

3/6/22 - John 17:1-5 - "The Hour of Worship"

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Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 01] As we approach a text like this today, we can't just blindly just pop into a passage without considering how it plugs into the whole.

So we're going to do that, and I want to explain a couple things. You can't strip it away from the neighboring verses. Previously, last week, we just went through about seven weeks in Jesus Christ's farewell discourse with his disciples.

We have to remember that context. We have to remember the time that he is, Jesus Christ is hours away from being captured. And we have to remember the people.

He's in the presence of his disciples, 11 disciples. Now, as Judas is more than likely on his way back with his captures. And we can't just dash over the passage and neglect to find such significance in these short verses of the high priestly prayer, Jesus's prayer.

And so with that, why we're going to read one through five is because there's three focuses in Jesus's prayer. This first focus is intercession for himself, which will lead into verse 6 through 19 of intercession for his disciples present.

[1 : 26] So that will be next week. And then the following week after that, there's intercession for his future disciples that will be drawn and brought to the Father. In this hour of the end of his life as it's appearing, Jesus enters into intercession, an intimate time where I believe most of us, if we want to be honest, we probably have a lot of self-concern for our safety, maybe run into the hills and hiding.

But Jesus Christ enters into a time of solace with God his Father. If we're honest about our lives, God will often find us chasing worldly things, worldly securities, worldly vanity, empty dreams in life, fighting and trying to pursue fame or recognition or affirmation.

And if we were left to ourselves, I believe that many of us would bask in self-worship and idolatry.

Think about it. Every hour of our lives poses an opportunity to give glory to something. Every moment of your life poses an opportunity to give glory to something.

Glory, by its definition, indicates an aspect in a person or in God worthy to be praised, honored, or respected. It's often used in a terminology that creates like a vivid brightness and splendor.

[3 : 23] And often we are between two choices, glorifying ourselves or glorifying God. And how often we forget that all that is within our lives, whether good or bad, rich or poor, feast or famine, everything in our lives has been given to us by God.

This is important to understand as we go into a text like this. And if all that we have has been given to us by God, even our famine, wouldn't we handle our trials and our triumphs by ascribing glory to God regardless of the circumstance?

Right? Through hours of maybe extreme tough anxiety that we all struggle with. I can't be the only one who struggles with anxiety. The hours of crippling stress that makes you want to quit in life, whether that being your job or even just being a parent, if we're honest.

And you just want to quit. The hours of working and dedicating so much time and resources to a craft, a certain craft of school or even a job, only to find out you don't get the promotion you wanted, only to realize that you didn't get the grade that you thought you deserved and you fail.

It's within these hours, church, that we have to ask ourselves, do we consider the glory of God? Do we consider the glory of God?

[5 : 05] All these moments pose opportunities of worship. The kicker is if our worship is true worship or false worship.

And if we do this well, the glory of God will propel us to worship God truly, because he's the giver of all things. And today we're going to enter this text where Jesus Christ's supreme concern is the glory of God.

He's doing something right in this passage. And so we will see in our own lives where we will glorify something, and we will see specifically how this passage aligns the object of our worship and the essence of our worship.

The object of our worship and essence of our worship, as Jesus Christ does it perfectly in this passage. Before we start, let's pray, and we'll enter into the first section, which will be verses one and two.

And before we do, I must ask God for help today. Let's pray. Father, we are so dependent upon you to speak clearly to us through your word, that as we come to the pages of scripture, we come to a supernatural encounter with your words to us.

[6 : 38] And Father, help us not to just breeze over it and check marks off the list and be more concerned about what we have planned this afternoon.

Let us marvel at maybe the opportunity where you want your church to gather half an hour later today to reflect upon what this word teaches us and how it challenges us.

Let us do this with the sensitivity of your Holy Spirit's leading in our gathering. And so, Father, help us, each one of us in this room, to have the Holy Spirit soften our hearts, to open our minds, to help shut out the noise from around our lives and come encounter with your word.

Father, we pray this in Jesus' powerful, mighty name. Amen. Amen. So, the first section that we're going to be looking at is the hour of God's glory.

There's various hours that we're going to be discussing here as Jesus Christ aligns here. Verse 1 says, When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.

[8 : 02] Glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, since You have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.

Let's just, before we start unpacking this, I tried to emphasize a few words in here, but, boy, this passage between five verses, I have been in a tizzy this week, just like, wow, there's this and this and this.

And, Lord, what do You want to speak to Your church through Your word today? And so, let's bring context into it. After these words that He's spoken, this is coming right out of the farewell discourse, after these words.

