

Sermons on John 17 – By Samuel Pierce – Sermon 20,

Joh 17:24

Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

We have gone over the former parts of this chapter, which contains the prayer offered up by our most precious Lord Jesus Christ, immediately before his Passion. In it he opens his whole heart to his church, and pours out his whole soul for them. In that part which concerns himself he gives us an opportunity to look at, and view over his personal, ancient, and primordial glories; how he shone forth before all worlds, in the sight and view of his being God-man, as the first-born of all Jehovah's thoughts, purposes, and designs towards all on earth, and all in heaven; so as that we may truly say, he there opens heaven to our view. It is true blessedness for us to be contemplating him, as he there shines forth, and there speaks to his Father on the subject of his own glorification. When we view and review that part of his prayer which more immediately (though not exclusively of his ministers, churches, people, and saints) belongs to his apostles, we have a most divine evidence given us of his love. Of the originality and spring-cause of it; of the fixation of it; of the immutability of it; of the way in which he had made it known unto them; of his care and concern for them; his pleas and arguments; his petitions and requests, which he offered up to his Father on their behalf. In all this he so sets open his heart, that we may know all in it is love; yea, love to us; and in the real view and apprehension of it, live in the full and free belief of it; and therein and thereby find good cause for praising him all the way to glory.

In the part which more immediately concerns his whole church, down to the last moment of time, there is an account given of the union and communion of all the elect, in and with him, and in and with the Father in him. The prayer runs thus: That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. At the latter day Christ will shine forth as the Man in God, as one person with the only begotten Son of God; as the Glory-man, Jehovah's fellow, as God-man. And the elect Bride and Spouse of Christ will then shine forth in Christ, her glory-head; and then they will be perfected in their union-glory, by seeing him as he is. They will then shine forth openly and manifestatively in him, their glory-head, so as to appear to the rest of mankind, who will be present at that day, and see the issue of God's decrees, that Christ was the sent one of the Father. Our Lord's words, That they world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. The world are the part of mankind, who have no part in the union our Lord has been speaking of. The time intended in our Lord's words, when they shall know this union, is at the latter day. Then says Christ to his Father, they shall know by the saints' union with me, and by them as thus perfected in one, I in them and thou in me; this shall be so conspicuous to all the world, that they shall know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. They will be convinced of this, when they shall see me appear in thy glory, as at that day I shall; which will constrain them to acknowledge, that I am one with thee. When they shall see such an union of my church, in me, and thee, and the saints filled with such a glory as they shall then appear in, they shall then know, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. They shall have outward evidence, that thou lovedst me as their Head of union to them, and for that nearer union which I have with thee. Thou hast loved them as my body, and for

my sake. Our Jesus having uttered himself on the subject of union and communion to the uttermost, and carried it down to the last day, and to the dawn and breaking forth of eternal glory, on his Spouse the church, looks forwards to the ultimate glory; saying, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. The words are deep: the love of Christ in uttering them is unspeakable; the truths contained in them are most truly divine. I do not call it a petition; no, nor a request; it seems to be in the language of demand. We may observe, the longer Christ prays, the more his heart is drawn forth: he cannot speak out to his Father, and for his people, but his very soul is further and further inflamed with affection unto them; he cannot be contented to be in heaven without them; his will is, they should be where he is. Our union to God, is founded on our union to Christ; he is by personal union one with the Son of God; as God-man he hath a personal glory. Christ is the words now before us, speaks as God-man, as Mediator and Head of union to us. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. As these words are, and contain the uttermost blessedness saints can enjoy in heaven, and contain the uttermost of Christ's love to them, it will be very necessary for you, and me, to be looking up to the Lord the Spirit, for his guidance and teaching, whilst I attempt to open and explain these words unto you. They are the greatest our Lord ever uttered; they contain Christ's will to his Father on the behalf of his people. It is his will, his whole church should be advanced to the state of ultimate glory, that the union between him and his Bride should be perfected by beholding his glory. This glory was given unto him; so was the church also given unto him; and as he was loved in his election, from everlasting, so was the church in him, and were chosen in him, and out of that love given unto him. To cast my text into form and order, will be the best means of securing the

treasures of grace and glory contained in it. With this design, I will divide it thus:

First, we have here Christ expressing his will to his Father, concerning those given unto him. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.

