

# The Lord's Prayer - Part 1

by David Adams

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*David Adams explores the significance of Jesus' prayer in John 17, emphasizing its lessons on prayer, redemption, and divine timing.*

**Duration:** 45:56

**Scripture:** Luke 11:1

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "Eternal Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on John chapter 17 in the Gospel of John. He begins by discussing the significance of Jesus lifting up his eyes to heaven and praying to the Father. Jesus asks the Father to glorify him so that he can glorify the Father and give eternal life to those who have been given to him. The speaker emphasizes the importance of knowing the only true God, Jesus Christ, for eternal life. He also mentions the marvel of the incarnation and the concept of time, highlighting the precision and purpose behind God's creation.

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## Transcript

Good evening to you all. I see this is a very unusual assembly here tonight. Most places that I visit nowadays, if we have a real good crowd in the morning, we can count on about 25% of them for the evening.

So I see you are a much superior gathering than what is generally seen around there. Will you turn with me, please, tonight to the Gospel by John, Chapter 17. Some of you, I believe, if you have thought about it at all to date, have a question mark in your mind as to what connection there might possibly be between our morning studies and the evening studies.

So I'm just going to ask you to be patient, and I think you'll find as we go that there is definitely a link between them. We began this morning, as you recall, with the subject of stewardship, and I hope to pursue that with you for the rest of the week. We will look at it in the various aspects of it, and those who are concerned with the matter of stewardship, we began this morning with what we call the Luciferic stewardship.

John's Gospel, Chapter 17. Those of you who are familiar at all with the life of our Lord and reading through the Gospels, as we all delight to do, will know that it is unnecessary for me to say that our Lord was preeminently and constantly a man of prayer. We have several times in each of the Gospels accounts

of him praying.

The Gospel by Luke, particularly and characteristically, gives to us eight occasions when our Lord was seen in prayer. That is, after he began his public ministry. What happened before that we may only conjecture.

But, beginning with his baptism, when you remember, as he was praying, the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God descended as a form of a dove and rested upon him. It was while he was praying. Then we go on through the Gospels, and we discover that on various occasions, and for various reasons, seemingly, our Lord was engaged in concentrated prayer.

Mark tells us in the very first chapter that he often went out into the lonely places to pray. Luke tells us in Chapter 6 that he continued all night in prayer, and one particular occasion was before he chose the twelve disciples. I think it is a good lesson for us, when we are making major decisions in life, to spend some time prior to the decision in prayer.

For this was a very specific and special occasion when the Lord was to choose those by whom he was to evangelize the world. He spent all night in prayer. If you recall, after he fed the five thousand, he sent the disciples away in a boat, and he himself went out into a mountain to pray.

Before major decisions, and after major miracles, our Lord often resorted to prayer. As a man of prayer, for he was just that, he has given to us valuable and vital lessons as to our prayer life as well. But it is also noteworthy that of all the times, the frequent times, when our Lord gave himself to prayer, this is the only prayer of any length that we have extant.

There are other occasions, of course, from short, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, to the lengthy all-night prayers. This is the only one that has been retained and kept for us. Therefore, we approach it with anticipation, we approach it with concentration, and we must be willing to give it the best of our thought life.

Personally, I feel that I hesitate to enter on a study like this. It reminds me of Moses in the burning bush. It reminds me of Joshua at the entrance to the land.

It reminds me of Hezekiah, it reminds me of Solomon. This is really holy ground. We feel, the more we meditate upon it, that it is incumbent upon us to remove the shoes from our feet as we listen to the Lord in this prayer.

And yet, at the same time, we realize, as he said himself in the course of the prayer, that he was speaking this audibly, and in some degree publicly, for their sakes and not for his. It was for the sake of those whom he was leaving behind him that the Lord did engage in this prayer. You will have heard it said many times that this is a high priestly prayer.

