John 17:22-24 (James A. Taylor) 72427

Bible Treasury: Volume N12, John 17:22-24, Two Addresses on (17:22-24)

No doubt every one of us has got comfort from this passage of God's word. It is well to see its connection. It is evident from chap. 13 that Judas was a hindrance to the Lord, and it was a relief when he went out, and Jesus could say, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him.” That was the reverse of all man did to Him. It is not the Son of God glorified; you get that in chap. 11. In Him was wondrous grace; but here it is God as the One Who has been sinned against, and judges sin. It is only a few hours before His passion; and how wonderful we should be in His thoughts then! Even then He thought of us, and made provision in His blessed supper. He tells them about His coming (chap. 14:3).

It is sweet to speak of, and to know He is present and takes an interest in our prayers and praises. There is no listener so attentive as Himself. He brings out one thing after another, in chaps. 13-16, and tells them His going away would make no difference to His love. He will take good care of them, and will send them another Paraclete. Then He turns to His Father, and unbosoms Himself to Him. That is quite unique. We are in the Holiest, and permitted to hear the breathings of His heart, and we learn what a place we have in that heart. We may be considered dirt by the world, but in O.T. language we are God's jewels.

Is not His love enough to stagger us? Even in the glory we shall not be loved more than we are now, because that love is a boundless, shoreless ocean, and one drop is enough to make our cup run over. We shall know even as we are known. Only think of Him telling the Father He had from Him a glory worthy of the Giver and the Recipient; and He will share that with those the Father had given Him! How He values us according to the way He acquired us—the gift of the Father! What a meaning that gives to the word “own"! And all here will soon pass away, and all be changed: then that vast eternity to come! But I suppose this glory is connected with the kingdom.

There was a unity “that the world might believe"; but it soon failed to be seen; there is a unity that will abide.

When people here lose a friend they often say “they are forever with the Lord,” but taking those words from their connection, one loses a great deal. When the Lord has come for His church, He will never be seen apart from her. “When He who is our life shall appear,” (no longer be hidden), “then shall we also appear with Him in glory.” That is the great beauty of that particular scripture.

The first unity was that the world might believe. The unity in glory is that the world may know that we are loved as the Son is. The heavens then will not be apart from the earth as now, through sin. We shall be visible, sharing the glory of Christ. That is a blessed thing to look forward to, but I was thinking of Rev. 19:1-10.

The day has then come to deal with the corruptress—a day of great sorrow on earth, but great joy in heaven. It is wonderful the amount of joy contained in these verses I have read. Ver. 7 makes us think of a readiness we have nothing to do with—a readiness He has given us by the Lord Jesus atoning for us, and the Holy Spirit indwelling us. “They that were ready went in” (Matt. 25). It is all of grace. We have that readiness for that bright scene of light and song. What the bride is clothed with is the righteous acts of the saints. Here is something that shows us the importance of our daily walk and ways. No doubt each one of us will contribute something to that garment; and what is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit will form that in which the bride is arrayed. It is “given” her. Well, in a good many cases that would bring souls up, and make them see how their lives are connected with the future display of glory.

But between the rapture, which will be all of grace, and the display, we shall be at the judgment seat of Christ. Everything connected with our whole moral being will come out. We shall not be there to be judged. He who sits there is our life and righteousness, and He would be judging Himself. Besides, we have His own word in John 5:24. That is a thing settled once and forever.

I wish every one could see the blessedness of it. It will be a wonderful gain to us to have everything out. But some quote Heb. 10:17 as contradicting this. The word of God shows that by one offering the Lord has perfected forever (in perpetuity) them that are sanctified, and a purged conscience can never be touched. I said recently in this room that in each of us naturally there is an absence of good, a propensity to all evil, and in our natural state, a capacity for all evil; and if preserved from it, it is through the mercy of God. Everything will be shown up at the judgment seat, and whatever the judgment of the Lord Jesus, there will be perfect acquiescence on our part, and we shall see and wonder at the full depth of the meaning of our salvation. It will produce praise as we see ourselves as God sees us, and won't the secret springs be touched!

That must take place before the bride gets her garment—not only the display of the evil of the heart, but what the Holy Spirit has wrought in us.

In Rev. 21 (for from chap. 19 to 21:8 the events follow one after another) the Holy Spirit goes back to give us particulars of the Lamb's wife in that wonderful display. But we have something better than that—we are loved with the same love God has for Christ.

Verse 24. The only time the word “will” is used in the chapter. He tells the Father He desires His own to behold that glory that cannot be communicated to us—something the world can never see—on a higher platform altogether—in heaven itself, where Jesus is.

Oh, may this speak to us as we listen, and learn the marvelous place we have in the heart of the Lord Jesus. Oh, may it strengthen us! There is a word in Colossians that shows the glory is strengthening to us. To bring the future in helps us along, and His grace can make us superior to the most trying scenes here. May the comfort of this scripture produce its own proper fruit to His worthy praise! J. A. T.

I feel reluctant to add to what our brother has said, but I would just press a little what we have been considering in that wonderful chapter in John, only by way of enforcement. I do not think we can too deeply consider the force of the opening words of ver. 24— “Father, I will, that those also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am.” These are very simple words, and this Gospel which gives us the deepest truth uses the simplest language. That of itself would give you to think it must be divine, and it is,” Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” —the revelation that is here before our souls.

