jesus, in the mercy He showed to those in trouble, in His love for His own, those same glorious attributes that are in God the Father too.

I would love to dwell longer on this great theme, but I must move on.

III. WE SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD JESUS IN THE PRAYER THAT HE PRAYED BEFORE HE RAISED LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD (John 11:37-42).

Notice again that the raising of Lazarus was to be for the glory of the Father and for the glory of the Son. The Lord had prayed to the Father before this about Lazarus, and now He prays, and it seems that He prayed audibly that the people might believe that the Father had sent Him. It was not a prayer for the raising of Lazarus except that his resurrection would convince the people that our Lord had come from God, sent by Him.

And notice from verse 45 that this prayer was answered with *some of the people, but not all of them*. With the latter group there was no question but that the miracle had been performed, but it did not bring them to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, we come to the fourth and final evidence of the Deity of our Lord, of His glory.

IV. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS WAS A TESTIMONY TO THE DEITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST (John 11:43-46).

Others in Scripture had been raised from the dead, but never one like Lazarus, who had been dead for four days and whose body had already started to decay. Scripture is silent about what Lazarus experienced in those days, just as the Apostle Paul was not permitted to tell when he was taken up into the third heaven. We do not have any indication as to the reaction of Mary and Martha to the resurrection of their brother. Nor do we have any indication concerning how Lazarus felt to be brought back from the dead. And all speculation as to what happened to Lazarus during those four days, is unprofitable. The important point for all of us is the evidence provided in this miracle showing the glory of God and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But what a picture of salvation we have here. All of us by nature, by birth, are dead in trespasses and in sins. And the only reason we are saved is because God has given us life, has called us to His Son, and granted us faith in Him. Lazarus died again. And we will die if the Lord

does not come before. But the gift of God is salvation, and we contribute to our salvation no more than Lazarus did in his own resurrection from the dead. Salvation is all of grace, and Christ alone is the Savior.

Concl: And so as we view the evidence of the glory of our Lord – in His words, in His tears, in His prayer, and in the miracle that He performed, may our own hearts be drawn to the Savior, to thank Him for raising us out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and guaranteeing to us by virtue of His death for us, that it is impossible for us ever to lose the salvation which He purchased for us at such a terrible price. Because He lives, we, too, shall live forever with Him.

ISAIAH AND THE GLORY OF CHRIST

John 12:27-41; Isaiah 6:1-8

— **Intro:** I continue today with our study of the glory of Christ by looking at two quotations which the Apostle John gave in his Gospel from the prophecy of Isaiah. You find these quotations in John 12:37-41. The first of his quotations is from Isa.53:1, and you have it in John 12:38. The second is from Isa. 6:9 and 10, found in John 12:40.

But notice the comment that the Apostle John made in John 12:41 with reference to his quotation from Isa. 6:9-10. (Read John 12:41.)

This quotation mean that when Isaiah said what he wrote in Isa. 6:1, the Member of the Godhead Whom he saw was none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He said that he saw the Lord's glory, and spoke of Him. So I want to begin today by looking at Isaiah 6, and see what Isaiah had to say there.

(Read Isa. 6:1-4.)

— From this let us consider first of all:

I. THE TIMING OF ISAIAH'S VISION OF THE LORD (Isa. 6:1).

It was in "the year that King Uzziah died." That statement is full of meaning because that was a very tragic year in the history of Judah, and it must have been a very discouraging year for the prophet Isaiah.

Uzziah became the King of Judah when he was just sixteen years old, and he was the King for 52 years. 2 Chron. 26 tells us that he did that which was right in the sight of God, and that he "sought God" (2 Chron. 26:5). This means that he was a King who walked with God, who was concerned about knowing God, knowing His will, and doing what was pleasing in God's sight. There is nothing that I can think of that would be better than that it could be said of Uzziah that "he sought God." And He enjoyed the blessing of God upon his reign. He did many good things to strengthen the nation spiritually.

— But when you come down to 2 Chron. 26:15, you find a very, very sad statement. Let me read it to you. It is written that "he was marvelously

helped, till he was strong.” Then verse 16 of 2 Chron. 26 tells us this:

But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction:
for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the
temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense (2
Chron. 26:16).

What was wrong with what he did? Well, he was the King, not a priest.
And he did that which only priests were permitted to do – he went into
the temple to burn incense on the altar of incense.