I hope to subject that to a little examination with you, because sometimes, you know, things are said, things that are very interesting, things that are very real, perhaps, to the person who says it. And yet, it does not necessarily mean that everything that is said from a public platform or elsewhere is necessarily true. When I was a younger Christian than I am now, I haven't got old yet, you understand.

I refuse to do that. I'm pushing it away off in the background. Every once in a while, my wife says to me, you know, I don't know, but it seems like so many of our friends are retired, have retired, or about to retire,

and what are we doing still here? And I say, don't push me.

I'm not in a hurry yet. I went walking with my little grandson down in Tampa there. He was about seven or eight, I think it was.

And someone had sent word to us that there was an old friend of ours that died up north. And actually, he thought it was my mother. She was a great-grandmother.

But it wasn't. It was someone else. And we were walking the dogs, he and I, as we do when I visit here.

And he said to me, you're very serious, like you looked up at me. He had one dog and I had the other. And he said, you know, Grandma, you and Grandma have been around a long time now.

You'll soon have to be going. And I tried to remember the scripture that says, out of the mouth of babes, you know. But I decided that I wasn't in a hurry yet, really, at all.

It seemed to me there was far too much yet to do. So we shall read a portion of this prayer. And not very much of that tonight, because it will take us some time to even consider this.

Most of you will know that it is considered that this prayer was said when the Lord was on the edge of the Garden of Gethsemane, having celebrated the Passover, that last Passover with his disciples. And Judas had gone out, you recall. And before he asked the eight of them to sit on the edge of the Garden, and then he took three more, you recall, into the Garden with him.

And he gave to them one of those very few, not even half a dozen are there, of the occasions when the Lord asked, being here, something personally for himself. It may be of interest to you to consider that sometime when you can't sleep, about 2.30 or 3.00 in the morning. And see if you can run over in your mind the occasions when the Lord Jesus asked for something personally for himself.

You'll be amazed how few times there are. And he had these three preferred disciples. Now, I say that guardedly because there were those three special occasions of which you are aware that our Lord took these three with him when he left the others behind.

At this time, there are just eleven of them, so he leaves eight on the edge of the Garden, and he goes in with the other three. And then he asked them to do this, he said, carry here and watch with me. Now, it was before that, they failed in that, as you know.

You recall that he said a little later than this prayer that we have here, when Peter drew his sword in defense of the Master, and he said to Peter, Put up thy sword into thy sheath. Knowest thou not that I could immediately ask my Father, and he would send me twelve legions of angels? But then, if that were so, how should these things be accomplished? Twelve legions of angels. And the Father didn't give him twelve legions of angels, but he gave him twelve men.

And of the twelve men that he gave him, one was a traitor. Eight could not enter into some of the circumstances into which the Master moved, and the three that he left to watch with him failed. It's a sad record, isn't it, of our human insufficiency to be what the Master desires of us.

But as he's standing there, evidently he is in the presence of the eight, though we assume it was on the borders of the garden. And we read these words. These words speak Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven.

He said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. And that will be sufficient, I think, for our meditation this evening. These words speak Jesus, and that's what we have in the last part of the previous chapter, 16.

And he lifted up his eyes to heaven. A young man came to me one time, and he said to me, Brother Adams, he said, Where is heaven? I said, I don't know. He said, oh yes you do.

I said, no I don't. But he said, you do! I know you do, you just won't tell us, that's all. I said, no, I'm sorry, I don't know where it is.

If you're speaking geographically, I don't know where it is. And he said, you do know where it is. And I said, all right, please tell me what I thought I didn't know, but evidently I do.

So he said, you know what's behind the North Star. And I said, oh, that's interesting. Heaven is behind the North Star.

How many times have I stood and looked for the North Star so I'd know where I was in the world, and never once did it cross my mind that heaven was behind the North Star. Very enlightening sometimes to be informed of these things. But what happens here is, we do read that Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven.

He lifted up his eyes to heaven. Let's not go into an unnecessary discussion as to the four cardinal points of the universe. And let us not think, well, if he's lifting up his eyes to heaven there, if he were on the other side of the world, he would be lifting up his eyes in an opposite direction.

