

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

JOHN 12.27-36



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,

He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Gospel of John: John 12.27-36
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Introduction to *John 12.27-36*

Jesus' hour has come, and though He dreads it, He welcomes it, for in it He will be glorified, and the Father will be glorified as well.

Jesus focused through the terrible events to come to see the greater glory of God that would be, when He, having been lifted up, draws all things to Himself. He is the Light of the world, and He calls us to walk in the light while we can, lest the darkness overtake us.

Satan is bound and cast out; nothing can hinder the work of Christ in us, except our own failure to believe and follow.

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1 Hour of Trouble

Read and meditate on John 12.27.

Jesus has been waiting for and postponing this “hour” for three years. Now it is upon Him, and His soul is greatly troubled at the prospect. Wasn’t this supposed to be His hour of glory?

²⁷“Now trouble on
My soul weighs heavy; what then shall I say?
‘Oh Father, from this hour save Me, I pray’?
But for this purpose I have come to this same
hour.”

- John 12.27

Reflect

1. Jesus has previously said that the hour for Him to be glorified had arrived. Yet now He almost wants to ask the Father to save Him from this hour. Why? Complete this prayer: *Lord, You came into Your glory through trouble, and if I am to glorify You, then...*

2. This verse anticipates Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf. Matt. 26.36-46), and reminds us of Asaph’s prayer in Psalm 73.15. Would it have been OK for Jesus to pray what He was thinking? Why or why not? Could we say that Jesus was *tempted* to pray this way? But did He sin in thinking this way? Explain. Is there a lesson for us here concerning prayer? *I know, Lord, that temptation is not sin, but if I am to keep from falling through temptation into sin, I...*

3. The word *purpose* is not in the Greek, which says only *for this*, and implies something like “reason” or “purpose” or “outcome” or “end.” Faced with the troubling prospects of what lay ahead in the coming week, and *thinking* about seeking a way out of it, Jesus stayed the course by looking *beyond* this troubling hour and *through* the temptations it occasioned *unto the larger purpose, goal, and end* of His life. (cf. Heb. 12.1, 2). What’s the lesson for us in His example when it comes to dealing with temptation? *Lord, You have left me here to be Your witness, seek Your Kingdom, and glorify You in all things. Help me always to...*

4. Evidently, Jesus’ hour of glory would also be an hour of great trouble and dread. To glorify God, and be glorified by Him, Jesus would have to endure trial, difficulty, suffering, shame, and even death. Why? Do you expect to endure such troubles as you seek to live for God’s glory? Should you? Explain. *Lord, You have promised that in this world we would have trouble. But I know that...*

5. Jesus clearly prized the glory of God more than His own safety, security, comfort, or ease. What is so special or significant about the glory of God, that Jesus would endure so much to achieve it? Do you expect to glorify God in your life? Explain. What do you expect to experience as you glorify God? Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

“I heard him saying previously ... ‘If anyone wants to serve me, let him follow me. And where I am, there my servant shall also be.’ And so, I was all on fire to despise the world, and the whole of this life, however long it might be, had become only a vapor before my eyes. In comparison with my love for eternal things, everything temporal had lost its value for me. But now, this same Lord, whose words had transported me from the weakness that was mine to the strength that was his—I now hear him saying, ‘How is my soul troubled.’ What does this mean? How can you ask my soul to follow you when I see your own in so much turmoil?”

How can I endure when even a strength as great as yours feels it is a heavy burden? What kind of foundation am I left with when the Rock is giving way? But the Lord is already forming the answer inside my own head, saying: You shall follow me that much better, because it is to strengthen your own endurance that I included this. You have heard, as if addressed to yourself, the voice of my strength. Now hear in me the voice of your infirmity. I supply strength when you need to run without slowing you down, but I take on myself whatever makes you afraid, paving the way for you to continue your march. Lord, I acknowledge your mercy! You, who are so great, allowed yourself to be troubled in order to console all of those in your body who are troubled by the continual experience of their own weakness—keeping them from perishing utterly in despair.” *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

Christians are called to the Kingdom and glory of God. We have seen that the path to God’s glory is strewn with trouble, and Paul reminds us that we must with many tribulations obtain the Kingdom of God (Acts 14.22). Why should you or anyone want to take up this way of life?