Azariah the priest went after him accompanied by eighty other priests,
and they tried to stop him. This made Uzziah very angry. And while he
had the censer in his hand suddenly all of the priest noticed that leprosy
appeared on his forehead. Then the priests made him leave, but he
wanted to go anyway because he knew that the Lord had struck him with
leprosy. And then we read this:

And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and
dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the
house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's
house, judging the people of the land (2 Chron. 26:21).

Isaiah was a prophet in those days. Now put all of those events behind
that statement with which Isaiah chapter 6 begins: “In the year that King
Uzziah died I saw also the Lord . . .”

None of the OT prophets had an easy time. They were always dealing
with sin in the lives of the people, and often in the lives of the kings.
There were also a lot of false prophets who tried to make the people think
that sin was not so bad after all. So this year, the year that King Uzziah
died, was not a good year for Isaiah. But it was that particular year that
he saw the Lord in glory, and the Apostle John was directed by the Holy
Spirit to tell us that the particular Member of the Godhead that he saw
was the Son of God, known on earth as *the Lord Jesus Christ*. It was as
though the Father was saying to Isaiah what George Duffield wrote in his
hymn one hundred and fifty years ago:

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you, Ye dare not trust your own.

It is probably true, as some men of God have said, that very few of us
really believe what the Bible teaches about the sinfulness of man. One of
the strongest evidences that the Bible is the Word of God is its teaching

about the human heart. We are easily deceived and corrupted. We are the personification of weakness. At no time in our lives from childhood to old age can we get along without the protecting care of our Lord.

The encouragement that Uzziah must have been to Isaiah was gone. His support would no longer be felt in Isaiah's ministry. But that is just when the Lord stepped in to give Isaiah the greatest encouragement he had ever had. And that was when Isaiah saw the Lord. Earthly kings get proud and suffer the judgment of God, but the Lord in heaven is a King Who will never disappoint us because He not only will not fail us, but He cannot fail us!

But now let us consider:

II. ISAIAH'S VISION OF THE LORD (Isa. 6:1-4).

Let me emphasize that Isaiah did not choose what he wanted to see. There is nothing to indicate that he even anticipated what the Lord was about to do. No, he saw what the Lord wanted him to see, just like when we are reading our Bibles we see what the Lord wants us to see.

He saw the Lord exalted *on a throne!* I don't know how many times Isaiah may have seen King Uzziah's throne, but the throne that Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon was far more glorious, far more exalted, it spoke of far greater power than Uzziah's throne. Isaiah would know immediately that this was the throne of the One Who exercises sovereign, omnipotent power. All the thrones of all of the kings of the earth combined are as nothing in comparison with the throne of our Lord. Uzziah might sin and die after a long, good reign, but the Lord will never sin, and He is our ever-living Lord and King.

But there was something else that Isaiah saw.

He saw that the Lord was surrounded by angelic beings called *seraphim* who were worshipping the Lord. Each one had six wings. With two of their wings they covered their faces in the presence of the Lord. With two of their wings they covered their feet, and with the last two they were flying – not as they might normally fly, but hovering, as though they were reluctant to leave His presence. Delitzsch, in his commentary on Isaiah, said that they covered their eyes in their awe of His glory, and that they

covered their feet in recognition of their creatureliness, not worthy to be in the presence of such a King. Then Isaiah added that the Lord's robes filled the temple.

But that was not all that Isaiah experienced.

The seraphim, these angelic beings, were joining together in one chorus, and they were singing, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord [Jehovah] of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory."

The idea in holiness is that of separation. If we are to be holy it means that we are set apart, separated from the world, and separated unto God. But for this word "holy" to be applied to God means that He is set apart from all that He has made, and distinct as being eternally holy, absolutely pure, the sinless One. Some expositors see in the three times the word "holy" appears a reference to the Trinity – the Father is holy, the Son is holy, and the Spirit is holy. But it seems to me that since this is a vision of Christ, the "holy, holy, holy" would speak of our Lord's perfect holiness!

But then they added, "The whole earth is full of His glory."