We have had before us the interest of the blessed Lord in us, of which we have but the feeblest conception. It is a grand thing to go to heaven—a blessed place; and I fear to many of God's children that is the acme of blessing. And heaven is paradise. If any extraordinarily beautiful view in this earth presents itself to us, we say, What a paradise! So these are foreshadowings of glory. If we look at the work of the Lord Jesus we see how absolute it is when we think of the first one to be there with Him (Luke 23). Can you conceive the course of thought that would be followed in that poor dying man's mind as far as possible? The world was no paradise to him, nor had he made it so to others—a brigand, a murderous highway robber. And for that word “paradise” to fall on his ears! What would he think? From the gallows to paradise! A paradise on earth was to be greatly desired-but the paradise of heaven!! And what is paradise? The brightest spot in heaven. And do you tell me a brigand, turning to the Savior in his dying moments and asking for forgiveness could get a title to the brightest spot in heaven? Oh, how blessed to find a Savior's blessing far beyond our needs! The God Who gave the Savior is “the blessed God". But paradise is not enough for the Savior. What would it be without Him? “Today with me” —on the cross? No, in that bright place above. Is He your Savior? Do you find it your joy to bow at His feet and own He is worthy? He has done everything to the glory of God.

Oh, the wondrous harmony of heaven! The Father and the Son, and the Spirit, all in harmony, and mutual interest; and as God could say, “Let US make man,” so in these counsels there is the church-those for whom the Savior gave Himself to make them members of His body. The Father gave; the Son suffered; and the Spirit bears His testimony to the Father and to the Son.

I speak for myself, we think too little of these things, and the words come to our lips without effort because we have read them often; but they have never come in all their depth and fullness. How do they come? By eating. And I think of poor Jeremiah (poor, I mean, because of his trials), how some spake against him, and he pours out his heart to God and finds comfort— “Thy words were found and I did eat them.” I can scarcely go with those who think because they were found he went about seeking them. We want to appreciate them. Man may say that God cannot reveal His will, etc. Why a child, if right in any measure, would not speak in any such way of his father! How does God communicate His will? Not writing it on a slate, saying “Here are my instructions,” Nor is it by Urim and Thummim, as of old. I remember as a boy reading an article “How to know the will of the Father,"1 for the title arrested me. The teaching of the tract was that this knowledge was not independent of our state of soul. The reason why we do not discern His mind is that there is something in us—our eye is not single. The fault is in us. We are not, shall I say, machines, we are moral beings. “If any man do His will, He shall know of the doctrine.” Well, you want to know. Are you prepared to say “I shall not be disappointed whatever His will is? If it is only pleasing to Him that is enough?” I want to do His will—not my own.

Here is what the Lord says. Think of the Lord's deep interest in His own. Think of this, at this moment when we enter the holiest we find something for which He cares, something on His heart. Who are they? A feeble company indeed, and, alas, it may be quarreling among themselves! Are you prepared to give your life for the brethren? How can one love God if he loves not his brother? I remember the utterance of one now with the Lord, “There may be occasions when you have to speak sharp words of rebuke, but how would you feel if you were both going to heaven together in an hour?” Faithfulness is consistent with love, and love with faithfulness, but let us guard against bitterness of spirit.

+ We find in just listening to what the blessed Savior says that He prays for those that shall believe on Him through the apostles' word, and that takes in you and me. We have believed their words. It is not of angels He takes hold. He speaks to them, and they delight to do His will; but it is not angels who are called to be his companions or fellows (Heb. 1:9; 3:14), but man—man once steeped in sin, but now redeemed! It is His work which confers all the value, and if the Father gives them to Him does not He value them? Then the blessed reciprocity! “All mine are Thine, and Thine are mine.” The Lord is with us here below, but we are not yet with Him. So in John 14:3. Does He say, I will take you to heaven? No, but “I will receive you to myself.” Does not the affectionate wife know and appreciate after a long absence the husband's welcome for her? The Savior does not say “to heaven,” but “to myself.” Oh, has it not been good to be here? Has not the Lord been in our meeting? What will it be to be with Him? It is His desire, His purpose, and the very expression is enough. He has not to plead. the king could say to Esther, “What is thy petition? It is yours.” But oh, the future! “I have something to show—that they may behold—my glory. I know these will be interested in what is mine; I have thought of them in the hour of my betrayal, and have said, Do this in remembrance of me.” Oh, is this given as a mere command? Will you not remember Me? We have the divine order, and He has told us how He would have us remember Him, and He has left it on record and given it to us from heaven (1 Cor. 11). To the Jewish disciples only then before Him? No, from heaven, to the apostle, that we Gentiles might also have the joy and the privilege.

There are families in heaven, many mansions, principalities and powers; not indeed angels rescued, but mankind saved—saints that will be displayed in the righteousnesses which they have wrought on earth—they “shall behold my glory.” Is not that of interest? And the blessed Savior would have His own redeemed interested. “That they may behold my glory"! Oh, I know nothing more blessed except the Savior Himself. I feel the intense interest of the Savior here made known. Why were those words spoken? poured out into the ears of the Father that we, catching His voice, may hear them too.

The beholding of His glory will never pall upon them, no, never, because it is “the glory Thou hast given me.” Can anything more bespeak the love of Christ Who loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it. We have been separated from the world “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” But are we truly separate? Mere separation won't do, but it must be separation to Him. He loves the church today; He loved it at the beginning, and He nourishes and cherishes and. washes it. That is not by blood. This was at the beginning; that constituted me a saint; but how about the difficulties of the way? We have His word, and the Holy Spirit to make it good to us. We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, the Paraclete up there, and the other Paraclete, the Holy Ghost given to us down here—what a Savior! May we at all cost seek, my beloved brethren, to be true to His word and name until the day of Christ, for His name's sake! Amen.

R.

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