Closing Prayer

This *is* the day the LORD has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
Save now, I pray, O LORD;
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.
God *is* the LORD,
And He has given us light;
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.
You *are* my God, and I will praise You;
You *are* my God, I will exalt You.
Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 118.24-29

Psalm 118.19-29 (*St. George’s Windsor: Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*)

All who know Christ’s righteousness, His great Name now thank and bless!
Though His gate full righteous is, He our saving mercy is.
Cast aside and left alone, Christ is now our Cornerstone!
God has made His Son and Word our salvation: Praise the Lord!

Blessed are they who in His Name come and Jesus’ grace proclaim.
God His light upon us shines in the Savior’s sacrifice.
Praise and thanks to You, O Lord; we extol Your holy Word!
Thanks to You, for You are good! Thanks to our great loving God!

2 Glorify Your Name

Read and meditate on John 12.28.

Despite the troubling events to come, Jesus was determined to glorify God.

28“So, Father, glorify Your Name.”

Then came a voice from heaven, saying, “I have glorified, and I will glorify My Name again.”

- John 12.28

Reflect

1. The hour of Jesus’ glory had come, but He must endure many trials before He would be glorified. The word *glory*, in its Hebrew root, means something like *to be heavy* or *weighty*. Paul puns on this idea in 2 Corinthians 4.17. In what sense is glory *heavy* or *weighty*? Cite some examples from Scripture which illustrate the “weightiness” of God’s glory (for example, see John’s response to Jesus’ revelation of His glory in Revelation 1). Complete this prayer: *Lord, Your glory is Your presence, and Your presence weighs on us as...*

2. Jesus declared the purpose of His *hour*, now upon Him – that in His being glorified, God should be glorified. As Jesus looked ahead to the events of the next several days, what did He envision, and for what did He prepare, so that God would be glorified? Do you think Jesus had a clear sense of what the glory of God would look like in this “hour”? And is it likely that He prepared Himself mind and heart, and ordered His life, to *realize* that glory? How should we be instructed by His example? What does it mean for you to live for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10.31)? *Teach me to number my days, Lord (Ps. 90.12), so that I...*

3. Jesus prayed that God the Father would glorify His Name through Jesus’ trials. A voice from heaven came, speaking in the Father’s Name. What does John mean by saying this voice came *from heaven*? Where is *heaven*? Why did the Father speak audibly to the Son? *Lord, I expect to hear You speaking to me, and I listen for You, Lord, as...*

4. What is the Father’s *Name* (cf. Exod. 3.13, 14)? What does this mean, and what does it reveal about God? Recall John 8.57-59. Was this an instance of the Name of God being glorified, as the voice from heaven said? Explain. *I know, Lord, that I can glorify Your Name, but only as...*

5. We have seen what Jesus thought about praying. Here we see what He actually prayed. What can we learn from Jesus’ prayer to guide our own prayers? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

“Whether the Gospel has ‘glorify your Son’ or ‘glorify your name’ makes no difference to the interpretation of its precise meaning. Christ, however, despising death and the shame that comes from suffering, focused only on the achievements resulting from the suffering. And immediately seeing the death of all of us departing from our midst as a result of the death of his own flesh, and the power of decay about to be completely destroyed and human nature already formed anew in anticipation of newness of life, he all but says to God the Father something along the following lines: ‘The body, O Father, shrinks from suffering and is afraid of a death that violates nature. Indeed, it seems scarcely endurable that he who is enthroned with you and has power over all things should be subjected to such outrageous treatment. But since I have come for this purpose, glorify your Son, that is, do not stop him from going to his death, but give your consent to your

offspring for the good of all.' The Evangelist even calls the cross glory elsewhere. ... It is clear that in this passage, 'glorified' means 'crucified.' 'Glory' is equivalent to 'the cross.' In fact, his acceptance of suffering for the good of others is a sign of extraordinary compassion and the highest kind of glory. The glorification of the Son also took place in another way. Through his victory over death we recognize him to be life and the Son of the living God. The Father is glorified then when he is shown to have such a Son begotten from himself and with the same attributes as himself." *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

We will only live for God's glory as we envision what that means and prefer the glory of God above all else, as Jesus did. Temptations and trials will always confront us. We must look through them to consider how God may be glorified through our submitting to His will, rather than our own. How should understanding this guide your prayers each day?