I think that this is different from what David had in mind when in Psa. 72:18 and 19 he offered this praise and prayer for his son Solomon:

Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Or different also from what Habakkuk prophesied in Hab. 2:14

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah also said this in Isa. 11:9. So Isaiah and David and Habakkuk were speaking about what would take place at a future date, but Isaiah in chapter 6 was speaking of what is true even now. The whole earth is full of the glory of the Lord, in many different ways, if we only have eyes to see it. His glory is to be seen in the wonders of creature. His glory is to be seen in the events of history. His glory is to be seen in the lives of His people in any generation. The seraphim see the glorious omnipresence of this infinitely holy God throughout the whole earth.

And this, of course, meant that the Lord was where Isaiah was. Uzziah was gone, but the Lord is ever-present.

— The Lord Jesus was ministering to the prophet Isaiah, as He often ministers to us, turning our eyes and our hearts to Himself, calling upon us to trust in Him, knowing that His purposes will never fail even though good men often fail Him.

But now let us look at:

III. ISAIAH'S REACTION TO HIS VISION OF THE LORD (Isa. 6:5-7).

He is humbled like the seraphim were, but not just by his creatureliness, but by his sinfulness, and by the sinfulness of the people to whom he was ministering.

— “Woe” is a cry of agony, and of despair. There is nothing that will make us realize how sinful and corrupt we are like really seeing what the Lord is like as we see Him revealed in the Word. The Lord was preparing Isaiah for the work of a prophet. Such an understanding of the Lord comes to us in different ways. Perhaps you remember the occasion when the Lord got into Simon Peter’s boat, and told him to push out from the shore. From the boat He taught the people who were on the shore. After He had finished His teaching He told Peter to move his boat out into the deep, and to let his nets down to catch fish. Peter told Him that they had just fished all night, and had caught nothing. But since the Lord told him to put his net back into the water he did, and he caught so many fish that he had to call for his partners to come with their boat. They filled both boats with fish, and the boats began to sink. It was then that Peter spoke like Isaiah did years before. This is what Luke has written about that incident:

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying,
Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord (Luke 5:8).

There is nothing more humbling than for us to see our own sinfulness. Then it is that we are amazed at the grace of God, and feel ourselves unworthy to serve such a great and holy Lord.

— The Lord did not deny what Isaiah said. Instead, one of the seraphim flew to Isaiah with a live coal that he had taken off of the altar, and then

told him that his iniquity was taken away, and his sin was purged.

Now let us go back to John 12 for a few minutes because I would like to bring these two passages together.

IV. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ISAIAH AND CHRIST (John 12:37-41).

Isaiah ministered in difficult times because of the sinfulness of the people of God, and because of their enemies all around them. The Lord Jesus also ministered in difficult times. In fact, when you look at the history of the world from the stand-point of the Lord's work, there really is no easy time. Notice what the Apostle John said about the Lord's work in John 12:37:

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

This is what caused the Apostle John to quote from Isaiah's prophecy.

When we look at Isaiah's prophecy, we see that the Lord did not promise him great success in his ministry. In fact, the Lord said that Isaiah's ministry would only harden the hearts of many who heard him, that ultimately the nation was doomed to judgment. But the last verse in Isaiah 6 tells us that in spite of the opposition of people, there would be a remnant who would be saved. The Lord would accomplish His purposes in spite of the rebellion of most people against the truth.

Going to our Lord's time on earth, He spoke of His approaching death in the words we find in John 12:32. (Read.) He would not die in vain. Even though people would not come on their own, He would draw "all men," that is, *all kinds of men unto Himself*—Jews and Gentiles, Pharisees and publicans, young and old, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, men and women, boys and girls, people from every nation, every language, a great variety would be awakened out of their sins, and come to Him for forgiveness. He would draw them.

And yet in this same passage the Lord Jesus said the words that we find in verses 35 and 36. (Read.) The Lord warned people to walk in the light lest they be overtaken with the darkness. This meant that they were not to put off coming to Christ, but should come when they hear, and in coming would become lit. "sons of light."

Concl: So we have to realize that God is sovereignly drawing people to Himself for salvation, but this does not mean that we have no responsibility in salvation. When we hear, we are to listen. When he calls us, we are to come. When the truth of the Gospel is presented, we are to believe. The most crucial time in any person's life is when they hear the Word of God. That was true in Isaiah's day. It was true in our Lord's day. It is true in our day. It is dangerous to put the Gospel aside. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul which he wrote to the Corinthians,

1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) (2 Cor. 6:1-2).