Well, if you're new with us and you're just jumping in, maybe you've been sick a couple weeks and you've been out of the series, well, let's figure out what these words are, right? This stems back to the beginning of the farewell discourse in chapter 13, where Jesus highlights a new commandment to love one another, a sermon we titled, Don't Forget the Plumbing.

We see back in chapter 13 as well, the three questions from Peter, Thomas, and Philip in a message titled, Confidence Amid Uncertainty.

[9 : 26] Into chapter 14, the promise of the Holy Spirit empowering the church to keep Christ's word. We see after that, the church abiding in Jesus Christ and one another as being a solution to our proneness to wander.

And then went into the hateful relationship between the world and the church and the Holy Spirit's role after that in the church and in the world. And then just last week, we saw the joy and the peace that Christ gives in a sermon titled, Enduring Joy and Peace.

That's what Jesus meant after these words. Everything having to do with things that are going on between this person and this person or Jesus Christ and the disciples of Jesus Christ leaving.

All having to do with our worldly relationships with one another. And look at what Jesus does. After Jesus had spoken these words, what does he do?

Look at the posture. He lifted his eyes to heaven. Off of all of those words.

[10 : 44] Off of those situations. Might this be the means of which the disciples will also find their strength to overcome the world as last week we considered.

Think about the chaos that's surrounding this time. Jesus models what it means to be an overcomer in the world. And guess what? I think it might start with a posture of prayer.

How would these disciples endure what is about to happen to their fleshly bodies as they are tortured and beaten for the name of Jesus Christ?

How will they endure? Right? Fixing their gaze above. Colossians 3, 1 through 4 says, If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is.

Seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. How do we overcome the world? I think it begins with prayer.

[11 : 53] And Jesus models that for us. And the call of the Christian life is into a battle, a spiritual battle, mind you. But the greatest weapon that we often forget about and neglect is the power of prayer.

And it begins with a battle on our knees. So what does he say? He's fixing his mind off of the things of this world.

He's lifting his attention, his gaze upon heaven. He says, Father, the hour has come. Boy, this has been, if you have been listening through this series, like a faithful church member, every week, right?

Not missing a message. Throughout the Gospel of John, it's kind of been like a thread of this hour. This stems back to the wedding in Cana.

And this reappears. It's kind of like the melody of a song that comes back. No, I'm not going to sing for you today. But it's that melody that keeps refraining and refraining.

[13 : 06] The hour. This refrain that the passage of the Samaritan woman, it refrained with the healing of the paralyzed man at the poolside. It refrained at the triumphal entry.

And it also refrained last week. And what does it refrain to? What's the emphasis of this refrain? The hour. It's meaning the cross.

That the hour is the hour of the cross. And as John continues it, it's similarly here, the hour, just as it's been throughout the passage, throughout the series.

And Jesus intercedes for himself in the third person. Glorify your son, right? Glorify your son that the son may glorify you. That you have given authority over all flesh.

Look what he's saying in this. If hour symbolizes the cross, and the cross symbolizes the most horrific death you could ever imagine, he is asking and petitioning God to glorify himself in what is about to transpire on the cross, and in so doing, glorifying the Father.

[14 : 27] This should be striking to us. Talk about a counter... I would say, like, the churches should be countercultural. This should be a... This is like a counter...

Church culture message anymore. To talk about what is truly happening in these words. That the gloom of the cross will expose the glory of God.

Has anybody seen the passion of the Christ? Christ. And John is telling us, as recording Jesus' words, that that very image of pain, horror, blood, and flesh ripped will be the display of God's glory.

Jesus is asking God to glorify the Son. This is a verb that's continuing. This is something that means that it should be celebrated of what is happening.

It should be praised. Which is an appropriate response to the goodness of God. And we see that at the cross. And in the most simple of terms, Jesus Christ is asking that His glory be celebrated at this coming hour.

[15 : 47] That is now here. Context. When we're talking about our lives, we'll always be glorifying something, church.

Remember, context. In the context, previously, we saw that at the time of the cross, the disciples would not be celebrating. The world would be celebrating.

The world would be glorifying. They wouldn't be glorifying God, though. And what He's saying here is that while the world is rejoicing at the cross, the church will be rejoicing at the resurrection.

And the reality is that we will always be glorifying something, whether we like it or not. You can try not to glorify something, but guess what you're glorifying then? You're glorifying yourself in trying not to glorify something.

You're always glorifying something, whether you want to admit it or not. And you see, the cross is intended to be the compass that directs our lives into true worship.

[17 : 02] Yeah, the disciples had it a little bit wrong. They're weeping and lamenting Jesus' departure, and I would probably be in the same disposition, looking upon Jesus' pain.