Closing Prayer

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;
But when He cried to Him, He heard.
My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
Let your heart live forever!
All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.
For the kingdom *is* the LORD's,
And He rules over the nations.

Psalm 22.23-28

Psalm 22.23-28 (*Darwall: Rejoice, the Lord is King*)

All you who fear the Lord, now praise His holy Name!
You children of His glorious Word, declare His fame!
We stand in awe of our eternal God, and on His mercy call.

For He has not despised the anguish of our King,
Nor from Him hid His eyes, Who knew such suffering.
Let praise arise from all who love and serve the Ruler of the skies!

The suffering King shall eat and praise with us the Lord.
Forever we His praise repeat and trust His Word.
Praise God above, all you who keep His vows and who His mercies love!

All nations shall repent and hasten to the Lord;
All those to whom His truth is sent shall praise His Word.
The Lord is King! His sovereign rule on high now we His people sing!

3 Glory and Judgment

Read and meditate on John 12.29-31.

Jesus demonstrated keen insight to the spiritual world. He indicated that His being glorified, and God the Father being glorified in Him, meant the casting out of one ruler, and his replacement by Another.

²⁹The people, therefore, who stood by and heard the voice, remarked unto each other that it thundered. Others said, "An angel has conversed with Him instead."³⁰But Jesus answered, "Not because of Me has this voice come, but for your sake. ³¹For see, the judgment of the world is come, and now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

- John 12.29-31

Reflect

1. People standing by Jesus heard something when the voice from heaven came to Him. What is suggested about the voice from heaven by their varying responses to what they heard? Complete this prayer: *Lord, whenever I hear You speaking to me from Your Word, let it be like...*
2. Let's step aside for a moment to a scene later in John's ministry. Look at Revelation 10.1-4. In this passage, both responses of the people in John 12.29 appear. Somehow, John understood what the "seven thunders" were saying, and was about to write it down. Should we expect to hear the "voice" of God speaking in created things (cf. Ps. 19.1-4)? Explain. What is the relationship between the revelation of God in Scripture and the revelation of God in creation? *Lord, I know You are continuously speaking to me, but I don't often take the time to listen. Help me...*
3. Jesus explained that the voice from heaven was not for His sake, but for the sake of those who heard it. What did He mean by this? *Whenever You speak, Lord, it is always "for our sake," so that...*
4. What was Jesus referring to by "the ruler of this world"? Look at Luke 4.5, 6. When was this ruler "given" this authority? What had been the effect of his rule, prior to the coming of Jesus? How does the appearance of bright angels out of a dark night sky symbolize the world into which Jesus was born, and the significance of His birth (Lk. 2.8-14)? Look at Matthew 12.22-29. What did Jesus mean by this? When did this occur?
5. Finally, look at Revelation 12. What happens to Satan in verses 7-9? Is this different from what Jesus described in Matthew 12.22-29? What event immediately preceded this (Rev. 12.5, 6)? Apparently, prior to this event, Satan had some access yet within the heavenly realm, as is suggested in Job 1.6 and 2.1, and Zechariah 3.1-5. Why did this event signal his final expulsion from heaven? What did Jesus mean by saying that the ruler of this world was being "cast out" by His being glorified? How should the *binding* and the *casting out* of Satan encourage us? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

Summary

"The Lord, therefore, was foretelling what he already knew, that after his own passion and glorification, many nations throughout the whole world, in whose hearts the devil lived as an inmate, would become believers, and the devil when thus renounced by faith would be cast out. But someone might ask: Wasn't the devil cast out of the hearts of the patriarchs and prophets and the righteous people of old? Certainly he was. How then can it be said that now he shall be cast out? Then it was done in the case of a few individuals, but now it is

foretold that it will take place rapidly and among many people and mighty nations.... But someone might further ask: Since the devil is cast out of the hearts of believers, does he now stop tempting the faithful? No, he has not stopped tempting. But it is one thing to reign within and another to lay siege from without.”

Augustine (354-430 AD)

The glorification of Christ – the *hour* for which He came – was accelerated at Calvary, illuminated by His resurrection, enhanced by His exaltation and enthronement, is expressed by His rule in and through the lives of His people, and will culminate in His return. Christ will not share His glory with another, so Satan was made to relinquish any access to God he enjoyed in heaven, and was cast out to stalk and prowl about on earth. How do we keep the banished ruler from governing our lives, so that we can live under the exalted Ruler’s grace and truth and glory?

