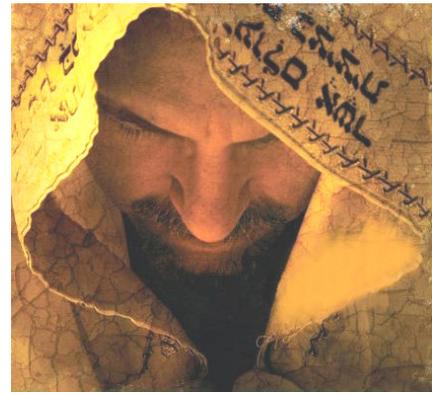


## **St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**

### **Sermon by Pastor A. E. Schultz Midweek Lenten Vesper #5. John 17:1-5 ESV March 21, 2012**



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

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in Hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

My grandson Jackson Daniel was at our house for supper just the other day. Jackson Daniel is just 1 year old. When he’s at Grandma’s house he sits in the same high chair I sat in – when I was little. Before we eat – we pray. Jackson has really small pudgy hands with short Schultz fingers. So he doesn’t really fold his hands as much as he holds them together – while we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus...” And “O, give thanks unto the Lord...” Then we say Amen. And then he claps – like celebrate supper from Jesus! Very little people pray – before they go to sleep at night – fold their hands. “Now I lay me down to sleep...” There are people in their 90s who still pray, “Now I lay me down to sleep...” Great grandmas that pray, “God bless...” And they name all their grandchildren and great grandchildren – each by name in family bunches! If you stop and think about it – it’s a wondrous thing – that you can talk to the Creator of Heaven and Earth – the Savior and Redeemer – any moment of day or night – and he will listen to you. And by grace alone – he will give you whatever you ask for – unless what you are asking for – would do more harm than good. And if what you are asking for is for your eternal good – there’s also the matter of timing! Timing is everything! And so your Heavenly Father will give you what is good for you – but not early, not late – just the right time. Today:

#### **Jesus, Our High Priest Prays!**

- 1. Jesus has eternal glory**
- 2. Jesus gives eternal life**

Today we are concentrating on John chapter 17. This has been called Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer. Jesus’ prayer can be divided into three parts. The first 5 verses – Jesus prays for himself. Verses 6-19 Jesus prays for his disciples. Verses 20-26 Jesus prays for all future believers. That means almost 2,000 years ago – Jesus was praying for you and for me! Every year – ILCW – Inter Lutheran Commission on Worship series A, B and C – there is a Sunday when we read part of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer! The first part of Jesus’ prayer – he prays about himself and about the glory that belongs to his Heavenly Father.

**After Jesus said all this...** That would be John chapters 13-16. You know what Jesus said. Chapter 13 – Jesus washed the disciples’ feet. **Do you understand what I have done for you? He asked them. You call me Teacher and Lord and rightly so for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet you also should wash one another’s feet.**

**I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them!"** John 13:12b-17 Jesus is again talking about attitude! An attitude of humility that stoops to do the lowly things—like washing the black scuff marks on the floor—downstairs—from the steps to the basement fellowship hall. An attitude of humility that does devotions for the residents on Waucoca Street. Humility that dishes out plates of food at *Bread and Roses*. That makes Easter Breakfast—or cleans up after a fellowship meal. This is what Jesus is talking about. Ushering! This is something you could do for Jesus. Pulling the weeds around the flowers in Jesus' flower beds and by the church sign. Picking up any trash or twigs or cigarettes or anything that isn't where it belongs around Jesus' house! That's John chapter 13. Remember that! If anyone ever asks you where is the account of Jesus washing his disciples feet—tell them—John chapter 13. John chapter 14. **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."** Thomas said to him, **"Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"** Jesus answered, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."** John 14:1-6 That's John chapter 14. Chapter 15 is familiar, too. **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful...I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."** John 15:1f

