

THE GLORY OF CHRIST  
John 17:1-5, 24

Intro: There could hardly be a greater subject to occupy our minds than the glory of Christ! By that term we mean the Deity of Christ because His glory is His Deity. If there is a distinction between the two terms, the glory of Christ refers to the manifestation of His Deity.

The word is first used of the Lord in Ex. 16:7. Then in v. 10. After that we read of it in Ex. 24:16, 17. This is what Moses prayed that he might see, in Ex. 33:18. See God's answer in v. 22.

And who can forget, who has read the OT, the way in which the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34, 35), and later, the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings 8:10, 11).

Although it was not called glory at the first, the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night were manifestations of the glory of the Lord. Cf. Ex. 13:21, 22.

When we come into the NT, glory is associated primarily with Christ. The use of glory with Christ is one of the clearest indications of His Deity. The glory of God and of Christ have been called, the sum-total of their attributes. That is, when you take God's holiness, His love, His righteousness, His grace, His wrath, and all of His other attributes, you have His glory.

To trace what the Bible says about the glory of Christ is to go from eternity past to eternity future (if we can think of eternity with reference to time). You can see that in my text in John 17 when you put the first part of our Lord's prayer with the last part.

Tonight I want to go from that one point in eternity past to that other in that glorious age to come, and mention just three things having to do with the glory of Christ in between them. So you can see that I have five things that I want to point out with reference to the glory of Christ.

First, then, let us look at . . .

I. CHRIST'S PRE-INCARNATE GLORY.

This was the glory that He had with the Father before the world was. This speaks of the eternal Deity of Christ. It is an expression which parallels what the Apostle John said in John 1:1, " . . . and the Word was with God." It speaks of equality between the Father and the Son. All that can be said about the glory of the Father in eternity past can also be declared of the Son.

For the Lord Jesus to be glorified meant, as I have said about the word glory, that the Lord's Deity would once more be on display.

This meant that all through the earthly life of our Lord His glory was there, but it was not displayed except on certain occasions, and only then to those to whom the Lord saw fit to make Himself known.

Thus we have the pre-incarnate glory of Christ.

But we also have . . .

## II. CHRIST'S INCARNATE GLORY.

By this we mean His glory when He became flesh.

This is a subject which has occupied the attention of theologians from the time that the Lord was here on earth. The question that they sought to answer was, What effect did the incarnation have upon Christ's Deity? Did Christ become any less God when He was in the flesh than He had been before He became a man?

The answer is, No! His Deity remained unchanged. The only difference was, as I have mentioned, that His glory was not displayed except on certain occasions--the greatest of which was at His transfiguration. The event is recorded in Matt. 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36. But what is even more important for us tonight is to consider what John and Peter, who were there, had to say about the transfiguration. See John 1:14 and 2 Pet. 1:16-18. Peter gave this as conclusive proof that he and the others were not deceived in what they had to say about Christ.

There were other times when Christ displayed His glory, such as the times when He performed the miracles. See John 2:11, but we will have to leave those events for another time.

A third occasion in which special emphasis was placed upon His glory had to do with three events which are all so closely united that we can consider them together:

## III. CHRIST'S GLORY IN HIS DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION.

Note the interesting words of our Lord in John 13:31, 32.

Note also Rom. 6:4.

And then we have Heb. 1:3.

For those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand the

the glory was everywhere present. Even the Lord's identification with our sins did not do away, nor diminish, His glory. His glory came to earth with Him, and went back to heaven with Him. Through all of the events of His life here on earth the fulness of God's glory was upon Him.

How very important it is to know this! The genuineness of our salvation depends upon this.

But, now, in my last two points for tonight, I want to deal with two other aspects of the glory of Christ which ought to fill your heart with more amazement than any other thing that you have ever heard.

You cannot study the glory of Christ in the NT without being confronted with the truth of Christ's imparted glory.

When we talk about salvation, we talk about imputed righteousness, and imparted righteousness. When we talk about Christ's glory, we can talk about His inherent glory and His imparted glory. (Explain these expressions.)

#### IV. CHRIST'S IMPARTED GLORY.

Cf. 2 Cor. 3:18.

To impart means to give some of what one has to others. It is to give out of one's abundance to others.

We can never be Deity. The term Deity belongs only to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and it will never be applied to anyone else. But, in a limited yet perfect sense every believer will share the glory of Christ.

And you will notice from the Corinthians passage that that impartation of glory has already started. It is continuously going on.

Notice what Paul said in Eph. 4:17-32, esp. vv. 22-24.

To whatever degree you are like the Lord Jesus Christ, to that extent you share His glory. Amazing, is it not? This is even one of the reasons that we observe the Lord's Supper. What are we to do in preparation for the observance of the Lord's Supper? We are to examine ourselves. Why? To discover, to uncover, to confess and forsake, those things in our lives which are not characteristic of the glory of our Lord. We look at Him, and then we can see more clearly the needs in our own hearts.

But, whatever your present state may be, or what mine may be, we are all partakers of Christ's glory.

But I have one more point. It has to do with . . .

V. OUR PERFECTED GLORY.

Why did the Lord pray as He did in John 17:24?

It was because this had to do with the ultimate purpose of our salvation.

We are looking at Christ day by day in the Word, and we are being changed more and more into His glory. But the day will come when we will no longer be limited to what we see in the Word (and that is certainly wonderful beyond words). When we get to heaven we will see Christ in person.

And what will be the result? Cf. 1 John 3:2.

You and I will never be eternal. We will never be infinite. We will never be omnipresent. We will never be worshipped by angels and by men. But we will be holy. Our sinfulness will finally be a thing of the past. We will be like the Lord. We will share His glory.

Concl: How important it is, then, for us to understand more and more about the glory of Christ! That glorious hope should be before us every day that we live. This is why we are saved. God is working in us to make us like His Son. May our hearts be drawn more and more to the Word and to Christ that greater progress in this direction may be made in all of our lives as we move toward that goal and the realization of that part of the purpose of the Lord in our salvation.