

God's Election and Christ's Exaltation (John 17:6-10)

16 years after the Mayflower Pilgrims landed, the Massachusetts General Court founded Harvard University in 1636. It's the oldest university in the United States. The express purpose of Harvard was to train gospel ministers as it still says on a brick wall plaque outside Johnstone Gate, Harvard Yard. For its first 140 years, almost all of Harvard's presidents were or had been preachers. It's been said 106 of the first 108 schools founded in the U.S. had Christian roots. Many ivy league schools originally trained reformed pastors

Harvard 1643 guidelines were: 'Let every Student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the maine end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternall life, John 17:3 and therefore to lay Christ...as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and Learning ...' founders of Harvard believed that: All knowledge without Christ was vain ... The motto of Harvard was officially: For Christ and the Church.'¹

Let's open our Bibles to John 17:3, and as students of God's Word, let's not forget what has sadly been forgotten at Harvard, that without Christ all we learn is in vain. Let our motto be 'for Christ and the Church' today, as we see Christ pray *for His Church* in this text. He prays to earnestly impress on us the main goal of life and study which is to know God and Jesus Christ. The Harvard Gazette in 2015 ran an article on Harvard's seal design, 1643: 'The open books represent the Old and New Testaments—the truth that any could read in the Bible. But the third book represented the yet unwritten truth of the future as the Puritans saw it: the book of truth that would be written by a second coming of Christ ... that millennial moment would arrive ... To the Puritans in Harvard..., *Veritas* meant more than truth, or even divine truth. It meant "fulfillment," the truth of a second coming.'²

Harvard has come a long way from those days, and so has this nation, but I want to start today the way they started, how Jn 17 starts, for Christ's glory

17:1 *When Jesus had spoken these words [these words in Jn 13-16], he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

⁶ *“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.”* ⁷ *Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.* ⁸ *For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth [veritas] that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.* ⁹ *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.* ¹⁰ *All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.*

Notice the emphasis on gift, gave/given 7x in the text. It forms our outline:

1. The Father’s *Gift for Christ*
2. The Father’s *Gifts through Christ*
3. Our Application: *Give Glory to Christ*

1. The Father’s Gift for Christ

² *since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.* All God gives Jesus, He gives eternal life to. The text emphasizes those given from the Father to the Son, a people chosen out of the world, God’s people. v. 6 *‘I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were [past tense, people of God already], and you gave them to me [different tense], and they have kept your word.’* They were already God’s people, His elect or His own He gives Jesus, then they believe and keep His Word. These aren’t the world, they’re chosen from it and given from it. ⁹ *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.*

He prays for the disciples but v. 20 says this prayer is for all believers, too. v. 24 again mentions those given to Jesus and the glory and love Father and Son shared before the foundation of the world. Eph 1 says the Father chose us in Him before the foundation of the world and in love He predestined us.

Titus 1:1-2 uses the phrase ‘*God’s elect*’ then mentions ‘*eternal life, which God...promised before the beginning of time*’ (NIV). There were no people created before time began, so who did God make that promise this to? The Son. Before creation, there was a covenant or agreement of a people chosen by the Father to give to the Son who agreed to redeem them and the Spirit’s part is to regenerate. Rev 13:8 calls Jesus a lamb slain from the foundation³ of the world for names written in His book from the foundation of the world

Ps 2 records God saying to His anointed (Christ): *'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession'* (7-8 NASB). The only begotten asks the Father for that promised inheritance of nations, people chosen from the ends of the earth, given Him as His own possession. Mal 3:17: *'They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession'* [KJV 'jewels'; NLT 'special treasure'] Zech 9:16 *'On that day the LORD their God will save them, as the flock of his people; for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land.'*

Turn back to John 10 for that language, the flock of His people. His sheep is another term for His elect, His chosen, all God predestined to salvation, also called 'His own.' John 10:14 says *'I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me,*¹⁵ *even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep* [that's particular redemption].¹⁶ *"I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock ...* That's the church, not just disciples from the nation of Israel, elect from every nation yet one over all the earth. His sheep are His elect, His own, all who believe.

²⁶ *But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.* ²⁷ *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;* ²⁸ *and I give eternal life to them ...* So those who aren't His sheep, His own, the people He chose, they do not believe, v. 26 says, because they're not His sheep, but His sheep will hear His voice and will follow Jesus and Jesus gives all of them eternal life. ²⁹ *My Father, who has given them to Me ...* There's that language again out of Jn 17; knowing, giving eternal life to those who the Father gives the Son.

Now go back to Jn 6:37, another text on these people God gives to His Son. 6:37 *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out ...* ³⁹ *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day ...* ⁴⁴ *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day...* ⁶⁵ *And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."* So this tells us all the Father gives the Son, all the elect, will come in faith to Jesus and none of them will be cast away or lost, of all God gives Jesus. And those God gives, He also draws so they can come, and v. 44 says those He draws will on the last day be resurrected to life. God grants or enables His own to come to Jesus in faith who could not or would not on *their* own.

