

John 17 2 of 2

Sermon #0954

Study by W. D. Frazee

I am sure we all agree that John 17 is a wonderful chapter. Before we read some verses from it I want to share with you two interesting statements from the Spirit of Prophecy about this chapter.

"What can I present before my brethren and sisters that is more important for their study and practice than the prayer of Christ. The entire seventeenth chapter of John is full of marrow and fatness" *Signs of the Times*, August 2, 1910.

"God's family on the earth have many lessons to learn in order to answer the prayer of Christ. His last prayer with His disciples before His humiliation. The seventeenth chapter of John, which contains this prayer, comprehends more than any other chapter in the New Testament" Letter, 1906.

We are going to see in this chapter four wonderful things that were given to Jesus.

"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest Me to do. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word.

"For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.

And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one" John 17:4, 6, 8, 22.

We should get those expressions before us so we can look at them. The work. What work? "The work which Thou gavest Me." The men. What men? "The men which Thou gavest Me." The words. What words? "The words which Thou gavest Me." The glory. What glory? The glory which Thou gavest Me."

Is there any connection between these? Oh, yes. The work and the words and the glory that was given to Jesus was to be given to the men that were given to Him. It is all there together.

Jesus finished the work which God gave Him. I am so glad that Jesus is not only the author but the finisher (Hebrews 12:1,2).

That is the reason we keep the Sabbath. We believe that Jesus, the active agent in creation, began the first day and finished it by Friday afternoon. So we are dealing with One who always finishes what He begins. That is the reason I have assurance of salvation.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:6.

When Jesus prayed this prayer it didn't look like He had completed His work. We are told that at that time His work had the appearance of cruel defeat. It looked as if He had made a failure.

Had He? Oh, no. Although just ahead of Him was the betrayal, the denial, the judgment hall, the scourging, the crucifixion, yet He knew that He was winning at every step. What faith, hope, and courage.

I am so glad that the same Savior who began a work back there and finished it has begun a work in your heart and mine. And He is going to finish it. That gives me courage. I rejoice in it. I know you do.

How does it happen that Jesus had Peter and Matthew and Thomas and Philip and Andrew and James? Were they selected men? Yes. Who selected them? God did. And He gave them to Jesus.

Jesus didn't go through the country sizing people and saying, There is somebody I might use. No. He was looking all the while for the men that God has selected to share with Him in His wonderful work.

"All that the Father giveth he shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" John 6:37.

Who is coming to Jesus? All those the Father gives Him.

Somebody says, I don't understand that. Maybe God hasn't given me to Jesus.

Well, let's look at it again and see what it says. "All that the Father giveth he shall come to Me." This was at the synagog at Capernaum. The day before He had fed the multitudes with the five loaves. They were ready to crown Him king. He refused it. He was not seeking earthly honors or earthly authority. He had a spiritual kingdom to establish. And when He made it plain the next day nearly all those who had been ready to crown Him king turned their backs on Him. He told them:

"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father" John 6:45, 64-65.

You will never be Jesus' disciple unless God gives you to Jesus. That is the way those disciples got to be Jesus' disciples. They were given to Jesus from God.

Would you like to be given to Jesus? Why don't you ask God to give you to Him? You have a part in this.

When Abraham sent his trusted servant, Eliezer, over to Haran to get a wife for Isaac, he found Rebecca. He made the necessary arrangements. He told the story of God's providence.

They asked Rebecca if she would go. She heard the story of God's providence and said, Yes, I'll go.

Was she given to Isaac? Yes. Did she have something to say about it? Yes.

The only way for you to be Jesus' child is for God to give you to Him. But He is going to ask you if you will go or not.

I am so glad that by His Holy Spirit He is drawing this one and that one. If we will respond, we will be given into the hands of Jesus to accomplish for us what He did for those first disciples.

When Jesus was praying for those disciples in the shadow of Gethsemane He was also praying for some people down here today.

"Jesus pleaded, not for one only, but for all His disciples: 'Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.' His eye pierced the dark veil of the future and read the life history of every son and daughter of Adam. He felt the burdens and sorrows of every tempest-tossed soul, and that earnest prayer included with His living disciples all His followers to the close of time. 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.' Yes; that prayer of Christ embraces even us"
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, page 529.

Jesus was praying for you. Not just for John and Peter and Matthew. He took your name on His lips. He had your problems and burdens and sorrows on His heart.

You say, That is too big. I can't comprehend it.