Closing Prayer

Teach me Your way, O LORD;
I will walk in Your truth;
Unite my heart to fear Your name.
I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.
For great *is* Your mercy toward me,
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
O God, the proud have risen against me,
And a mob of violent *men* have sought my life,
And have not set You before them.
But You, O Lord, *are* a God full of compassion, and gracious,
Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.
Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me!
Give Your strength to Your servant,
And save the son of Your maidservant.
Show me a sign for good,
That those who hate me may see *it* and be ashamed,
Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalm 86.11-17

Psalm 86.10-17 (*Andrews: Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven*)

For You are great, You wondrous deeds do;
You are the only and sovereign Lord.
Teach me Your way, let me give heed to,
With all my heart, Savior, all Your Word!
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
Praise Your Name forever, Lord!

Great is Your mercy, Lord, toward me;
You have delivered my soul from hell.
Though dreadful foes and threats arrayed be,
You will Your grace and Your mercy tell!
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
Slow to anger, loving well!

Turn to me, Lord; be gracious to me;
Grant me Your strength; save Your servant, Lord!
Let me a sign of something good see;

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Shame all who hate me beneath Your Word.
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
For You help me, sovereign Lord!

4 What You See

Read and meditate on John 12.32, 33.

We get another glimpse into the mindset Jesus maintained as He prepared for His suffering.

³²“And I, if I am lifted up, will draw all things unto Myself.” ³³Because He saw the death that He would suffer, He said this.

- John 12.32, 33

Reflect

1. From Jesus’ statement, and John’s comment on the statement, it’s clear Jesus was seeing two things at once. Explain. Complete the following prayer: *Lord Jesus, sometimes all I can see is what’s immediately in front of me, and that’s not always very encouraging. Help me to...*

2. What happens in the life of one who is *drawn* to Jesus? What happens in his outlook on life? His aspirations? His priorities? What happens with his possessions? His time? What did Jesus *see* as He envisioned *all things* being drawn to Him? *Look at my life, Lord. How much of the all things of my life are...*

3. In John’s gospel, multitudes welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem, but they all abandoned Him. In the book of Acts, multitudes came to Jesus, and stuck with Him, drawing even more people to Jesus, despite threats and persecution. What is it about Jesus’ being *lifted up* that makes Him such a powerful “draw” for people? *Lord, I think of the unbelievers I know, and I want them to be drawn to You. Help me...*

4. Meditate on Hebrews 12.1, 2. Jesus endured the cross, despising the suffering and shame of it, because He saw the joy that was set before Him. Of what did that joy consist? What should we learn from Jesus about facing trials, threats, and fears? What joy do you concentrate on when you need to persevere through a difficulty or trial? *Increase my joy, Lord, by...*

5. It’s clear that what Jesus *saw* beyond His suffering enabled Him to *endure* that suffering. What you see, how far you see, and what you believe as you see, will in large part determine how you live. How can Christians improve the quality of what we see (cf. Heb. 11.1)? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

“He took up humanity into himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering and the Word being made human, thus summing up all things in himself: so that as in supercelestial, spiritual and invisible things, the Word of God is supreme, so also in things visible and corporeal he might possess the supremacy, and, taking to himself the preeminence, as well as constituting himself head of the church, he might draw all things to himself at the proper time.” *Irenaeus of Lyons (135-202 AD)*

Do you think that, if we could *see* Jesus more completely and more consistently, we would devote more of the *all things* of our lives to Him and His glory? Explain.

Closing Prayer

What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.

I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people.
Precious in the sight of the LORD
Is the death of His saints.
O LORD, truly I *am* Your servant;
I *am* Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;
You have loosed my bonds.
I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And will call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people,
In the courts of the LORD's house,
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 116.12-19

Psalm 116.7-19 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*)
Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.
My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,
And dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.
What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?
Salvation's cup I lift above and call upon the God of love
And pay my vows most truly.

How sweet to Him when saints depart – save me, Your servant, Savior!
From sin You loosed my wand'ring heart; I praise Your Name forever!
On You I call, my vows to pay; here in Your presence I would stay
Your praise to offer ever.

5 Say What?

Read and meditate on John 12.34.