So on these who like to digger and quarrel and discuss this kind of question, I think we are wasting our time to do that. But in the sense of being who he was at this point, and in the dependency of being the submissive servant, he turns his eyes to heaven. As far as I'm concerned, that's sufficient evidence for me where heaven is at any time for myself.

And as he turns his eyes towards heaven, in that dependent position of the traveler to the cross, he says, and I think these are the most poignant words that we have in all our New Testament, if not in all our Bible, he says, The hour has come. Compressed into those few words, we have the millennia of human history, and we go back before the world was. You remember our Lord mentions in this prayer, farther down, about him being with the Father, and being loved by the Father, and the glory that he had with the Father before the world was.

Now, it's very difficult for us to conceive just exactly how it was before the world was. But we do know some very clear statements from Scripture about some of these things. And here is our Lord, and he says, The hour has come.

Now, there are many times and decisions and seasons that God has given to us in this work. This one stands out in very large, bold, capital letters. The hour has come.

I recall being impressed one time reading 1 Peter 1, we come to verse 18, and you remember when Peter says, You are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ. Some of you have noticed

that only once in all the Bible, the blood of Christ is called precious. We use the expression frequently.

We speak it often at the Lord's Supper, when we're partaking of the cup. And in the preaching of the gospel, we speak about the precious blood of Christ. And I was struck with the fact, in fact, I went in to have looked it back and forth, and inside and out, up and down, it must appear somewhere else.

You hear it so constantly. We use it so frequently. The precious blood of Christ.

And when finally I was disillusioned with my own concept of it, and discovered that it's not used anywhere else. The blood of Christ is never called precious anywhere else. And then there's something else that impressed me.

It's this. It is in connection with the remission of sins. And there was something else that rather startled me.

You're not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, lifestyle, habits, a fruitless way of living. And I said to myself, is this so important that what we were before redemption was vain, it was useless, it was fruitless, there was nothing to it at all? And is it that important that the only time the blood of Christ is called precious is in connection with us being redeemed from a fruitless lifestyle? And it made me appreciate more just exactly what salvation, redemption, and the new birth really is. An insight of God.

Peter speaks about that. And then he goes on to say this, "...as of a lamb without spot and blemish, who verily was foreordained from before the foundation of the world." And that rather arrested me, too, because I said to myself, now, just a minute, the world hasn't been yet. History hasn't begun yet.

The birds and the bees and the animals of the forest and the fish of the sea haven't been created yet. And yet, before there were any lambs, he was marked out to be the Lamb of God. And in this, I found something a little majestic about the concept of our redemption and how we're living today because of the precious blood of Christ.

There were no lambs, but he was marked out as the Lamb without spot and blemish. It's something similar when we read in Galatians, "...when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." But who made the woman? He did. And he who in Genesis made the woman for the man is the one who was made of a woman.

That arrested my attention at Christmastime, a little while back, when I thought of this. Do you remember Gabriel said to the Virgin Mary, "...thou shalt conceive him by womb, thou shalt bring forth a son, thou shalt call his name Jesus." Made of a woman whom he made in the beginning. And when he came, it was the fullness of time.

You will know, of course, that God is a God of order. He is a God of precision. He is a God of fixed occasions and plans and purposes.

And nothing runs amiss, and nothing runs behind time, and nothing runs ahead of time. And we who live in this modern age of technology realize that it is because of the precision, cosmological precision of the universe, that man has been able to do what he has in outer space. It's marvelous what he has done, but it's more marvelous still that God put the laws there with so much precision that he could do what he has done.

And so, it was the fullness of time. God sent forth his son. And when he sent him forth, he sent him forth to be made of a woman.

The constant marvel of the Incarnation. But how about this business of time? We try to conceive of that, and we don't have a word to describe it, because you can't say period, you can't say era, you can't say eon, when there was no time. For before the world was, there was no such thing as time.