Friends, I don't begin to comprehend it, but I believe it. Thank God, I believe in a lot of things that are too big for me to understand. We are dealing with an infinite God. Thank God He was able to think of each one of us personally as if we were the only objects of His love and care. Believe it. Get the joy and thrill of it. Jesus prayed for you. We should be comforted by the thought that we have a great intercessor in the heavens presenting our petitions before God.

So you have the joy of including yourself, of thinking of your name as you hear Christ pray for the men God gave Him out of the world.

When the Holy Spirit knocks at the door of your heart, your response must be, Yes, I will go. I will go to be with Jesus. I will go to be His child. I will go to be His disciple. Your choice enters into it.

We are told that this prayer was an illustration of the prayers He would offer in the heavenly sanctuary within the veil. He has been praying like this ever since He went back to heaven. It recalls to our minds the wonderful fact that as the high priest bore the names of Israel on his shoulder and the breastplate, so our High Priest carries on His heart the names of all His children.

Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

Did it cost something for my name to be written there? Yes, untold agony. Oh, the love that was willing to be tortured, abused, and killed that our names might be written upon His hands. So He is thinking of us tonight.

What did Jesus give to the men God gave Him. The word. Think of it. When Jesus came to this world He made Himself dependent as we are on getting things from God. And the only way Jesus used to lead and teach and train those disciples was to get some words from His Father. He got those words every day.

"The Lord GOD hath given Me the tongue of the learned,
that I should know how to speak a word in season to him
that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He
wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" Isaiah 50:4.

Jesus got a word to speak in season. What does in season mean? At the right time. How did Jesus manage to do that? He got those words from His Father.

"Christ was continually receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us. 'The word which ye hear,' He said, 'is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me.' John 14:24. . . . Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to

others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed" *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 139.

Continually means all the time. He was receiving words from the Father all the time so He could communicate. He got them fresh every day. If He had missed getting it, He would have missed giving it, wouldn't He? But He never missed. Every morning He received the words. Isn't that wonderful?

"And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." I wonder what that glory is? Moses wanted to see God's glory, and he prayed about it. God said, All right, if you want to see My glory I will give what you ask for. Notice what it was:

"And he said, I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory. And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" Exodus 33:18-19.

The glory was God's goodness and His name. Goodness stands for His character.

"And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" Exodus 34:5-7.

This was God's glory, His name. So when Jesus says, "The glory which Thou givest Me I have given them," Jesus revealed the Father's character to His disciples.

"I have revealed Your real self to the men You gave Me from the world" John 17:6. (Goodspeed translation)

In getting acquainted with Jesus the disciples got acquainted with His Father.

One word expresses the character of God. It is love.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" 1 John 4:8.

That is what Jesus came to reveal. It is what He revealed to His disciples. It is the glory.

"It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. *The Desire of Ages*, page 20.

That's the glory. It isn't just some light as Christ went about those hills of Judea and Galilee. There was not some light shining like a halo such as is seen in medieval pictures. No. He walked as men walk. He appeared as a man. But from His face was shining the glory of love. Little children loved to approach Him. The sick and weary and discouraged felt He was someone who was interested in them.

It is true that the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees hated Him. They resisted Him. But every heart that was open to the Spirit's influence felt that drawing power of love. And they saw something of that glory of God, the glory of love.

"God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him" *The Desire of Ages*, page 224.

Discern means to see something. Understand it. Do you discern the glory in the life of Jesus? Is it just that light that illuminated Him at the transfiguration? Oh, no. The glory of God was displayed in loving ministry to those about Him. Even as a child He was possessed of but one purpose. He lived to bless others. He was loving people all the time.

Where did He get it? From His Father. What did He do with it? He gave it to His disciples.

God, in Jesus, wants to share all this with us. He wants to give us work just as He gave Jesus work. He wants to give us men just as He gave Jesus men. He wants to give us words to give to those men just as He gave Jesus words. And He wants to share with us His glory that we may share it with those He has given to us.

"As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" John 17:18.

Who sent Jesus into the world? God, the Father. Jesus says, I am sending these men you gave me out into the world. Isn't that wonderful, friends? And it wasn't just those men kneeling around Him. No. As we have already seen, that prayer included all of us. Has Jesus sent you as the Father sent Him?

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" John 20:21.

As means in the same way. Just as the Father has sent me I am sending you. Oh, if we can get that sense of mission we can go knowing that Jesus has given us a work to do just as the Father gave Him a work to do.

"For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch" Mark 13:34.

He gave to every man his work. Not just some work. The man's individual work.

"He gives 'to every man his work.' Each has his place in the eternal plan of heaven" *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 326.

Is there a place for you?

"Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God" *Ibid*, page 327.

