

THE CONTEXT OF THE HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER

John writes "so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name" (Jn. 20:31).

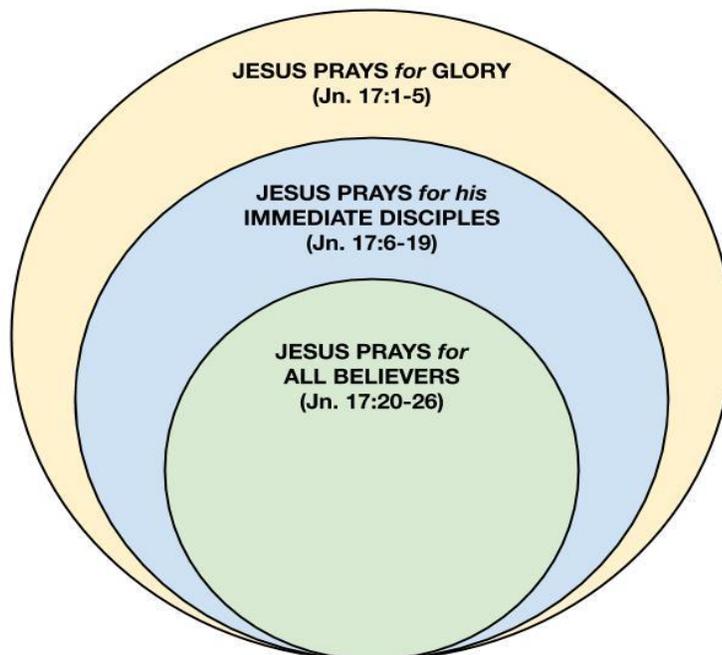
John shows us that Jesus is unlike any other king. Jesus enters into glory through the shame of the cross. Before Jesus goes to the cross, he gathers his disciples for a final block of teaching. In this "Farewell Discourse" (Jn. 13-17), Jesus:

- scandalously humbles himself, washing his disciples' feet, commanding them to do likewise.
- teaches that "the world" hates him and his disciples; "the world" rejects Jesus' union kingship and the cross.
- predicts that his faithful disciples will suffer trials.
- predicts his betrayal by Judas, and his denial by Peter... whose feet Jesus has washed!
- claims to be the only way to the Father. Therefore, disciples must "abide in" him.
- comforts his disciples, promising the Spirit.

Jesus concludes this teaching with his "High Priestly Prayer."

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER (Jn. 17)

- (A) **Jesus Prays for Glory** (vv. 1-5): Jesus is on a mission to glorify the Father. This is his overriding purpose. It contains his other intentions.
- (B) **Jesus Prays for Immediate Disciples** (vv 6-19): Jesus prays for his disciples. They are integral to his mission, which is to glorify the Father.
- (C) **Jesus Prays for All Believers** (vv. 20-26): Jesus prays for future believers, who will participate in his mission to glorify the Father.



(A) JESUS PRAYS FOR GLORY (vv. 1-5)