The word *granted* in v. 65 is the same word for the people *given* to Him in v. 37 and 39. Those given to the Son also have it granted or given for them to come. The Father gives enablement to come to all He's given to the Son.

When v. 44 says no one can come unless the Father *draws*, that's the Greek word used in chapter 21 when Peter *hauled* fishing nets to shore (21:11). It often is used of a person strongly pulled to a place he wouldn't go naturally, that's what God must do for us if we will come to Jesus. This word is often translated dragged or carried away (Acts 16:19, 21:30, Jas. 2:6, 1:14), but in this context it's not against our will, kicking and screaming, He changes our will and draws by cords of love. It's the word for Jeremiah⁴ drawn up out of a cistern, pulled up by ropes (Jer 38:13). The Father must draw us up in that sense from a pit, then we see Christ's beauty and come. The word is 'attract powerfully,' I think of a magnet attracting or attraction of bride and groom.

Eph 5 says '*Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...*' and He washes her and makes her beautiful. Isa 62 prophesies *You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD...you shall be called My Delight Is in Her ...for the LORD delights in you...as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you* (v. 3-5). The Father chose a bride for the Son as a love gift, and the Son in turn gives His love to the bride given Him, He delights in her. The bride loves the groom, because He first loved us.

Why was this bride chosen instead of others, she doesn't know. But those who rejected and hated Him and wanted nothing of His love can't complain it's not fair they won't spend eternity with someone they don't want to. The bride didn't initially love Him either, but 'from heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride, with His own love He bought her and for her life He died.' Why her, she doesn't know, but He won her heart, she loves Him. If you're a part of the bride of Christ, if you're a believer in Christ, you're a part of something much bigger than you, a plan bigger than the universe and that started before it was created, the covenant promise of God the Father to God the Son to give Him a bride as a love gift, to delight in, for all eternity!

The Father's Gift for Christ (point #1, now back in Jn 17 let's see 2ndly)
The Father's Gifts through Christ (look again at Jn 17, v. 6)

I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me ...

1st gift: He revealed His name. God went by many names in Scripture, but if the word *manifest* here means reveal/disclose/make known something new, it may mean the name of God revealed to them for prayer: the name *Father*. In the context of prayer, Jesus revealed to His disciples to pray to God in a way that was new and not known before, to talk to God by the name *Father*. There were OT passages that say things like: ‘*As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion...*’ (Ps 103:13). He fathered the nation Israel but praying to God by the name *Father* is a new revelation.

James Boice wrote: ‘nowhere, either in the Old Testament or in any other document prior to the time of Jesus, does any individual Israelite ever address God directly as “my Father.” Yet this is what Jesus does always ...all four Gospels record that Jesus used this address, they also report that he did so in all his prayers [except on the cross when He prayed ‘*My God*’ because His fellowship with the Father was broken as He bore our sin] ... In the Sermon on the Mount he taught, *This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father* ... Is this important? Of course it is, for it means ... we can come to him, not with a prayer that says, “O high, exalted and inscrutable God, far from us in your majesty, unreachable and unknowable...” but rather with that warm and personal prayer that begins, “My Father...”⁵

What a gift it is that Jesus has revealed the Father’s name, the Father who Jesus taught in prayer loves to give good gifts to His children who ask Him (Mt 7:11)! And He said in that same context, after teaching to pray to God by the name Father, He knows your needs, worries and provides (6:31-33).

A 2nd gift is His Word: ⁸ *For I have given them the words that you gave me* ...In the original context, these are Christ’s words to His disciples while He was on earth, but they’re also a gift for us because they’ve been given to us in the gospels. And it’s a gift that keeps giving: it gives life, joy, direction, strength, peace, comfort, conviction, transformation, hope, healing, power.

At the end of v. 8 He mentions they believed that Jesus is of God and from God, that’s another gift in Scripture. Phil 1:29 says ‘*unto you it is given...to believe on him*’ (KJV). Rom 12:3 talks about a ‘*measure of faith God has given you*’ (NIV). Eph 2:8 says it’s by grace you ‘*are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*’ (KJV, the Greek grammar⁶ doesn’t limit that gift to salvation or grace, even faith is part of God’s gift). Even repentance is part of God’s gift, as Paul prays in 2 Tim 2:24 that God ‘*give them repentance*’ and Acts 11:18 says God *grants repentance unto life*

v. 9 mentions another gift: *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.* We'll talk more about this in future weeks but this is a tremendous gift that Jesus prays for us. Like the OT priest who would intercede for God's people wearing a breastplate with stones for the tribes over his chest, Jesus prays with God's people on His heart. This isn't His general love this is a particular personal love for those the Father gives the Son, they belong to God and were given to Jesus, so Jesus has a special care for them. If someone special loaned to you something special that was theirs (house or car or something valuable) you would want to take special care of it. That's maybe some of the sense of v. 9, God's people were given to Jesus to care for so He cares for them personally as precious (this includes us, v. 20 says, put your name in v. 9).