Secondly, our Lord's reason for this, That they may behold my glory:

Thirdly, I will inquire what this glory is. It is a given one, My glory which thou hast given me.

Fourthly, the reason assigned why the Father gave this glory to Christ, For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. These are the particulars. May the Lord the Spirit be with me of a truth, whilst I attempt to explain them! And, first,

We have here Christ expressing his will to his Father, concerning those elect persons given unto him, for whom he had laid himself out in prayer for.

The elect were, and are, and ever will be, dear to Christ; he will everlastingly love, value, and esteem them, as the gift of his Father's love to him; as the very ones who were from all eternity preordained to behold, to admire, and adore him in his person and glory, as being that very thing they were ordained for, more than for their own glory; which our Lord mentions not, for it ariseth from beholding his. Thou hast, O Father! Chosen me, first and primarily, for mine own glory, in thy first and primitive intention; and thou hast chosen them in me, that their ultimate blessedness might arise, from their beholding my glory. He addresses himself at the throne, on the behalf of his elect, with the term, Father, just as he did when he began his prayer, without any addition: Father, I will. This is expressive of his Father's will, being equally engaged with his own

in the matter here expressed concerning the given ones, and their being admitted to the state of ultimate glory, there to behold his glory; the glory of his person, which is the height of his glory in heaven, where it is they are ordained to behold it. Father, I will. These words are spoken by way of demand and authority, say some. How far it may be proper so to express ourselves, I leave you to judge: I should rather say, they are uttered as expressive of the whole of Christ's will concerning all the elect. We can never sound the immensity of grace contained in them; no; it will not be comprehended in heaven itself. When saints behold Christ's glory, they will never be able to conceive of the grace of God, from whence all originates, as it is in his own heart. To behold Christ, agreeable to what is here meant by our Lord, will far exceed all enjoyed in the resurrection-state; it will transcend all which saints will be filled with, when the union glory shall break forth upon them; this will be so far above all, as that hereby in the highest sense, and to the utmost degree of creature-capacity, God will be All in All. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. The elect and given ones are, and will be for ever, in the heart, in the eye, and mind of Christ. His own personal glory will not cause his love in the least to decay; it will not take his mind from them. No words on earth; no thoughts in all the minds of glorified saints in Christ's immediate presence in glory, can ever fully conceive the love of Christ, to the elect and given ones. He mentions to his Father, that these persons, for whom it is his will that they should see his glory, were very precious unto him, because he gave them unto him; he cannot be content without they are with him where he is. Surely nothing can convey to the mind, under the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, a more vast idea of the heart of Christ towards his beloved than such words as these. I would, therefore, instead of attempting to give any account of the love expressed in these words, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, look up to the Holy Ghost, and entreat him so to shine on these words, and thereby let in such light on the minds of his people, as may reflect such a knowledge, and sense of his love upon

them, as may raise their hearts unto an higher conception and admiration of his love than ever. Oh, thou Holy Ghost! Look down upon the elect and beloved of God! Make known Christ more fully unto them! Give them to look at these words, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. From hence do thou lead them so to know the will of Christ concerning them, as to raise up their expectations, and fix their hopes, more and more on him. It being his will they should be in heaven where he is, do thou lead them to have their conversation with him in heaven. As he hath expressed his will to his Father on their behalf, concerning the uttermost blessedness they can enjoy; do thou, Holy Spirit! Lead out their minds to contemplate this! Beloved, hereby it is you and I shall have a blessed, spiritual, intuitive knowledge of our Lord's words, and they will have their most blessed effects upon us. I must add, the further I advance in this most wonderful Prayer of our Lord's, the greater the mysteries contained in it appears. In the beginning of it, we have Christ giving an account of his having emptied himself, to enrich his church; of his laying aside the glory which he had with the Father, before the world was, for the salvation of the church. Then we have a most glorious account of the love of Christ to his church, all the while she remains here below. Then we have an account of the union glory, which will break forth upon the church at her Lord's second coming, in his kingdom and glory; and here we have a glorious declaration of the utmost of Christ's will, concerning the elect and given ones. Nothing will content him; but they must live in the same heaven with him; nothing short of their seeing his glory will content his vast mind. As he prayed for his own glorification, (verse 5) And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own-self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. And so ends his prayer for himself, because he had said the utmost; this being the crown of all, to shine forth in the same glory which he had with the Father before the world was. So here, in his close and last word for his people, it is for the perfection of their blessedness; that they may be raised as high as they can; that they may be where he is; that they may behold his glory. And this is the