And now there will always be time. I know that we sing sometimes, we used to sing, time ends, then eternity. But, of course, that's another one of those little things we sing and say that isn't true, because there's no such thing as time ending.

You know that the expression that we have in our Bibles for endlessness, which we call eternity, endlessness, is not the extinction of time. But as long as you have matter in space, you have time, don't you? And there will always be matter, won't there? The heavens and the earth are coming, which are new, or will be new. And whether it's matter between atoms or protons, or whether it's matter between light years, from star to star, or galaxy to galaxy, as long as there is matter in space, there must be time.

Yet, here is something that was planned and purposed before time began. And in these succeeding ages, God had all the cycles of time planned and fixed. And that goes through, of course, as well, for that which is yet to be.

Hath he not appointed a day in which he would judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained? Was it not when our Lord came the exact time, was it not in the consummation of the ages that he appeared, as Hebrews 9 says, to put away sin by the sacrifice of sin? Did not Paul write to the Corinthians and speak to them that the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning? Upon whom the ends of the ages have come, the purpose, the cause, the reason for the preceding ages now has appeared. And so, Paul says to the Galatians, it was when the fullness of time was come that God sent forth his Son. God sent forth his Son.

How say some of you, then, that he who came to Bethlehem was not the eternal Son of God? I do not understand the clever theological minds now who are promulgating this doctrine that he was not from before time the eternal Son. Tell me what does it mean when it says in 1 John 4 and 14 the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. The Father sent the Son.

Can there be a Father without a Son? Who was it that came? The Son. Who was it that sent the Son to come to be the Savior of the world? The Father. If he were not the eternal Son before he came, then there was not a Father who sent him.

Because the fact that he is called the Son sent by the Father, it means there was that Father-Son relationship before he came. For I don't understand the meaning of the words. And so our Lord comes to this point.

You will remember that previously in his life service he mentions about his hour, his time. His brethren want him to go up to Jerusalem and show himself to the world in John chapter 7. And he said, no, you go on up. My time has not yet come.

But your time is always ready. My time hasn't come. And down through the millennia, from before there was time, from before the world was, the Father and the Son are moving inexorably and irresistibly towards this hour.

And our Lord looks to heaven and as though the disciples were not there, he says, Father, the hour has come. There is something very moving in those words. He had been anticipating it from he was declared to be the Christ, the Son of the Living God in Matthew 16 and Luke chapter 9. From that moment on, he is speaking to the disciples about this hour.

The hour has come. You have perhaps noticed in the seven times that our Lord mentions his death after Matthew chapter 16 when he asked them, Luke chapter 9 when he said, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am? Each time from the very first time and every time as it's moving on, he mentions the fact that he is going to be killed but that he is going to rise again. But in the details that he gives to the disciples, you will have noticed an increasing intensity and added details.

The closer he gets, particularly in Luke chapter 19 on that last journey down through Jericho and up to Jerusalem, you will notice how the shadow of the cross is falling over his spirit and he adds one detail after another that he hadn't said per chance the previous time until he brings the Gentiles into it as well. And he brings the mockery into it. He brings the spitting into it.

He brings the details that cause you to shudder realizing that he knew them all beforehand. I don't know why Shakespeare, somebody said, I might as well blame Shakespeare. He gets credit for most things he didn't do.

Somebody said, Omnipotence from the future kindly veils our eyes. And we who look back over the decades now say, If I had only known that this was going to happen, I wouldn't have done that. But we don't know the future, do we? And the problem, particularly in our youthful days, was we looked for a blueprint from God to give us to understand what our life was going to be like and if we would serve him in one particular sphere or not.

And he hid it from our eyes, didn't he? And if the falls had been known, would we have carried on? If our mistakes had been set before us in anticipation, would we have made them? If we had realized how cruel we could be and how caustic and how critical at times and how wounding we could be to others, if we had known the failures that we were going to experience and how we were going to fall so far short of his purpose of life for us, if we had known all this in anticipation, how would we or could we have met it? And yet our Lord was very conscious of everything that was ahead of him. And he states the detail to his disciples. On some of these very memorable occasions.

