

COMMUNION MEDITATION

"True Eternal Life"

John 17:2, 3

Mar 3, 1985

INTRODUCTION

1. Here is one of those precious intimate pictures of the heart of our wonderful Lord. Here He prays to the Father and we are given a glimpse of what He said.
2. The time had come for Him to be glorified. The hour of redemption had finally arrived. Hence, this high priestly prayer of our Lord focuses on His own person and mission to this world.
3. Give heed to the concern of the Saviour for the issue of eternal life which is to flow from His glorification. Three thoughts are expressed:

1. AN INFINITE COMPARISON v. 2

The connective "as" shows that the petition to glorify the Son (v. 1) is in complete harmony with the authority which has been given to the Son.

The aorist verb "given" points to the eternal arrangement within the Godhead which is related to the eternal decree (Psa. 2:7). Earlier He noted this (John 3:35). The word "power" is better rendered "authority" (cf. John 1:12; Matt. 28:19). The extent of His authority is "all flesh" and to be taken in its widest sense (Col. 1:10; 1 Pet. 3:22). "Flesh" points to weakness (Matt. 26:41).

2. AN INFINITE INTENTION v. 2.

It has already been indicated that the glorification of the Son will result in the glorification of the Father (v. 1). But there is more! It is stated here that without such glorification, no eternal life is given. The original enforces this by affirming that the Father has given "all" to the Son and this mean believers collectively. But to "them" individually the Son gives eternal life. Hence, a totality and an individuality is here. Communication of eternal life is on a one to one basis only!

The absolute sovereignty of God is taught here by the perfect tense of the verb "has given." The verb "give" is aorist and points to a single historical event. If the doctrine of grace is taught anywhere, it is taught here! Seven times believers are stated to be gifts of the Father to the Son (vv. 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24).

3. AN INFINITE EXPLANATION v. 3.

Here is a definition and an explanation of the terms

"eternal life." The thought is brought from the abstract to the personal.

a. Eternal life is experienced. This is the force of the verb "know." It is knowledge gained by experience. It is a habit of life because the present tense notes its continuity. Nothing static, but a growing experience. The appropriation of knowledge is essential here. The relation of two persons is inherent in the verb. Here is a knowledge which is not speculative, but practical; not theoretical, but experimental; not intellectual, but spiritual; not abortive, but saving.

b. Eternal life is related.

1) To God the Father. "Thee" is emphatic. Its apposition is "the only true God." The word "only" qualifies the whole phrase and does not deny trinitarianism. He is "true" as opposed to "false" (1 Cor. 8:5, 6). He alone fits perfectly the idea expressed by the word "God."

2) To God the Son. Only here does Christ call Himself "Jesus Christ." He affirms that all others are false Messiahs. It is important to note that you can't know God apart from Christ (John 14:6-9)--this is the inevitable sense of the connective "and." The aorist "sent" points to His deity (John 16:30), incarnation (Gal. 4:4) and redemptive mission (John 17:18).

CONCLUSION

True eternal life is a relationship with God the Father and God the Son intimately! Such knowledge is the issue of the glorification of Christ our Lord. Do you know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:13)?