very essence of all the perfection in glory, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. Thou hast constituted me to be their Head, I stand in that relation unto them. They are mine, in union to my person; they are my portion, my treasure, my joy, my glory. I, as their Mediator and Head, express my will, Father, unto thee. I will that they all, each and every individual of them, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. I proceed to my next head of this discourse.

Secondly, to observe our Lord's reason for willing his church and people should be where he is; he expresses it thus, That they may behold my glory.

Our Lord's glory is great in the salvation of his people; they have a spiritual perception of it now, and will have a much greater apprehension of it when removed from this vale of tears, when they are absent from the body, and present with the Lord. As soon as the Lord is pleased to dismiss any of his saints from the body of sin by death, they are immediately admitted to heaven, and there they behold Christ's glory. Heaven is the habitation of all saints, upon their departure from the body; heaven stands open to receive them, as soon, and immediately upon their dissolution. Christ wills, they should be where he is; his will cannot be frustrated; his will, and his Father's, is one and the same. Therefore, he says to his beloved, Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And when he introduces his beloved into it, he speaks the same language: come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. The state departed saints are in, is a state of glory; they are with the Lord of Glory; they behold the Lord of Glory; they see Jesus, and behold his glory. In this sight they live forever. It is the perfection of grace to behold Jesus; to look on him; to see him. We see Jesus; we would see Jesus. These are the real exercises of a spiritual mind on earth.

We see, we behold, the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ whilst we remain this side of heaven, we shall but see and behold his glory when in heaven; yet these sights of him are very different, and also by very different mediums. Here we see Christ by faith, there we shall behold him by vision. Here we apprehend, and behold him through the gospel, as the medium thereof; there we shall see him by vision, and thereby have an intuitive knowledge of him let in upon our minds. The apostle says of himself, and other believers, We all with an open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. If our Lord's will is, that his members, his saints, the given ones, whom the Father gave him, to be his Bride and Spouse from everlasting, and for whom he gave himself, and on whom he bestows himself, that they should be where he is, to behold his glory; it follows from hence, that his heart is set upon this; which is a wonderful expression of his love to his body the church. It is not sufficient for him to be in glory, except his people are also. Therefore, he says, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. I would here observe that election, with the father's giving the elect to Christ, are in such a perfect unison as not to be dissolvable. Our Lord's relation to his church, his redemption wrought out on the behalf of his church, are in perfect agreement. The sanctification and glorification of his whole church, and every member thereof, is all as a golden chain linked together; they cannot be separated. Our Lord never forgets his union and relation to his people, nor does he ever leave out his Father's interest in them. Even when their uttermost perfection, in eternal blessedness, is spoken of, it is expressly uttered by him to his Father, They also whom thou hast given me. They were everlastingly precious in thy sight; they will to everlasting be so in mine. Therefore, it is I will they should be where I am, that they may behold my glory, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Christ-glory is the heaven of heaven of heavens in glory. Our Lord here informs us what heaven will consist of. It will be in a vision of him; it will consist in beholding his glory.