Today, tomorrow, next week, next year, and as long as time shall linger there is a special work planned for you given to you by Jesus, just as the Father gave Jesus a special work.

There was a time for Christ to be in Capernaum. There was a time for Him to be in Jerusalem. There was a time for Him to be in Nazareth. There was a time for Him to be across Jordan in Peria. There was a time for everything. He was on time. He was doing His work.

At the age of twelve He said to Mary, Do you not know that I must be about My Father's business. My Father has given Me a job to do, and I have to be on it. In carrying it out He was subject to His parents for another eighteen years. But He was always conscious that His Father had given Him a particular job to do, and His one thought was to do that work. When He came to the end of His life He could say, I have finished it. If He had allowed anything to divert Him, He wouldn't have finished it.

If you and I allow anything to divert us from the particular work that God has given us to do, we will come to the close of our life with that work unfinished. That will be too bad. It will be an eternal loss.

If we will be as willing as Jesus was to be emptied of self, and day by day look to Him to get our work, thank God, by His grace we can finish our work as He finished His work. Shall we do it? Oh, yes.

What do you think of when you think of soul winning? What do you think of as you come into contact with men and women day by day? Is it just a wholesale thing? No. You are to be looking at certain people all the while.

When I go into these canyons I am looking for hepaticas. As the season gets this far along I am not just looking for hepaticas. I am looking for certain hepaticas. I

like to find blue ones, or a purple one, or a pink one. There are hundreds of them up there, but I am looking for certain ones.

When Jesus was ready to bless everyone, He was looking for the particular ones who could be helped at that time by Him. You can't help everyone. You might wish you could. But there is someone you can help.

"If the teachers of His word are willing, the Lord will lead them into close relations with the people. He will guide them into the homes of those who need and desire the truth, bringing them into the situation best suited to their talents" Letter, 1896.

God says He is wanting to guide you into certain homes where the people in those homes will be those whom your talents are particularity suited to help. Isn't that wonderful?

A brother has a key. It is the key to the ignition in his car. Do you suppose it would fit my automobile? Why no. It will not. It will fit his. Why? It was made to fit his, and nothing else.

Brother, sister, God has made you to fit the needs of someone. Your daily prayer should be as Jesus' was, Lord, give me the men and women, the boys and girls that I can best help. And God will do it for you just as He did it for Jesus.

There are thousands of people who need help, and God needs someone as peculiar as you to help them. Certain individuals are waiting for you. And what a thrill it is to discover that from all eternity God has planned to give you that person, and give you the joy to fit into their needs. Can you think of anything more thrilling to live for than that?

This is life. This is the great object of life. The men which Thou gavest Me I have manifested Your name to. Will you manifest His name to the men that God gives you?

In *Ministry of Healing*, page 473, it calls attention to the fact that God sent Philip from Samaria down toward Gaza to find one man. If you study the map you will find that there were dozens of wonderful preachers much closer to that man than Philip was. But God bypassed Joseph, and by His Spirit went up north of Jerusalem and said, Philip, I know you are doing a work here in Samaria, but I have a special job for you to do today. Get down on that road to Gaza.

When he got down there he found a great audience of just one man. He was led by the Spirit, and he was looking for the man that God gave him. Did God give Philip that man that day? Oh, yes. And all through eternity Philip and that man will be close friends.

God is still sending men and women today to be at the right place and the right time with the right words.

I want to ask a special question to some special people. It is to fathers and mothers. Do you know who your men are? They are your children. Here is Bible proof:

"And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me" Hebrews 2:13.

Those disciples were like Jesus' children. They were grown up, but they acted like children many times, didn't they. They had the same problems children have. Jesus had to train them and discipline them and pray with them like parents have to do with their children. He kept on until He could say, They are all here, Father, except that one son of perdition, Judas. Jesus got eleven out of twelve.

Judas was not given to Jesus as the others were. He urged his way in.

Parents, God has given you children. What a thrill it will be to be able to look into Christ's face surrounded by your little flock and say, Behold I and the children which God has given me. What a disappointment if one were missing. And I say to every father and mother, when you think of those who God has given you think first of all of those children. There might be some question about someone else. There is absolutely no question on this one.

"Mothers who sigh for a missionary field have one at hand in their own home circle. . . . Are not the souls of her own children as much value as the souls of the heathen?"

"Everyone has a work to do for the Master; it is a wonderful work to make home pleasant and all that it ought to be.

"If you ignore your duty as a wife and mother and hold out your hands for the Lord to put another class of work in them, be sure that He will not contradict Himself; He points you to the duty you have to do at home. If you have the idea that some work greater and holier than this has been entrusted to you, you are under a deception. By faithfulness in your own home, working for the souls of those who are nearest to you, you may be gaining a fitness to work for Christ in a wider field. But be sure that those who are neglectful of their duty in the home circle are not prepared to work for other souls.