And once we become "sons of light" through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, then we will know that it was God Who sought us, and God Who drew us, and that this is what was going on when we understood what we were hearing, and turned to Christ to escape the judgment which was justly ours because of our sins. Why Christ? Because He has presented Himself to God to pay in full the penalty which was upon us because of our sins.

And in our salvation He is glorified because He has subdued our rebellious hearts and changed our lives by His grace, forgiving us and cleansing us from all of our sins.

MESSAGES FROM GETHSEMANE

Matthew 26:36-46

Intro: (Read the passage.)

Most of us are familiar with the story of what took place in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before our Lord was crucified. But how many of us have learned the lessons of Gethsemane? The more we meditate on this passage, as well as on Mark and Luke's account of this same event, the more the lessons multiply before our minds. I want to mention just of them, before we observe the Lord's Supper.

I. FIRST, IT TEACHES US THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER.

The Lord had asked His disciples to watch with Him. He left them and returned only to find them sleeping. We can read this and think about how ashamed Peter and James and John should have been that they went to sleep instead of praying, and yet let us ask ourselves about the place that prayer has in our lives when over and over again we are told in Scripture to "pray without ceasing," and other statements which mean practically the same.

Lucille and I have read a little book this past week by Bishop Ryle who was the Bishop in Liverpool, England from 1880 to 1900, and who had a rich and godly ministry long before that. But he said that he feared that very, very few of his people had the habit of private prayer, and that with most even public prayer was just a formality. What do you think the situation is among professing Christians today? What is among us here at Trinity? How important is prayer to us in actual practice? How much time do we give to prayer each day? These are questions we need to consider seriously. The Lord needed their fellowship in prayer, but they needed to pray in order to ward off temptation. And it is impossible for us to avoid the ravages of temptation unless we are praying.

And what value do we attach to prayer meetings? Do we feel that prayer meetings are meetings that we can get along without, or that prayer meetings can get along without us? The emphasis today is upon the sensational and the entertaining, just as it was in England a century ago (and may still be today as it is in America), but our Lord calls us to the closet where behind a shut door we pour out our hearts to Him. We all know that Peter

regretted to his dying day the way that He denied knowing the Lord, but we haven't paid as much attention to the way he must have shed many tears because of his failure to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. Doubtless the same was true of James and John.

Surely the writer of Hebrews had Gethsemane as well as Calvary in mind when, speaking of our Lord, He wrote,

7 Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from Death, and was heard in that He feared;
8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 5:7-10).

Tonight let's give special attention to the place that prayer has in our lives, and ask the Lord to help us to change is that is what we need.

II. GETHSEMANE TEACHES US THE AWFULNESS OF SIN.

How could any of us minimize the terrible nature of sin when we read of what the Lord experienced in Gethsemane alone, even before His scourging and death? Luke, the physician, is the one who recorded for us that the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane sweat great drops of blood – evidence of terrible stress and intense physical turmoil.

And seeing this, does it not make us hate sin?

And does it not humble us to see that what was troubling the Lord was the burden of your sin and mine? We need to remember that if the Lord had only been dying to save us, one of us, He would still have had to suffer all that He did.

And when we visualize in our minds what the Lord endured, does this not give us a glimpse into what hell must be like?

Furthermore, when we just understand Gethsemane, and hear the Lord talking to the Father about “this cup,” would we even dare to think that

there is some puny, imperfect, human work that we must do, or could do, to add to what our Lord did in order to save us from our sins? He only asks that we believe on Him, that we trust Him to save us, and then He gives us faith to make sure that we do.

Finally,

**III. GETHSEMANE STRENGTHENS US TO BELIEVE THAT
OUR LORD IS ABLE TO SYMPATHIZE WITH US IN OUR
TRIALS AND OUR NEEDS AS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.**

Again referring to the book of Hebrew,

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:14-16).

Concl: There are many lessons for us to learn from Gethsemane. And as we observe the Lord's Supper tonight, let us all pray that we will learn these lessons, and that our lives in the days to come will show how we have changed. What a truly wonderful and all-sufficient Savior we have.

CHRIST'S GLORY FULLY RESTORED

John 17:1-5

Intro: While the Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth, for most of the time His glory was concealed. That is, He was a Man, and that is all that many people saw in Him – His humanity. But Peter and James and John saw the glory of the Lord revealed on what we call, The Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew in recording that event said the Lord “was transfigured before them.” And then he added, speaking of the Lord, “And His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment,” or clothing, “was white as the light” (Matt. 17:2).