It's not clear whether the people here were trying to get some clarification from Jesus, or to trap Him in an inconsistency. Some of both motives may be reflected here, since this one question is reported as coming from "the people" (literally, *the crowd*).

³⁴*The people answered, "But the Law insists that Christ remains forever, yet You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up.'"*

- John 12.34

Reflect

1. Let's start by giving the crowd the benefit of the doubt, and suppose that some of them were only seeking clarification. The mention of "the law" here probably references the entire Old Testament, and not just the first five books written by Moses. Were the people right? Does the Old Testament teach that the Christ "remains forever"? Where? If the Old Testament *does* teach this, why would it be important for *us* to know this? Complete this prayer: *The Old Testament is full of prophecies, types, and symbols pointing to You, Lord, and the better I know these...*

2. The crowd challenged Jesus' statement about the Son of Man being "lifted up." Do they seem to have known what that implied? What does this suggest about Roman governance of Judea? About why it was so important to the religious leaders of Judea to silence Jesus (cf. Jn. 11.47, 48)? *Lord, when we fear men more than fear and love You, we...*

3. Jesus was deliberate in referring to Himself as "Son of Man." This is an Old Testament idea that appears especially in the book of Daniel, and would have been familiar to Jesus' Jewish contemporaries. Daniel lived and prophesied at a time not unlike that in which Jesus lived. In Daniel's day, the nation was captive to the Babylonians in Babylon, whereas in Jesus's day, they were captive to the Romans in their own land. Look at Daniel 7.13-27. What is attributed to the "Son of Man" here? How does this help us to understand Jesus' appropriating this title for Himself? *Lord, thank You for giving us Your Kingdom, and for calling us to...*

4. Let's assume that Jesus had Daniel 7 in mind as He talked with the crowd in Jerusalem. As this relates to Jesus' "hour", when do the events of Daniel 7 occur (cf. Pss. 47, 110)? How does this help us to understand what Jesus was looking ahead to, what His hour of glory would entail, and why it was so important for Him to be "lifted up"? Does being "lifted up" take up significance *beyond* Jesus' death on the cross? Explain. *Lord, as You faced trial, self-denial, and sacrifice in gaining the Kingdom, so we, in seeking it, should expect...*

5. Finally, let's think about Jesus' detractors, those who were always trying to trip Him up on His own words. What were those who asked this question from this perspective hoping to accomplish? Do you think unbelievers still try to catch those who bear witness to Jesus in contradictions? How can we make sure we don't stumble into such a trap as we are bearing witness to the Lord? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

"And so we see that they understood many of the things that he spoke in parables.... As he had talked about death earlier, they saw now what was meant by his being lifted up." *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)* "Or they interpreted the word by their own intended act. It was not wisdom imparted but conscience disturbed that disclosed its meaning to them." *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

The Son of Man has been lifted up in death, lifted up to life, and lifted up in glory at the Father's right hand. He has received an eternal Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14.17, 18), which He is giving to His saints to possess and advance, even in the face of opposition. What are your expectations and hopes for seeking and advancing the Kingdom of God in your own [Personal Mission Field](#)?

Closing Prayer

Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised
In the city of our God,
In His holy mountain.
Beautiful in elevation,
The joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion *on* the sides of the north,
The city of the great King.
God is in her palaces;
He is known as her refuge.
For behold, the kings assembled,
They passed by together.
They saw it, *and* so they marveled;
They were troubled, they hastened away.
Fear took hold of them there,
And pain, as of a woman in birth pangs,
As when You break the ships of Tarshish
With an east wind.
As we have heard,
So we have seen
In the city of the LORD of hosts,
In the city of our God:
God will establish it forever.
Selah
We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness,
In the midst of Your temple.
According to Your name, O God,
So *is* Your praise to the ends of the earth;
Your right hand is full of righteousness.

Psalm 48.1-10

Psalm 48.1-11 (*Cwm Rhondda: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*)

Great is God, now greatly praise Him in the city of the Lord.
Holy she, His lovely mountain, great and glorious by His Word!
God her King is great within her, He, her Stronghold ever sure!
He, her Stronghold ever sure!

Earthly kings, amazed and wond'ring, look upon the Church with fear.
See them flee in dread and anguish, knowing that the Lord is near.
For the city of the Savior God will keep forevermore!
God will keep forevermore!