"The Lord has not called you to neglect your home and your husband and children. . . .

"You may be urged to attend mother's meetings and sewing circles, that you may do missionary work; but unless there is a faithful, understanding instructor to be left with your children, it is your duty to answer that the

Lord has committed to you another work which you can in no wise neglect. . . .

"The mother should not accept burdens in the church work which compel her to neglect her children. The best work in which a mother can engage is to see that no stitches are dropped in the training of her children"
Adventist Home, pages 245-246.

There is similar instructions to fathers also.

To do our work we will need some words. When and where will we get them? Morning by morning from Jesus.

I read something that impressed me very much. God is talking to ministers, and He is telling them to be careful who they listen to and about what they preach.

"Another cause of failure in these conferences is that the people to whom God's messenger is sent wish to mold his ideas to theirs and to put into his mouth the words that he should speak. God's watchmen must not study how they shall please the people, nor listen to their words and utter them; but they must listen to hear what saith the Lord, what is His word for the people" *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, page 252.

Here is a warning. Did you ever wish you could tell a preacher what to preach? Did you ever wish to tell him what not to preach? You had better talk to the Lord about it.

Don't misunderstand me. It might be proper at times to suggest to someone to give a message that God has impressed your heart with. But be delicate. Be careful. Be a bit reticent. And don't forget this message.

I say to every elder and church minister, be careful that you do not shape your message to suit the ideas of the people. Don't do it. You may miss the message of God. Why? Because there is danger. Listen where? Listen to Jesus.

"God would have His workmen wholly dependent upon Him. They must listen to hear what saith the Lord, asking what is Thy word for the people? The Holy Spirit will give them ideas adapted to meet the needs of those present"
Gospel Workers, page 165.

For forty years I have watched God do this. While I confess that many times I have failed in my humanity, many a time I have seen the Lord bring fresh ideas to share with people that turned out to be exactly what the people needed.

Some of you young men are interested in learning how to speak for God. Don't think it comes by accumulating a lot of notes in a notebook. It is all right to

make notes. But when it comes to get ready for a meeting, even if the subject has been presented in years gone by, I have to get down on my knees and wrestle with God and find out what God's words are for those people. I commend you that way. There is no other way of success. On your knees find out what are the words God wants you to give.

If you think this is important to the preacher in the desk, do you think it is important to the parents in the home? Does the mother need heaven's words to give to her children? Does the father need heaven's words to give at family worship?

What would you think if every morning at breakfast the cook opened up a can and put it on the table, and you knew it was coming three hundred sixty-five days a year? That's the way some people conduct family worship. Believe me, it is a lot better than starving to death, isn't it? I would rather have a can opened every morning than to sit and have nothing. God pity us, there are thousands of homes that are not having family worship at all.

But if you want a blessing, and have not been entering into this, get down on your knees in the morning and get fresh manna for that morning. Tell God you must have His words for those children. Ask Him. Thank God, there is fresh manna every morning if we will go after it.

"The glory which Thou gavest Me." That same Jesus who got the glory from His Father and shared it with His disciples wants to give that glory of love that we may share it with the people God has given us. They need to see the glory of love.

But love is something you can't manufacture. Neither can you dry it and store it away. Love is something you must get fresh every day.

We have a wonderful picture of Jesus standing at the mercy seat in the most holy place praying to His Father, and the glory shining down upon Him. I read:

"As the incense ascended to the Father, the excellent glory came from the throne to Jesus, and from Him it was shed upon those whose prayers had come up like sweet incense. Light poured upon Jesus in rich abundance and overshadowed the mercy seat, and the train of glory filled the temple" *Early Writings*, page 252.

See how it is put in the Bible:

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" Romans 5:5.

We can get that glory day by day. We can get enough to share with others. If we run out before the day is over, what do you say we go back and get some more. There is plenty there. Thank God. Hour by hour we can look to the mercy seat and get this love to share with others.

"And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" John 17:26.

Precious Lord, we thank Thee for sharing Thy work and Thy words with us that we may minister in Thy name to those whom Thou hast given us.

Most of all we thank Thee for that glory of love which shone from the dear face of Jesus when He was here, and is reflected down from the mercy seat.

We thank Thee that we are called to the sweet privilege of sharing that glory of love with others as Thou hast shared it with us. We praise Thee in Thine own dear name, Amen.

Copyright 2019. All rights reserved.

W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 129, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org