

John 17

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores the profound relationship between Christ and the Father, emphasizing the believer's access to this intimacy through grace and revelation.

Scripture: John 14:20, John 17:3, Romans 8:1, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 1:27, 2 Timothy 1:9-10, Hebrews 4:16, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Communion with God", "Grace and Identity in Christ"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the profound communion between Jesus and the Father, revealing that through Christ's work, believers are granted the same intimate relationship with God. He explains that eternal life is rooted in knowing God personally, rather than through intellectual understanding, and that Christ's sacrificial role allows us to stand before God as He does. Darby highlights the importance of grace, asserting that it is through Christ's finished work that we are made fit for God's presence. He encourages believers to treasure God's word and to live out their faith as a testimony to Christ's love. Ultimately, Darby calls Christians to recognize their identity in Christ and to share in His joy and glory.

Transcript

{Helps in Things Concerning Himself, Vol. 3, pages 194-6.}

The Lord ceases to speak to His disciples; He looks beyond the cross, and empties His heart into the Father's bosom about His disciples. Listen to me, He says. He says it to us in a way He could not have said to His disciples. They were Jews, not Christians. This communion He reveals to us that we may enjoy the same communion as Himself. We are Christians - anointed ones. The testimony of the Holy Ghost is that Christ has taken the place of our badness before God. The "Lord's Prayer" was suited to the people it was given to. In verse 26, there is the past "I have" and "I will" future revelation in redemption - disciples were in the middle between these two, and we are after both. The first was the revelation of the Father in testimony. Legal people put the first part of this chapter last - from vers. 1-13 the Lord puts us in His place before God - then He puts us in His place before men. His work is our title to His place before God. If Satan could have got Him to use His Godhead He would have left the place of a dependent man.

Verse 3: Eternal life is not connected with "almighty God," "Jehovah," but connected with the present capacity to know God and to become acquainted with His nature. Man thinks to know God by His brains. By my wants I have found out God. Conscience only is the entrance of God into my soul. I must have a revelation from God to know Him.

The Son takes an official place - gives up glory - becomes voluntary servant - "I love my Master," God - is made Lord and Christ - still official place. Then the Holy Ghost takes the subject place as servant of Christ to make you feel that Christ dwells in your heart by faith. Was there ever the smallest discrepancy between the Father's counsels and the revelation of Him in the Son? God meets you in grace without contradicting righteousness. The doctrine of non-eternity is an attack on the cross.

The Lord Jesus wishes His people to be brought into the same intimacies with His Father down here, that He had. His work is our title to His place. 2 Timothy 1:9 is purpose; verse 10 is fact.

He created a condition of humanity for us by entering into it Himself. "I have glorified" &c. is our title to the place. Good resolutions, reforms, &c are but dead flies that spoil the ointment. He is now returned to the glory in a condition of humanity never known before.

"As he is so are we" - judgment behind Him, and as far behind us. There is nothing so hard as to make people believe grace.

Secondly, revelation in last verse is unfolded in the middle of the chapter. "I have glorified." You are as fit to be in the presence of God through the finished work of Christ as He is. A Christian speaking of Christ's love to him, is witnessing for Him. They have kept thy word." "Word" revelation of Himself they treasured in their hearts. The activities of God's nature in the midst of evil is grace. Grace is more than love. He loves the angels. You like grace because there is nothing good in you, and everything good in Christ for you.

"I have given them thy words." "Words" were the communication of God's heart to Him. There is not a thing you do in Christ's thoughts that He does not magnify to the Father. When the disciples slept in the garden He said of them, "These are they that have continued with me in my temptations."

Martha treated the Lord as if He had come down from heaven to receive her hospitality. Mary consulted the tastes of His heart, and in the end her service comes out in emptying a box of ointment on Him. We are first qualified for heaven, and then sent into the world to give faithful testimony to what we believe - to walk according to what we are, not what we are not. What a place we have! It comes through the conscience to the affections - His joy, our joy: not a thing He has acquired, that He does not wish to share with us now.

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