But they would be glorifying God from that moment forward, even to the moment when their own flesh would be ripped apart in their torturous deaths.

They would continue to glorify God from that point forward, all because of the moment of the resurrection. And so Jesus brings glory to the glorious one.

This is central to who God is and what God is doing through Jesus Christ. And so if it is true that we're always glorifying something, at every hour, every minute of our lives, we have to ask ourselves, what might the hour of your cross, as symbolized in something difficult up ahead, what would the hour of your cross ascribe glory to?

In this, we have to pause for a moment to evaluate that which our lives are glorifying. After all, we're created by God for the sole purpose of glorifying Him.

[18 : 24] And fallen humanity gets it wrong majority of the time, even in the church. The world demands our glory to be directed towards sin, things of this world, to celebrate sin.

And it's to celebrate sin, to celebrate self, to celebrate superficial pleasures that seem to medicate our fleshly cravings for sin.

And that our sinful nature beckons for, right? But God, in verse 2, through the cross of Jesus Christ, the consummated glory of God, has satisfied the penalty of our sins.

And this is borrowed language, meaning authority, borrowed from Daniel 7, 13 through 14, representing that at this time of the cross, this will inaugurate a new era for humanity.

And we will be given something at this inauguration ceremony. We will be given eternal life.

[19 : 38] This makes me think of the three crosses. And upon Jesus' cross, He invited the man in that was dying right next to Him, right?

This is the new era that is ushered in by the authority that has been given. And not only that, we'll see something else that has been given as well.

But before we jump too far ahead, we have to see that God has satisfied. He has satisfied our deepest cravings in our lives. And the cross is the means of which the church has to fix our gaze above the things of this earth.

To lift our gaze similarly in that same posture, to lift our gaze as Jesus Christ lifted His gaze, just as Jesus Christ was lifted up, just as Jesus Christ was also lifted up into ascension at the resurrection.

This is a perspective that is consumed in the glory of God that nothing in this world can ever satisfy. No cravings in this life, no sin can touch the satisfaction that that truth can hold in our lives.

[20 : 53] Amen? So in this hour of your life, are you exposing the glory of God? Are you exposing the glory of God?

In this hour of God's glory, we're talking about the object and the essence of our worship. Well, the object of our worship, according to Christ, is God's goodness. Was it you who hung on a cross?

Right? The essence, then, of our worship is that we were given to Jesus Christ.

Look at the passage, how it says that. To give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. The object of our worship is God's goodness.

The essence of our worship is that we have been given to Jesus Christ. This is good news. So in times of doubt, in times of pain in this life, in times of envy, in times of pride, in times of jealousy, in times of bitterness, in times of confusion, in times of questions, do you know that all of these things the cross has traded for our peace, for our joy?

[22 : 19] This is how we overcome church. This is the hope of the hour of the cross. And may the glory of God be exposed in celebrating that cross.

And we see a second aspect of worship in this passage. We see the hour of eternal life in verse 3. And while the synoptic gospels can present usually eternal life, meaning something like off in the distance, up and coming eternal life, it's as if John is trying to impress a present tense emphasis of eternal life for us.

John's gospel was the last gospel that was written, and it's almost as if they perceived it and interpreted it one way. And in John's portrait of eternal life, he makes it clear that something present is occurring in our lives.

It's not something that we're waiting for necessarily, but it's something that we can experience the moment we place our faith in Jesus Christ, eternal life. Eternal life is the central theme of this section.

And you can kind of look even at the structure of this passage, starting with verse 1, looking at verse 5, you see some repetitive words of glory on the top and glory at the bottom. And it's as if, like, the text naturally is impressing upon a center, and that center being eternal life.

[23 : 57] Eternal life is the central theme of this section in Jesus' prayer for himself, the intercession for himself. And it's our present reality even for us today.

We see that Jesus, like us, we're in this movement towards death. Jesus Christ's death being the supreme death.

But we're all in this movement towards death. I don't know if this is news to you, but you're gonna die someday. There's gonna be a moment where all of us in this room will not be able to escape death.

And we can say, well, unless Jesus returns you out. If that makes you feel better about death, sure, go ahead and talk about that. But guess what? It's very likely that we all will experience death when our lungs will fill with air no longer, our hearts will no longer beat.

This is a time where we are moving towards, since the day of our birth, we have been moving towards death. And it's within this hour of death that we are often prone to ask, how do I know for certain that the moment air stops going into my lungs and my heart stops being, the moment my eyes and my brain just shut off, how do I know beyond a shadow of any doubt that I will be with Christ in glory?