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, **"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup>since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.** Jesus died on the cross to give us the gift of eternal life! It happens every once in a while—someone dies in order to save others. I read about a man named Edward—a pilot of hot air balloons. It seems Edward took some 5 people—5 sky divers up some 17--18,000 feet up to jump out of his hot air balloon. When they started out—the sky was blue—the sun shining—a little fog a little haze on the horizon. Nothing to worry about—they thought. Very quickly the storm gathered. What Edward did—was make sure it was safe for the sky divers all to safely jump—before he and the balloon were literally sucked up into the thunderstorm—where his balloon collapsed—and he was sent hurtling toward the ground. Searchers in helicopters and planes and on horses and all terrain vehicles searched until they found Edward's broken body! He gave up his life—to make sure everyone else was safe! Jesus gave us his life—not to save just 5 people—but to pay for the sins of the whole world! How great is his forgiving love for sinners just like us. When Jesus was about to be arrested—tortured and crucified—his thoughts were for His Father's glory and our eternal good. That's how unselfish Jesus' love is for you and for me!

**<sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.** How well do you know Jesus? Pretty well? Jesus had half-brothers—children born of Mary and Joseph. What were their names? Do you know? Matthew chapter 13—**When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. Going to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where**

did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things? And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith. Matthew 13:53-58 Can we find Bethlehem on a map? Do we know where Jerusalem is – or Nazareth or Capernaum or Tyre and Sidon? Do we know the Old Testament well? Do we know about Hosea and his wife Gomer who sold "hugs and kisses" who had children named Jezreel, then not loved, then not my people? Gomer who was sold into slavery – then redeemed by her husband? Do you know about Ezekiel – the watchman on the wall – who warns about danger – the way we need to warn about spiritual danger – before it's too late! Do you know about the heroes of faith? Hebrews chapter 11! When there is nothing good to watch on TV – read Chapter 11. Read about real heroes! **And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheep skins and goatskins destitute, persecuted and mistreated – the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. They were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had prepares something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect!** Made perfect! Think about that – perfect – nothing missing – nothing lacking – made whole and complete – set part for God! Flawless because we are completely and entirely set apart for God!

<sup>4</sup> **I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.** From the cross Jesus said with a strong voice, "It is finished!" *Finished!* The older I get – the more I am painfully aware of all the things I have started – and not finished! I have branches from trees that have sentimental value – that I would like to whittle into crosses. I have a doll house that I started about 20 years ago to build for my daughters – I have most of the walls and most of the floors cut out – but they are all in a stack! I have 2 copies of the blueprints because I lost the first – bought a second – then found the first. That's not finished. I have a sparrow on a little branch of a pussy willow – that's only just begun. I have 2 swords and 3 machetes that need plaques to mount them. It's spring. How is your lawn? Any branches down? Do you know how to prune an apple tree? Do you have any patches of crab grass or quack grass – that you are supposed to kill – then dig up – then replace the top soil and reseed? Don't get me started on painting! Whenever Jesus calls us home – we will leave behind a zillion projects only started. It is to the glory of God – that the job of washing away all our sins is finished!

<sup>5</sup> **And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.** *Before the world existed!* That's a difficult saying – before the world existed! 164 years ago – Wisconsin became a state and St. Luke's became a congregation! That's a long time! 500 years ago – Martin Luther was preaching and writing. 2,000 years ago – Jesus was walking around the Sea of Galilee – preaching and teaching. 3,000 years ago – King

David was building the city of Jerusalem. Noah and his family were on the ark some 4,300 years ago. Before that—before Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel and a world of violence. Before all that—there was God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The disciple Jesus loved wrote about this—the beginning of his Gospel. **<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.** John 1 This is part of the essence of our faith—that we believe in the Trinity--Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is not something we understand or comprehend. We accept it by grace through faith because it is Scripture and it is truth. When we come home to Heaven much more of this will make sense—when we see the glory of the Risen Christ. Amen!