And he is moving with the Father. They went both of them together, didn't they? Until now. And he looks up to heaven and he says, Father, the hour has come.

The hour has come. He's standing on the border of his suffering. It only happened to me once, and I don't know if I said this to you the last time I was here or not, but it only happened to me once.

You know, we have dreams all the time, most of us do. And my wife seems very peculiar as far as I'm concerned in this. She remembers them all when she wakes up in the morning and knows all the details.

I asked her one time if she dreamt in color, and she wasn't sure, but I'm going to tell you they're very colorful, some of the dreams she has. I never remember anything. I think mine all probably proceed from an upset stomach or a bad liver or something.

But I do recall very vividly one occasion. I had a dream, and it was given to me to know, in fact, I was told. I don't really know how I was told, but I know that I was told that in the morning I was going to be crucified.

And I've never dreamt that before, and I've never dreamt of sin. And I don't want to. However, it did enlarge my appreciation, not necessarily of what crucifixion really was, and all the sensitivity of the human frame in the physical part of the torture, but also it entered into my bones in a way I had never thought of it before, probably too materialistic or too carnal or whatever when I was awake, what our Lord actually went through when he was crucified.

But, to me, it is augmented horror to know ahead of time everything that was going to happen. And it seems to me that in this very close relationship which he kept all through his life with the Father, he looks to heaven and he says, Now, the hours come. Then, in the midst of that, he goes on to say, Glorify thy son, as thy son might glorify thee.

Now, I take a different view of some of the passages of John chapter 17 than others do. And the one picture, and I probably have occasion to mention it as we go, one fact of this psalm that I cannot understand, I cannot really receive or appreciate, is those who interpret this chapter being retroactive. That is, they tell me, and you'll see there are some statements where you might think that, that the Lord is looking forward, and looking forward, he has experienced in his soul what is going to happen.

Therefore, he retraces his steps and he gives expressions to things in this prayer that really, actually, have already happened, although he hasn't gone through it yet. Now, let me give you an example why they say that, and yet we haven't come to it in the prayer. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

How do you understand that? I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Rather, I say, and I believe, that we must take it as it was said, in the time frame in which it was said. And when the Lord says to his Father, Glorify thy Son, is he talking about post-resurrection experience? I think not.

For if he were, then how does it connect itself with having said, the hour is come? What hour? The hour of his resurrection? No. The hour he's been speaking of from way in the north of Galilee to this time now, the hour of the cross. The center of all time, the focal point of eternity, that to which everything converges in the mind of God, and that from which everything emerges in the purposes of God.

If there is no Calvary, there is no future. If there is no Calvary, there is no prophecy to be fulfilled. If there is no Calvary, my friend, there is no anticipation of that which is yet to be.

No. The hour must be the supreme hour of all time. That which was purposed before time was.

And that which will long be remembered after this world and these heavens are gone and others have taken their place. The hour has come. And in the midst of all that, he says, and it seems to just jump out at us as very characteristic of the Master, he says, glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee.

You remember back in chapter 12 of John, the Lord said, now is my soul troubled. What shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. How can I say, Father, save me from this hour? Because this is the hour for which I came.

It is inevitable. It is inescapable that he go through this hour. That doesn't mean, of course, that in anticipation of that hour he wasn't so deeply burdened in the prayer that follows this one.

The prayer when he was prostrated and said, Father, save me from this hour. There's a mystery hangs over Gethsemane, isn't there? The humanity of the Lord Jesus springs out at you with particular emphasis when you hear him repeat. But he didn't repeat the same words three times, but he did repeat them twice.

And after he said, Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done, we see the individuality, not only of the person, but the will of the Lord Jesus. He was truly man. And he was so exhausted by the pressure of the fulfillment of this hour that he's referring to here that it says in Luke 22 that an angel came from heaven and strengthens him.