For Your grace and lovingkindness we proclaim Your matchless worth!
As Your Name is, great and boundless, let Your praise fill all the earth.
Let Your people sing rejoicing for the judgment of Your truth;
For the judgment of Your truth.

6 While You Have the Light

Read and meditate on John 12.35, 36.

Jesus did not answer the question posed by the crowd. Instead, He would let His work speak for itself, and He returned to the image of light and darkness, to offer a word of warning.

³⁵Then Jesus said to them, "I say again, a little longer shall the light with you abide. Walk while you have the light, lest you be overcome by darkness. He who in the darkness walks is lost. ³⁶Believe then in the light, and you shall be the sons of light." He said these things and left, and from their sight was hidden.

- John 12.35, 36

Reflect

1. John uses this image of light and darkness in a powerful way here. By having Jesus recall this image, John pulls his entire narrative together. Review John 1.4-9, 3.19-21, 8.12, 9.3-5, 11. 9 and 10, and our passage for today. How does John use this contrast of light and darkness in his gospel? Complete this prayer: *Lord, light my path today by Your Word and Spirit, and keep me...*

2. In 1 John 2.7-11, John applies this image directly to the life of a believer. How does this passage connect with John's use of this image in his gospel? What promise and instruction does this image hold for us as believers? *Lord, the darkness cannot prevail against us as long as...*

3. How would you explain to a new believer what it means to "walk in the light" and "believe in the light"? How would you explain that to an unbeliever? *Lord, this image seems so central to what it means to believe in and follow You. Help me each day to...*

4. Who are the "sons of light"? Should it be possible to identify them readily? In what ways? *Lord, You have made me a child of Your light! Let Your light so shine in and through me, Lord, that...*

5. Jesus departed Jerusalem to return to Bethany (cf. Mk. 11.11). As we shall see, John moves in his narrative from the triumphal entry, through a brief bit of commentary and a single public statement by the Lord, to the night of Jesus' betrayal. In so doing, he left out almost a week's worth of teaching, activity, and confrontations with religious leaders. Why do you suppose he did that? Why leave so much out in order to go right to the upper room? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

"He signifies that his death is a transition, for the light of the sun is not destroyed, but having withdrawn for a while appears again. Then he says, 'While you have the light,' but he does not say of what time he is talking about here. Is he speaking of the whole present life or of the time before the cross? I think both, for because of his ineffable love of humankind many even after the cross believed. He speaks these things to press them on to the faith." *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

To walk somewhere implies destination and progress. To what destination do the children of light journey? How do they mark progress?

Closing Prayer

You will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me *to* glory.
Whom have I in heaven *but* You?
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.
My flesh and my heart fail;
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.
But *it is* good for me to draw near to God;
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,
That I may declare all Your works.

Psalm 73.24-28

Psalm 73.21-28 (*Ellacombe: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*)

When my poor sad, embittered heart was pierced within by grace,
I saw how beastly was the part I chose before Your face.
But I am ever with You, Lord, You hold me by the hand,
And guide me daily by Your Word; in glory I e'er shall stand.

Then what have I in heav'n above but You, my God and Lord?
And on this earth what shall I love besides You and Your Word?
My flesh and heart shall surely fail, and death my soul release;
Your strength for me shall e'er avail and grant eternal peace.

Then let them perish who depart from You and from Your Word.
All those unfaithful in their heart You shall destroy, O Lord!
But as for me, Your nearness, Lord, is where I e'er will dwell!
I hide myself within Your Word, Your wondrous works to tell.

7 Dread Hour

Read and meditate on John 12.27-36.

Jesus experienced what we should experience in the presence of God's glory – a sense of anticipation and exhilaration, lifting and emboldening us to live and die for the Lord, and an impression of the heaviness, the weightiness, and the sacrifice such an experience of God's glory entails.

