

2012 Camp Hill Evangelism Series
Part 2 “The Mission of Missions”
By Doug Hamilton

It was the night of the Passover and just moments before the events of the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus and the apostles had already gone through the Last Supper, the foot washing and the reiteration that He would be suffering execution by the Jewish leadership. It was a difficult time for the apostles because they could observe a seemingly an unraveling of their Leader of the last 3 ½ years. With many questions on their hearts upon conclusion of the supper, Jesus offered a detailed and very moving prayer. That prayer is chapter 17 of the Book of John.

1. In verses 1-5 He prays for Himself and the purpose for which He was about to undergo a most hideous death.
2. In verses 6—19 He prays specifically for the Apostles that will soon be sent out into the world with unity for gospel message.
3. In verses 20-26 He prays for all of us who followed after that we would believe that blessed message through the mouths of the apostles and be united to God forever.

It is in the first section of this prayer that we will examine a trait of Jesus that is often overlooked, but impossible to ignore if we are ever to be evangelistic for the kingdom. Let us look at Jesus’ prayer and discuss that most important characteristic about our Lord.

John 17:1-5

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, ² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. ³“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵“Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Some important facts to point out from this text are the following:

- 1) God shall not share His glory with another.
 - Isaiah 42:8 “I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.”
 - Isaiah 48:11 “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can *My name* be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.”
 - The fact that Jesus would soon share in the glory of God implies that He is God. It was a reciprocating glory. God was glorifying Jesus with the intent purpose that He would receive back glory.
- 2) This eternal life would be based in knowledge of the Father.
 - He prayed “that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ...” Knowing God means something different than possessing knowledge of God, but having a relationship with Him. It is more than possessing facts about God, but encompassing our whole being in Him. This was predicted to come in the OT.
 - Jeremiah 31:34 “They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to

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the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

- Isaiah 11:9 and Habakkuk 2:14 states “They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.”
 - It is true of Hosea 4:6 states that “*My people perish due to lack of knowledge.*” Without the saving knowledge that Jesus brought (i.e. the gospel) it would be impossible to even have eternal life.
- 3) It was through Jesus that all on earth would have opportunity to glorify God for eternity..
- Throughout the Old Testament, God provided clues to His plan of having Jesus come into the world and bridge the gap for sinful souls to His glorious throne.
 - Is 9:6-7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.
 - Daniel 7:13-14 “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. ¹⁴ “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

In John 17, Jesus was approaching the crucifixion and requesting to be glorified by God. It was for the purpose of fulfilling the gospel message to be shared with the lost world. It was that knowledge that would empower men and women to enter a relationship with God and glorify Him forever.

Jesus was a man with a mission.

- God’s glory is so great that nobody on earth could approach Him (Ex 33:17-23). He “...*alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see* (1 Tim 6:16). No one has seen the Father at any time, except the Son (John 6:46). He has seen the Father. In fact He would later say in John 14:9 “...*He who has seen Me has seen the Father...*”
- Jesus came into this world with ONE MISSION and a three-fold path.
 - 1) He brought glory to God.
 - 2) He provided a means for us to bring glory to God in this life.
 - 3) He paid the way for us to glorify God eternally.
- He was a trailblazer for glory and for anyone who wanted access to the same. In any and every circumstance of His being, He was seeking to turn our heads toward the face of God.

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As a newborn in a manger, He caused shepherds to glorify God.

- Luke 2:20 The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

As an eight-day old infant, He caused an old man named Simeon to glorify God.

- Luke 2:30-32 For my eyes have seen Your salvation,³¹ Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,³² A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel.”

As a miracle worker, He caused crowds to glorify God.

- Matthew 9:8 But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.
- Matt 15:3 So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

As a Teacher, He encouraged the same to others.

- John 15:8 “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”
- Matthew 5:16 “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

As “God in the Flesh”, His entire life was to cause others to glorify God.

- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus was a Glory Catalyst, using His intrinsic glory to cause others to glorify God not only in this life, but in the eternal life to come concerning those who chose to do so.

The Mission of Missions

What should we take from this concerning evangelism? Consider the following:

The PRIMARY Mission of our Mission is NOT...

- bringing others to a Bible study
- assisting the needy
- inviting someone to the worship service
- speaking kind words to another
- sharing our funds, our time or emotions
- baptisms, singing hymns, offering dishes, Lord Supper wafers and cups.

The PRIMARY Mission of Mission is...

- To glorify God and assist others in doing the same, not in this life only but also in the life to come.

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All the above mentioned behaviors are definitely steps toward that goal, but are not the primary goal. Part of understanding the 2012 Camp Hill Evangelism Series is to stress that the primary goal of every Christian, to set our eyes on the ONE TRUE GOAL of glorifying God and never letting go of it.

Distractions, Distractions, Distractions!

- Too many times we take our eyes off the primary goal of glorifying God and downshift to steps of the goal. We start making steps of the goal the mission and THAT IS NOT BEING TRULY MISSION MINDED! Without the primary goal in place, we will fall short personally and evangelistically.
- Without keeping in mind the Mission of Missions, we forget that “...*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*” (Rom 3:23). There is a world of souls that have been cut off from God’s glory and their end is not good.
- The whole reason that Jesus came in the flesh was to bring God the glory due to Him. It is to be our goal as well. This was always the mission since before the beginning of time. *1 Peter 1:20-21 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*

Re-aligning Our Mission

Make this the day that you completely and unequivocally refocus your mission in life to glorify God and assist others in doing so. Make sure “...*that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*” (1 Pet 4:11). Refocus in such a way that “*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God* (1 Cor 10:31). Make the reason you do everything in your life, even evangelism, for the glorification of God.

Some Suggestions:

- 1) Change your conversation:
When we attempt one of the steps toward the goal of glorifying God, restate those intentions. Add to each statement, “...so we can glorify God.” Allow that to permeate your vocabulary.
- 2) Change your actions:
One cannot glorify God if they are not living for Him. Make sure to always do what is pleasing in His sight.
- 3) Change your outlook:
Keep meditating on that glorious day when we will no longer have any restrictions on our glorifying God. Focus on the moment that we will appear before Him in glory and face to face. Celebrate that celebration to come.
- 4) Change your Approach: When reaching out to someone, make sure that you do not confuse the steps of glory with the Mission of Glory. Let them know how good God is to you and your willingness to exalt His name. Invite them to steps of progress with God’s glory in mind first.