[25 : 29] How do I have assurance when my life is gone? Maybe this is your perception today. Even if you're a Christian, maybe this is your perception.

It's hard to know for certain, right? Well, there's good news today. Look in verse three. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

He's given. There is great assurance to those who hold firm to the hope of eternal life by no other than knowing Jesus Christ.

Knowing Jesus Christ. It begins now in your life of placing your faith in Jesus Christ and it will continue all throughout your life and it will not end when your body fails to function any longer.

It will continue just as if you were still alive on this earth. This is hope. Certain hope. Not even death can steal your joy.

[26 : 55] We're talking about overcoming. We see the posture of prayer. We see the goodness of God and him giving us to Jesus Christ. Well, guess what? Now we see that there is an hour in our lives where we can worship God because we are recipients of eternal life.

Jesus Christ is the only true God. Eternal life is the relationship that we have with God through Jesus Christ, our high priest.

This is good news. This reminds me of the Shema and it says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. To know Jesus is to know the Father.

To know the Father is to know Jesus. You can't separate the two. Church, and this is hope of eternal life at our hour. The object of our worship is rooted in God's redemption for us.

The essence then of our worship is the provision of Jesus Christ in our lives. This is hope. And boy, we're surrounded by false ads, by all these fraudulent things, clickbait.

[28 : 12] I think there might be some in this room who might have a numerous amount of viruses because they got you on your computer with those ads that pop up that seem legit.

I can't say I've never fallen for them. But we're surrounded by this false advertisement. The off-brand, those Oakleys that, yeah, those aren't Oakleys.

The Rolex watches, oh, look, you got a Rolex. Yeah, okay. How much? 20 bucks? Yeah. So, we understand that there's imposters in this world and there are imposters of salvation as well.

We must not fall for the lie. Jesus Christ is the true God. The Lord God is one, right? And so, we can't fall for the lies of the world's many ways of salvation.

YouTube can say whatever they want about this message, but it's endorsed by the Bible. There's nothing that the world can ever do to change the reality that within God's design of reality, God has designed one way of salvation, salvation.

[29 : 25] And that being through the blood stains on Calvary, upon the cross, where our sins were placed upon him, he died the death that we deserve so that we may receive the righteousness of God.

And if you're looking and searching for any hope in this life, you can try the imposters all you want, but you're wasting precious time in your life, and guess what? You are not promised tomorrow.

Your heart will stop beating, and you better hope that it doesn't stop beating before you turn your life to Jesus Christ. And let that be today if that's you within this room, and come talk to me after the service.

So we have to see. The object of our worship is God's redemption. The essence of our worship regarding eternal life is the provision of Jesus Christ. So I gotta ask you, is this hour of your life exposing the hope of eternal life?

Is this hour of your life exposing the hope of eternal life? If not, guess what? You're not too late. You can start right now. And you can repent of your sin, you can repent of your selfishness, of your false worship, of falling for the imposters in this life, and you can turn your life to Jesus Christ right here and now.

[30 : 49] And lastly, we see this last section in verse four and five, and then we'll be wrapping up our time today. The hour of mission.

Jesus says in verse four, I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. Just as Jesus Christ has glorified, he's celebrated the Father and accomplished the work that God gave him to do.

Jesus Christ literally asked the Father to glorify him, not only at this hour of the cross, but to glorify him in the future, to glorify him at the resurrection that will be witnessed by 500 people.

Glorify him at the resurrection. He says, and now, Father, glorify me in your presence, in your own presence. Where's his presence? Well, it's up. Just as the word became flesh, that the word dwelled with God, the word was God, just as John 1-1 says.

Well, Jesus Christ is returning to that state, and he says in verse five, and now, Father, glorify me in your presence, in my ascension, with the glory that I had, past tense, with you before the world existed.

[32 : 10] Look at all of this. I, me, my. He's not talking about third person as a distant reality of glorifying the Son of God.

He is in first person within five verses. The movement of this passage has gotten so personal as the cross is approaching. He says, I glorified you on earth, glorifying me in your presence, that the glory that I had with you before the world existed, right?

This is so riveting. Just as the cross is ironically the glory of God, and the world was vainly rejoicing, the resurrection is also the glory of God in which the church, in turn, rightly rejoices, and that's where we rest upon.

That's where we hang our hat as the saying goes. And this is a glory of God that is timeless. He's been going from third person to first person.

He's been spanning all sorts of time frames of something God has accomplished in the past, in the present, in the future. If you really dissect this passage, this is what threw me in for a loop, is just how timeless the glory of God is in the past, the present, and the future.