The word “transfigured” is μεταμορφώθη, from which we get our English verb, *metamorphose*, and also the noun, *metamorphosis*. Our young people who have taken biology know this is the word which describes the change that takes place when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, or a tadpole becomes a frog. It really means *a change in appearance*. I don’t think that the Lord’s appearance changed from being a Man into just a blazing light because Matthew mentioned His face and His clothing. But it was an amazing display of the glory of the Lord, a display of His Deity. Besides Moses and Elijah appeared with the Lord, talking to Him.

It was then that Peter suggested that they make three tabernacles, or booths, one for the Lord, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But at that moment this happened as it was related by Matthew:

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces [NKJV], and were sore afraid (Matt. 17:5-6).

The transfiguration of the Lord before them, and then the bright cloud which overshadowed them, with the Father speaking from heaven, was too much for them. The glory of it all was too great. But at that moment the Lord said, “Arise, and be not afraid” (Matt. 17:7). And when they looked up they saw only the Lord; Moses and Elijah were gone.

We saw last week in Isaiah 6 that when Isaiah saw the Lord, he saw also the cherubim who covered their eyes with two of their wings because they could not look upon the glory of the Lord. The Israelites did not want

God to speak to them because they knew that they would not survive such an experience, the glory of God was so great.

It was probably some sixty years later that the Lord again appeared to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos. After telling him to write what he was about to see in a book and send it to the seven churches of Asia, then the Apostle John wrote this:

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death (Rev. 1:12-18).

Some day we are going to see the Lord in His glory, and do you know what will happen when we do? The Apostle John said, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

John recorded that he had seen the Lord's glory in John 1:14, which is where I started on this series. Let me read that verse to you again.

14 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 1:14).

Now I believe that John was talking about when he saw the Lord transfigured on the Mount, but he also saw the Lord as few men saw Him. He saw the glory of the Lord in the character of the Lord. He saw the glory of the Lord in His teaching. He also saw the glory of the Lord in the works that He did, the miracles which He performed. *There was abso-*

lutely no question in the Apostle John's mind or heart. He knew that the Lord Jesus Christ was truly God!

Peter also spoke of seeing the Lord in His glory. These are his words found in 2 Peter 1:16-18:

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

But lest all of this talk about seeing the Lord in His glory would make us feel that we have lost out, I want to read to you the words with which Peter followed His account of having seen the Lord in His glory. Look at 2 Peter 1:19:

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

You and I have not had a vision of the Lord like Peter and James and John did. But we have what they did not have: the completed revelation of God. And it seems that Peter was saying that while we might not see the Lord in His glory on a mountain where he and James and John saw the Lord, and we may not see the Lord as He appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos, yet we have this Book, the Old and New Testaments, where we can see the Lord in His glory day after day as we feed our souls on this precious Book.

Before we look at John 17, let me remind you of a prayer of our Lord that we considered earlier in the Gospel of John. The Lord Jesus had prayed, "Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." And then He added, "Father, glorify Thy Name" (John 12:27b-28a). And then the Father spoke from heaven, and said, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John 12:28b).

Over and over again the Lord Jesus had glorified the Father. Everything He said, He said for the glory of the Father. Everything that He did, He

did for the glory of the Father. I want to read to you what the Lord said to Philip just after the Lord had responded to Thomas' inquiry about where the Lord was going, and the Lord had said that "no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6b). And then the Lord continued:

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it (John 14:7-14).

It is hard for us to understand the intimate relationship that existed between the Father and our Lord, even while our Lord was here on earth. The Lord never said a word but what the Father was speaking in Him. And He never did a miraculous work but what the Father was working in Him. And always the Father worked that the Son might be glorified, and always the Son worked that He might glorify the Father. The Father wanted the Son to be known as God, and the Son wanted the Father to be known as God. Each sought the glory of the other. Even answered prayer, every answer to prayer, is what the Son is doing for the glory of the Father.

Now with this background, let us turn to John 17.

Whenever we come to the Word, we come to holy ground. But never should that be more apparent to us than when we are given the privilege of listening to the Son of God as He speaks to His Father and our Father.