So what's our application? Give Glory to Christ

¹⁰ *All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.*

1st way Christ is glorified in us: Care for and prayer for His people

There's no selfishness here, 'all mine are yours,' and all the Father cares for are cared for by Jesus. And we should care for them for the same reason and be in prayer especially for those our Father has placed such value on. If you want Christ to be glorified in you, show His care, His love to His people. In Jn 13:31 He began the whole upper room section saying "*Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him...[then He said] love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*"

2nd way Christ is glorified in us: Keep His Word

The end of v. 6 mentions His followers kept His Word and it's of these He says in v. 10 '*I am glorified in them.*' And that's not only for the disciples, it can be true of you, do you keep His Word? We keep the doors open Sunday morning and night, opportunities to keep the Word, you need it to keep you. Dt 28:58 NKJV '*carefully observe all the words...written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD*'

3rd way Christ is glorified in us in this text: Believe in Christ

The end of v. 8 says they believed Christ. Do you believe in Christ? Do you trust Christ alone for salvation? If not, call upon this glorious and gracious Lord in faith, asking Him to deliver you from your sin. Give your life to the Lord and you can know you're one of those given to the Lord by the Father. Eph 1:12 says *we who...trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory*

4th way Christ is glorified in us: Exalt Him by your Words

That's what Jesus says He had done with His disciples and it's what we're to do. Eph 1:4-6 says God chose us before creation and He predestined us *'to the praise of the glory of His grace.'* We're saved to praise God's glory!

Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote: 'That is how we glorify him, by talking about him. We are very ready to talk about our doctors, and to praise the man who cured us when so many failed; we talk about some business which is better than others or about films and plays and actors and actresses and a thousand one other things... We see other people getting excited about such things as football matches, shouting for their side, wearing colours so everybody may know which side they support. We see people boasting about all kinds of things in this life and world. Yet when we come to our Christianity ... oh, how often we lack enthusiasm and energy. Instead of proclaiming it to the whole world, we conceal it or are uncertain about it and even [act as if] defeated ... we do not realize that Christ is glorified in us ... the children of God and joint heirs with Christ – the children of the heavenly King ... the Christian is meant to be praising and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ.'⁷

1 Pet 2:9 *'you are a chosen...people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies [or glories] of him who called you out of darkness*

4th final way Christ is glorified in us in this text: Exalt Him by your Works

⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me ...

I can't improve on Spurgeon's words of application so let me close with his: 'Lastly, I think that Christ is glorified in his people by their efforts to extend his kingdom. What efforts are you making? There is a great deal of force in a church like this; but...the tendency is, so often, to leave everything to be done by the minister, or else by one or two leading people; but I do pray you, beloved, if you be Christ's, and if you belong to the Father, if, unworthy though you be, you are claimed with a double ownership by the Father and the Son, do try to be of use to them. Let it be seen by your winning others to Christ that he is glorified in you. I believe that, by diligent attendance to even the smallest [Sunday]-school class, Christ is glorified in you. By that private conversation in your own room, by that letter which you [mailed] with many a prayer, by anything that you have done with a pure motive, trusting in God in order to glorify Christ, he is glorified in you.

... The work of God is as holy and acceptable in domestic service, or in trade, as any service that can be rendered in the pulpit, or even by the foreign missionary... You godly mothers, you are the glory of the Church of Christ. You hard-working men and women, who endure patiently “as seeing him who is invisible,” are the crown and glory of the Church of God.’⁸

¹ William J. Federer, *Great Quotations* (St. Louis, MO: AmeriSearch, 2001).

² <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2015/05/seal-of-approval/>

³ Translators aren’t united on whether that verse emphasizes the book being written before creation or the Lamb slain from that time [from God’s perspective and plan]:

ESV ‘*everyone whose name has not been written [NASB ‘from’] before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.*

KJV/NKJV/YLT ‘*in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*’

NIV ‘*the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.*’

Either way it fits with the concept of a plan before creation to save specific people by the redeeming work of Jesus as a Lamb (revealed to man soon after creation in Gen 3:16-21).

⁴ In the Greek translation of the OT (Septuagint) it uses the same Greek verb as John 6:44.

⁵ James Boice, *John*, p. 1273.

⁶ Faith is the closest antecedent, but the nouns *grace* and *faith* are feminine, along with the masculine verb *saved*, while the *that* (which is not from yourselves and is a gift) is a neuter pronoun. So grammatically the gift can’t be limited to the saving or the grace, but would fit the whole phrase of saved by grace through faith as God’s gift, something not of ourselves.

⁷ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Assurance of Our Salvation: Studies in John 17* (Crossway, 2000), p. 272, 276.

⁸ Charles H. Spurgeon, “Christ’s Pastoral Prayer for His People,” *Metropolitan Tabernacle*, vol. 39, p. 513.