

HUMANITY GLORIFIED

In John chapter seventeen there are seven requests from the Son to the Father. The first one, at first glance, may seem strange to us. It had to do with His humanity being glorified. Listen to His prayer:

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” - John 17:4,5.

As the eternal Son, one would think that His glory was beyond doubt. Why did He ask the Father for it?

A closer look reveals that He is referring to the glorification of His human nature which He acquired on earth, the body which had been prepared for Him and in which He lived. He is asking that it be received up and into the place of glory where He had always been. He described this to Nicodemus, *“he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven” - John 3:13.* He is really praying that His manhood attain a status far beyond what normal humanity can reach.

Was the prayer answered?

Forty days after His resurrection His disciples witnessed a bodily ascension. Let us hear and ponder the words of the Angel: *“this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner (that is in a literal body) as ye have seen him go into heaven” - Acts 1.12.*

What did Stephen see as he was being stoned to death? *“He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and JESUS, STANDING ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD” - Acts 7:55.* Luke also records that Jesus spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road. Stephen and Paul were not hallucinating! They SAW and we BELIEVE!

His humanity WAS glorified. The prayer was answered. AND - THERE IS A MAN IN THE GLORY!

“Father I will that them thou hast given me may be with me where I am that they may behold my glory ” - John 17:24.

In this last request, He now asks the same for His disciples and all who would believe on Him, sons of a fallen Adamic race. He asks that they should be glorified with Him. This surely stretches the boundaries of human understanding.

Yet, this is what He wants. It is His final request. To see this accomplished will be the zenith of His work.

As part of the prayer, he adds "*you have loved me from before the foundation of the world*". What a plea to the Majesty on high! This must mean that the redemption and reconciliation of the Cross will be reflected in uncountable myriads of changed human beings - changed into the image of God's Son.

The hymn writer as aptly put it:

And is it so we shall be like Thy son,

Is this the grace which He for us has won;

Father of glory!, (thought beyond all thought),

In glory to Thine own blest likeness brought.

The Apostle Paul, in his dissertation on the resurrection says "...as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" - and as if to emphasise the enormity of the transformation, he adds "...flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit corruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery, we shall not all sleep but we (believers) shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal put on immortality." - 1 Corinthians 15:49-51,53.

Not we alone, Thy loved ones all complete,

In glory, round Thee there with joy shall meet,

All like Thee, for Thy glory like Thee Lord,

Object supreme of all, by all adored."

The heart is satisfied, can ask no more,

All thought of self is now for ever ore,

*Christ, its unmingled object, fills the
heart,*

In blest adoring love the endless part.

DREW CRAIG