As the Lord considered the time, note what He said in verse 1.

I. “THE HOUR IS COME” (John 17:1).

All through our Lord’s ministry we read in the Gospel of John that the Lord’s hour had not come. But now, suddenly, that is all changed, and the Lord told the Father that “the hour is come”! What hour? The hour for the Son to be glorified that He might glorify the Father. What hour did the Lord have in mind? It was the hour of His death. There on the Cross as the Lord suffered for your sins and mine, His purpose was that the Father would be glorified, that His people would know that God was God, that He was displaying His infinite mercy and grace toward sinners when He bruised His Son for our sins. But in order for them to understand this about God, they had to see the glory of the Son because no ordinary man could possibly have opened the way to the Father.

So when we think of Christ dying on the Cross, we understand that even in that tragic hour God was declaring that Jesus Christ was His Son, and that God the Father was being revealed as God as well, when He made His Son an offering for our sins. Think long and hard upon verse 1 of John 17. The foundation of our salvation is right there.

But notice a second point in our Lord’s prayer. It had to do with:

II. “ETERNAL LIFE” (John 17:2-3).

The glorification of the Father and the Son was absolutely necessary if guilty sinners, dead to God, and dead in their sins, were to have eternal life. No sinner wanted it. No sinner was seeking it. But it is important to know that God is God, the only God, and that He in is divine, sovereign power, gave His Son authority over all flesh, over every single person who had ever lived, or who was living then, or who would ever live to the end of time – the Lord gave the Son authority over all flesh, “that He should give eternal life to as many as” the Father had given to Him.

And what is eternal life? It is knowing that God is God, the true God, and Jesus Christ, His Son, Whom He, the Father, sent into the world with the glory of God upon Him to lay down His perfect life that those whom the Father had given to Him, might have eternal life, might be saved. It is only when we know that Jesus Christ is God, and that He was sent by

God, His Father, that we are awakened to the realization that we are sinners in need of a Savior. When we understand who they are, then we will follow Peter and James and John in falling on our faces before Him, knowing that we have every reason to expect eternal death from them, not eternal life.

But it is to God's glory, and not our own, that we know Him, and that we know Jesus Christ, and it is to Their glory alone that you and I and every other person who has come to understand Who They are, and trusts in Christ and in His death for sinners, is raised from spiritual death and given eternal life.

And so in verse 4 we see:

III. THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST (John 17:4).

In every word that the Lord Jesus spoke on earth, His purpose was to glorify the Father. In every work that the Lord Jesus did, His purpose was to glorify the Father. His passion was that people would know God, that He was holy and righteous, and yet full of compassion and merciful. He came to reveal God, and He came to do the work of salvation that the Father had sent Him to do. And here on the eve of His crucifixion, He declared that His work was done.

As we observe the Lord's Supper this morning to show forth His death, there is nothing on the communion table that speaks of our part in our salvation. It all speaks of Christ, of His death, of His shed blood. And so as we come to the Lord for salvation we sing in the words of that great old hymn, "Nothing in my hands I bring; simply to Thy Cross I cling."

But as we move on to verse 5, we see that nothing remains but to see:

IV. THE FINISHED WORK OF GOD (John 17:5).

We have been dealing with the question, Did being born as a babe in Bethlehem have any effect upon the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ? And the answer of Scripture is a big, "NO! ABSOLUTELY NONE! His glory was veiled in human flesh. But with the completion of the Lord's work on the Cross, that glory was to be unveiled again. His glory was seen on the Cross, but it was brought out in the open at the resurrection.

In the opening verses of the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul tells us what the Gospel is, and this is what he said that the Gospel of God was:

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3-4).

The stone was rolled away from the tomb of our Lord, not to let the Lord out, but to let the disciples in. He came through closed doors to meet with His disciples. And amazingly after forty days following His resurrection, He suddenly ascended and disappeared into a cloud.

Concl: And so we see the Lord never lost His glory, and when He went back to heaven, His glory was unveiled once again, just like it had been “before the world was.”

As I close, let me call your attention to the Lord’s last request in this prayer. I will read verses 24 through 26. (Read.)

We see Him now as He is revealed in the Word, but the day is coming when we will see Him in all the majesty of His unveiled glory. Only then we will have eyes to see the infinite perfection and untarnished glory of Him Who loved us, and gave Himself for us.