Did you ever think of that? Do you remember on two very split occasions angels ministered to the Lord when he was here? Once after the 40 days of temptation in the wilderness when he was with the wild beasts and then confronted in what are called the three cardinal temptations by the adversary himself. When he was challenged to make bread out of stones, that which he needed was the greatest necessity of his humanity at that moment with bread. He wouldn't do it, would he? And finally, after the three temptations were over, it says angels came, in the plural, angels came and served him.

How do you suppose they served him in the wilderness? And then move on to Gethsemane and read about his prayer in Gethsemane. There appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him. I don't have any difficulty with the first ministry of angels in the wilderness because it seems to me they did what another had done for Elijah that brought him bread and water.

But that's what he needed most then in the wilderness. But how did an angel strengthen him in Gethsemane? You remember Hebrews chapter 2 tells us he was made for a little while inferior or lower than the angels. And now they're waiting on him as they so often wait on us according to Hebrews 1 and 14.

Now they come to him, or an angel said rather, it's in the singular, an angel came to him and strengthened him. He didn't need material food, did he? For a few hours before he had eaten the Passover with his disciples the Rosh Halaam and the Unleavened Bread. How did an angel impart strength to our Lord? Well, I think there must be an answer to that.

But what I was thinking of here is when he said to the Father the hour has come, glorify thy Son. Is he speaking of the resurrection? No. Is he speaking of the glory which is yet to be which we'll meet farther down the chapter? No.

He's speaking about the hour of the cross. And he says if though it be difficult for us to comprehend it, he says glorify thy Son. Back in chapter 12, as I mentioned, when he said at that time now is my soul troubled.

He ends up by saying Father, glorify thy name. Don't you see how the perfect servant puts in subjection the glory and the will of his Father, his own glory and his own will. And then there came a voice from heaven saying I have both glorified it and I will glorify it yet again.

And we have something very similar here when he says the hour has come. I can't tell you sometimes how I feel the weight of those words. But then he thinks about his Father and this cross that is before him and the tremendous work that is to be accomplished.

He is to be strengthened to do it. His spirit, his soul, they must take courage. They must move onward.

He has been oppressed. He has been depressed. He has been compressed in Gethsemane.

But now he looks forward and he says Father, glorify thy name that thy Son also may glorify thee. Was there glory in the cross of shame? Was there glory to the Father in this obedient servant's son that he

would go through what was planned for him and laid out for him without a murmur, without a word? And is there to be glory to the Son by the Father because of what he had done in that act of submission, that act of obedience and suffering? Yes. Yes, my friends.

Yes, there is. Before we ever get to the glory farther down the chapter, here is the first glory of the chapter. It's the glory of the cross.

It's the glory of the one who goes forward to accomplish that mighty, majestic work. The reconciliation of all things is in his hands. Everything depends on him.

Yet he and the Father are one. And they are at this point very closely joined in one in the glory that is to emerge for all the ages yet unborn from the fact that this hour had come and that he met it with submission. He says, Glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee.

And this happened in both sides of this tremendous work that was before him. Now, just briefly in closing, verse 2 says, As thou hast given him power over all flesh, authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life as many as thou hast given him. Here's a very interesting statement, isn't there? As thou hast given him authority over all flesh, he stands alone.

He stands in his human ability and capacity and frailty. And he looks to the Father and he says, As thou hast given him authority over all flesh. Isn't that a marvelous thing? On the edge of the cross, on the edge of being beaten, being maltreated, being battered, being bruised, being crushed, being publicly disdained and disclaimed, he's saying, Thou hast given him authority over all flesh.

What does authority do for the average man? It makes him arrogant. It makes him demanding. It makes him self-centered.

It makes him self-pleasing. Everything is to come this way to the man that has the authority. What does authority mean to the Son of Man? It means the capacity to give.

Look what he says. Do you remember in John chapter 13, Jesus, knowing that the Father had put all things into his hands, everything depended on him. Ultimate, absolute, total authority.