A (v. 1): When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,

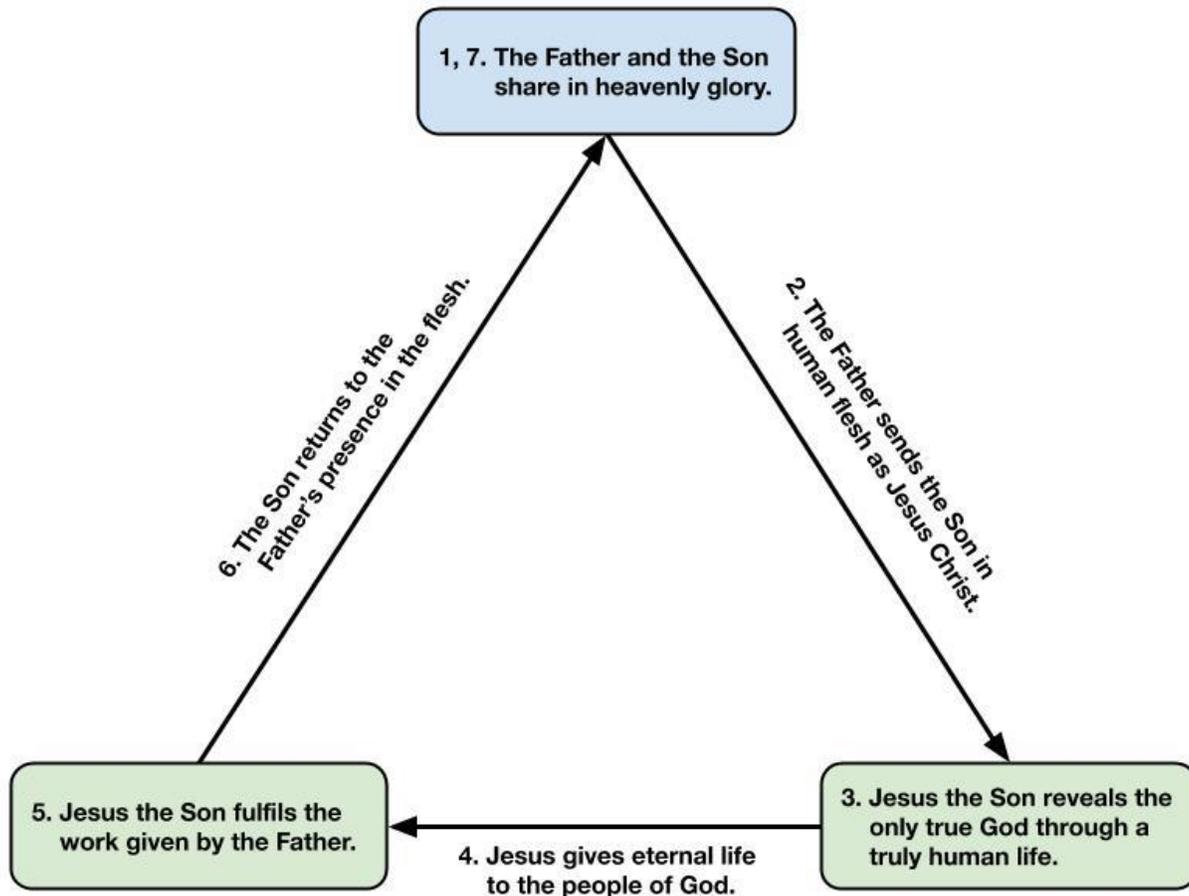
B (v. 2): since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