*27“Now trouble on
My soul weighs heavy; what then shall I say?
‘Oh Father, from this hour save Me, I pray’?
But for this purpose I have come to this same
hour. 28So, Father, glorify Your Name.”
Then came a voice from heaven, saying, “I
have glorified, and I will glorify
My Name again.” 29The people, therefore, who
stood by and heard the voice, remarked unto
each other that it thundered. Others said,
“An angel has conversed with Him instead.”
30But Jesus answered, “Not because of Me
has this voice come, but for your sake. 31For see,
the judgment of the world is come, and now
the ruler of this world will be cast out.
32And I, if I am lifted up, will draw
all things unto Myself.” 33Because He saw
the death that He would suffer, He said this.
34The people answered, “But the Law insists
that Christ remains forever, yet You say,
‘The Son of Man must be lifted be.’” And they
continued, “Who then is this Son of Man?”
35Then Jesus said to them, “I say again,
a little longer shall the light with you
abide. Walk while you have the light, lest you
be overcome by darkness. He who in
the darkness walks is lost. 36Believe then in
the light, and you shall be the sons of light.”
He said these things and left, and from their sight
was hidden.*

- John 12.27-36

Reflect

1. This section ends with the phrase “and was hidden from them.” It's not just that *Jesus* was hidden from them, but the mystery of His *hour* as well. What was preventing these people from understanding and embracing what Jesus said in these verses? Does that same hindrance block people today from seeing Him? Does it block you at times? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, Your truth is hidden from many people, even from some folks I know, but You have sent me, like Jesus was sent, to...*

2. Christians sometimes want something more than the Scriptures to guide them in their walk with and work for the Lord. Some seek a sign, or claim to hear a voice from heaven, or insist they just know in their spirit by some means or other what God wants them to do. They may experience something which they regard as guidance from the Lord, while, at the same time, they pay but scant attention to what God has revealed in His

Word. The crowd around Jesus heard the sound of God's voice, and seemed to be excited by that. But they *could* not or *would* not hear the *Word of God Himself*, as He urged them to walk in the light while they still had it. Where did that leave them at the end of the week? Peter says the written Word of God is *more sure* than even his own experience of the glory of God on the Mount of Transfiguration (2 Pet. 1.17-19). How can you make sure that the Scriptures are both the foundation and framework for your relationship with Christ? *Lord, Your Word is living and powerful, and I want that life and power to be at work in me. So...*

3. Jesus announced that Satan, "the ruler of this world," whom He had previously bound (Matt. 12.22-29), was now being finally cast out and deprived of his ability to blind the nations and peoples of the world. What are the implications of this for your growth in the Lord? For your witness for Jesus? *Lord, I am free from the devil's power because of You. Help me to live in that freedom, and to...*

4. The devil is cast out, but he's still prowling around and dangerous. We must learn to recognize his ways and resist his allurements, so that we can walk always in the light, and not in the darkness. How would you explain this part of the Christian life to a new believer? What does this require of us? How can Christians help one another in this? *Lord, keep me in the path of light, and help me to help others...*

5. How can you know when the darkness is trying to "overtake you"? What can dispel that darkness? What does it mean for you to "walk" in and "believe in" the light of Christ? How can you increase the presence and power of that light in your daily life? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

"[In the] form of a servant the fullness of true light was there. And when the form emptied itself, there was the light. Then he said, 'Walk while you have the light.' Even when he was in death, he was not in the shadow.... The true light of wisdom shone there as well. It illumined hell but was not shut up in hell."
Ambrose of Milan (333-397 AD)

Jesus, the Light of the world, shows us the way to follow Him along the path of God's glory. It's not always an easy path, and the darkness of sin and unbelief encroaches constantly. But if we hear the Word of God and walk in His light, we can bear the weight of any trial or challenge, and know the weight of glory in the midst of it. Meditate on 2 Corinthians 4.6. How do you practice what Paul describes here?

Closing Prayer

I have set the LORD always before me;
Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will rest in hope.
For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16.8-11

Psalm 16.8-11 (*All to Christ: Jesus Paid It All*)

You are ever with me, Lord; in You I shall not fall.
But rejoicing in Your Word, I abide within Your call.
Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

The Gospel of John: John 12.27-36

Soon Your glory I shall see, for as Jesus rose again,
You will come to gather me to my home with You in heav'n.
Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

The Gospel of John: John 12.27-36

Questions for reflection or discussion

1. Why do you think John revisited the theme of light and darkness at this point?
2. In the short term, Jesus saw pain and suffering. What did He see in the longer term? How did seeing that sustain Him through the short term?
3. Why should we be emboldened by the fact that “the ruler of this world” has not only been bound, but cast out? At the same time, what do we need to keep in mind?
4. What are you learning about walking in the light and not allowing the darkness to overtake you?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from John 12.27-36? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

Items for prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.