[33 : 34] And at the cross of glory, the cross of the glory of God, Jesus Christ would trade all his glory for humiliation.

He's the man of sorrows. And it would be similarly at the resurrection that the goodness of God would then be vindicated and bestowed upon Jesus Christ alone. He'd be reunited with the Father, John 1.1.

Jesus Christ is glorified upon this earth to accomplish the work of God and the call of the church is to continue in the same pattern. Greater works than these will you see, right?

Greater works in the magnitude of salvation. Jesus is with the eleven. If you can check the statistics on Google to see how many, what the Christian population, without going into like, okay, are they really Christian or, you know, just the Christian population, you could see that that has been ongoing since the day of Jesus' death and people coming to faith in him.

And this church is an hour of mission. This is the hour of mission. When every minor detail of your life is concerned with the glory of God, this is when our lives become temples of worship.

[34 : 50] This is when we become temples of celebration, temples of mission. God has called each and every one of you to greater purpose than seat warmers on Sunday morning.

Your purpose is so great. God has called you saints. He's given you the title of ministers of the gospel wherever you are placed.

you are saints, you are ambassadors of Christ. You're not of your own. And Christ was dedicated to that mission. So we see the hour of mission being the object of our worship.

We see that it is God empowering us. That is the object of our worship. And the essence of our worship then is the accomplishments of Jesus Christ that continues us to go.

Is the glory of God top priority in your life? What if we had a renewed perspective that anything that we did in this life was a worshipful response to what Jesus Christ accomplished?

[36 : 05] Every, everything was a worshipful response. There's no timeouts, there's no breaks, there's no Netflix binges, there's whatever other things there are out there.

There's no vegging out to your favorite TV show, there's no taking a time out to watch the game after church. church, what if we had a renewed perspective, church, that anything that we did in this life was a worshipful response of what Jesus Christ accomplished with no smoke breaks, no timeouts whatsoever.

Is this hour of your life exposing the completed mission of God? So as we kind of wrap up the thought process here and the passage, it feels like I preached on like 30 verses.

What an hour we have ourselves today. All modeled through simply five verses of Jesus interceding for himself. This hour holds the glory of God.

This hour holds the meaning of eternal life. This hour holds what it means to be on mission. Just five verses and what an image of worship that we have an opportunity to be a part of, an object in essence.

[37 : 37] The church is united in that fact that we're all part of this, whether you signed up for it or not. If you're in Christ, you're part of it. There's no other option. This is the only way.

John 17 clarifies the object of worship in this hour. It's centered upon God's goodness, his redemption, and empowering us. The essence of our worship is therefore God's giving us to Jesus Christ, the provision of Jesus Christ to us, the relationship we have, and the accomplishment of Jesus Christ that God gave to him.

In that, we share the glory of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ was glorified, we are sharing that glory in order that we may reverberate the glory of God in our lives, progressively becoming more like him in this life until we're reunited with the very glorious one of whom we glorify on this earth.

If only we would just receive that which God gave to us in worship. If only us thick headed people would just receive that which God gave us and worship him with it.

Right? Glory of God ought to consume our lives and all within. It should consume our thought life. It should consume our behavior. It should consume our attitudes.

[39 : 05] It should consume our identity of who we are and what we aspire to be in life. It should consume our very purpose. It should consume, guess what, your five-year plan, your ten-year plan, and the goals that you have in your marriage.

It should consume your plans of discipling your kids or your grandkids. This should consume all your goals, your hopes, and all your dreams should look like worship.

What would this look like? I mean, it goes without saying we live in a dark day. You can just turn on the TV and figure that out pretty quickly. With everything happening in Ukraine and just the political turmoil of the country still since the last election.

We live in a dark day. We're just divided. There's no right. There's no wrong. Everybody does what's right in their own eyes.

The world can look for political leaders to solve their problems, look for legislation to solve their problems, or social activism can go maybe an extent of the time, but it can't fully solve the problem that is in the dark day of today.

[40 : 15] But through the glory of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the church is given the solution that the world longs for. That's the world doesn't need a new political leader.

Gosh, forbid. The world doesn't need a new political leader. The world needs Jesus Christ. The world doesn't need more legislation going through Congress. They need a Bible.

The world doesn't need more social activism because it will always fall short if there is no heart transformation involved. The church has the answer.

And may the glory of God become our highest concern during the gloominess of our day. How will they receive what God has given to us if we lose the object and essence of our own worship in our lives?

Do you live for the glory of God? We'll end in prayer here as we reflect upon that and continue to sing. Let's pray.