C (v. 3): And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

B' (v. 4): I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

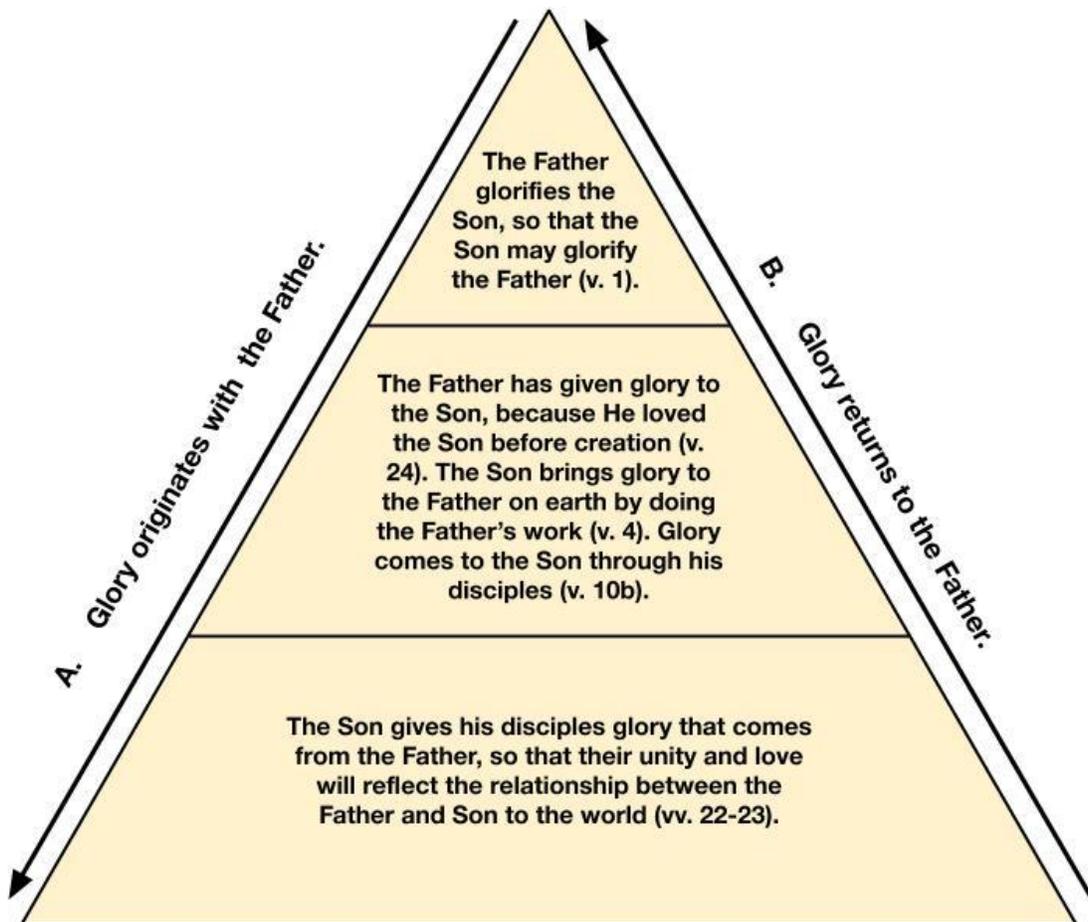
A' (v. 5): And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

- (1) **Prayer to the Father** (A, A'): Jesus prepares to return to the Father's heavenly presence through the cross. He prays for glory. The glory of the Father is the ultimate aim of the Son.
- (2) **The Work of the Son** (B, B'): The Son gives eternal life to God's people. This brings glory to the Father on the earth. The Father will glorify the Son, since the Son has accomplished this work.
- (3) **Eternal Life for God's People** (C): The people whom the Father has given to the Son have eternal life. Eternal life is knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent.



(B) JESUS PRAYS FOR HIS IMMEDIATE DISCIPLES (vv. 6-19)

- (1) **The Reason for Jesus' Prayer (vv. 6-11a):** The disciples belong to the Father, who has given them to the Son. The disciples have seen the Father revealed through the Son, and responded obediently; they have believed. Although the Son will ascend to heaven, these disciples will remain in the world.
- (2) **The Preservation of the Disciples (vv. 11b-16):** The world and the Evil One hate the Father. Therefore, the world hates disciples, who glorify the Father through the Son. The Son has preserved the disciples in faith, but Son is returning to heaven. Jesus prays that the Father would preserve the joyful witness of the disciples amid a hostile world.
- (3) **The Sanctification of the Disciples (vv. 17-19):** Although disciples are in the world, they are distinct from it. They are set apart for the Father, because they have believed in the truth of the Father's word, revealed in the Son. They are set apart from the world in the same ways as the Son.



(C) JESUS PRAYS FOR ALL BELIEVERS (vv. 20-26)

- (1) **The Witness of Future Believers (vv.20-23):** Those who believe in the message of the disciples can experience true communion, reflecting the relationship between the Father and the Son. This is a sign to the world that God truly sent Jesus, and that God loves the world like Jesus.

- (2) **The [Eventual] Perfection of Future Believers** (vv. 23-26): Jesus prays for the ongoing revelation of the Father to disciples in the world. One day, disciples will be brought to complete unity, and will see the uncreated glory of God unveiled.

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

- (1) Jesus glorifies his Father on earth through his disciples, who know the only true God.
- (2) Disciples continue the glory mission of Jesus by their joyful witness to the truth in a hostile world.
- (3) Disciples bear witness by loving one another, reflecting the unity between the Father and the Son.
- (4) God reveals His ongoing love for the world to and through the disciples of Jesus.

HOW, THEN, SHOULD WE...

PRAY?	LIVE?