He put all things into his hands. The reconciliation of the world, the expiation of sin, the putting away forever of the barrier that stood between God and man. It's all in his hands.

Jesus, knowing that the Father had put all things into his hands, what did he do? He divested himself of his garments. He took a towel and he girded himself and he took a basin of water and he got down and he watched the disciples speak. What is the proper expression of true authority? Service and humility.

What do we know about authority? How can we handle authority? We look for everything to come in. And here you have the same thing. Thou hast given him authority over all flesh that he should give.

That he should give. That he should give eternal life. Here he is about to face death.

The unspeakable death of the cross. Yet he is rejoicing in the fact that by the arrival of this hour he will be glorified, the Father will be glorified and he has received, invested in himself absolute universal authority that he might give, not that he might receive. Have we learned, brethren, the true essence of God-given authority? That he might give eternal life, he says.

Well then, thou shouldst give to him. And then what does he say? With this I will close. He says, this is life eternal.

What is life eternal? The children in Sunday school ask you, what is eternal life? And the first thing the teacher thinks of is the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Eternal life is a gift. Paul writes to Timothy, he says, tell the rich in this world to lay hold on eternal life.

What's that? That's the state in which they are to live. Not for this life, but for eternal life. What does it say in Matthew 25? He shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous are going away into what? Into life eternal.

It's the state of all the ages to come. What does the Lord say about the man who gives up father and mother and houses and lands and so on for his sake and for the gospels? He shall receive a hundredfold more in this life. And in the life to come, what will he get? Eternal life.

I puzzled over that to, as we say in Spanish, romperme la cabeza. What does it mean? He is giving a reward for those who have given up everything for him, and he says it's eternal life. But then I know that the simplest believer in Christ has eternal life.

I know that eternal life is the state in which we are to live now. I know that eternal life is that which yet shall be. But why did the Lord so succinctly put the reward of the faithful servant into these words, in the world to come, eternal life? Here's the answer.

What's eternal life? This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God. And Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, my brethren, he has given us eternal life, that we might know God, and that we might know something of the glorious person of our blessed Lord. This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God.

And Jesus Christ. Do you remember what the prophet said? He said, My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. And what is the knowledge that they lack? He said, There's no knowledge of God in the land.

And that's something that we, indwells of the Holy Spirit with the scriptures of truth in our hands, enjoying the blessings of eternal life. This should be the object, and this should be the purpose, and this should be the goal of life, that we might know God. I wonder if as Christians we drift along, saying, well, it's marvelous, you know, I'm going to heaven.

I have eternal life. A man, a brother that I know real well in the north, just came to me the other day and he said, You know, Dave, I guess you've heard I've got cancer of the bone marrow. I said, Yes, I've heard it.

He said, People are beginning to feel sorry for me, and he's had more chemotherapy than would kill five or six other men. They gave him a dose. He's had 12 chemotherapy treatments back-to-back.

Two lots of 12 back-to-back. And he said, They're trying to harvest something of the bone marrow where they've killed all the cancer so that they can inject him with his own marrow as you know the treatment. Well, he said to me one day, He said, You know, Dave, people panic because they know I'm doomed to die.

They're doing their very best and I'm doing their very best and he's an inspiration how really all that he has taken in the last few months. Taken that which would have killed the other ten men, I believe. Very upbeat,

very hearty, very practical.

He said to me, I don't know why they panic. I know I'm safe. I have eternal life.

And if this is the time God has chosen for me, and he's fighting it, mind you, every inch of the way. And if anybody ever can do it at his age where he's quartering on sixty. If he's not, he's about sixty now.

But he says, If this is the time, why should I panic? Isn't it all better before? This is life eternal that they might know thee. The only true cause. Jesus Christ to whom that is said.

And that, my brethren, is going to be our future eternal exploration. To know him. Shall we pray? Our Father, how poor, how feeble, how weak is our understanding, our concept and appreciation of what thou hast given to us.

When thou gavest us...

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