Like as all the glory of the sun is subjectively in the sun, and in the planets, creatures, ourselves, but susceptible, we are but the receivers of it; so all the glory of saints in heaven, is not inherently in them, it is in Christ for them, just as all grace is; he imparts it unto them, and thereby they receive and enjoy it. And because they must be where he is to behold his glory, therefore it is they must be in heaven, that they may behold him. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. If to behold Christ in his glory is heaven, then let us keep this in remembrance: our blessedness in heaven will not be independent of Christ; our blessedness in glory will not be inherent in ourselves; we shall there be perfectly and entirely dependent on the Lord; our heaven of glory will be received out of his fullness; we shall see him as he is, and be swallowed up in the fruition of him for ever and ever. That they may behold my glory. You see how the heart of Christ breaks forth as he comes to a close. Just as it is with real and renowned saints, who are favored with extraordinary communion with God, when they draw towards the conclusion, they exceed in their address to God, beyond what went before; just so it is here. Our Lord speaks this when out of heaven; but he speaks as though he was just to the next moment to enter into it; he had a prospect of it; he wants his people to be to the end of time the better for it; he therefore utters himself on their behalf, as he had never done before. The subject he speaks of is glory, his own glory; the glory in which he shines forth at the right-hand of the Majesty on high; the glory which he had been praying for in these words, at the 5th verse. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. This glory he had in view when he says, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. He could not have his own glory in view, but he has the glory of his church also; she being his social companion, who was to enjoy glory with him to everlasting. The beholding of Christ's glory is the medium of glory to the saints in heaven; theirs is to come out of his; it is by seeing him; it is by their beholding his glory. He had before

said, And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. And now it is beyond all this: Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. This therefore, must be a glory beyond the former; a glory which cannot be communicated; a glory which is in Christ, God-man, personally and peculiarly his own; a glory which it is his will his church shall behold, and in the views of it be swallowed up for ever. It is the uttermost they can be admitted unto; and they must be admitted to behold Christ's glory, because it is his will they should. He says, Father, I will. And the Father's will, the Son's will, and the Spirit's will, are one in this. So that saints must be admitted to the beatific vision of Christ, and this will be the perfection of the glory-union to everlasting: beyond this they cannot go. In this vision of Christ's glory, they will be filled with inconceivable glory; their minds, their understandings, their will, will be swallowed up: here they will so center in the Eternal Three, as their portion and inheritance, as to be for ever swallowed up in communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the fountain and spring of life everlasting. But all this is but a preliminary to my third head of this present sermon. I will, therefore,

Thirdly, inquire, what this glory is which Christ designs here. When he says, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. It is a given one: the glory which thou hast given me. I must go back to the fifth verse, where our Lord speaks on this subject for the first time in this chapter. His words are these: And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. The glory he was there speaking of was the glory of his person, or his personal glory as God-man, the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. This glory he had with the Father before the world was; this glory he there prays for; and

this glory he now shines forth in at the right hand of the Majesty on high. And this glory is a given glory unto him; it is not his essential glory abstracted from the manhood, but is the glory which results from the personal union of the Son of God and the man Christ Jesus. The Second Person, his subsisting in an human nature, or his being God-man, dependeth wholly on the ordination of God; and that, says Dr. Goodwin, in respect of his being the Second Person, singly considered, or in respect of that human nature that was united to him. First, it cannot be said to be a natural due to the Second Person to be made man. And, secondly, much less was it a due to that nature of man assumed to be made one person with the Son of God. Christ's personal glory, is the glory of the very Godhead, shining forth in and shining through his human nature. The glory of his person is his birthright as the Son of God. Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Heb 1: 4.

The Lord Christ shines forth in his personal glory before the Father and Spirit, now and evermore; and he will, when the whole work and office of his mediation is fully accomplished, shine forth in the view of all his saints in all his personal glory, and be so seen by them, as for the glories of his person to be reflected on them, and they will be favored with such views of him, as God-man, as will for ever satiate their souls, and fill them with holy and utterable admiration and glory. I have, when speaking on the personal glory of Christ, in the course of these sermons, said all I could, according to the gift given me of God; I have, therefore, nothing more to say of it now, only that it is all of gift. The union of the man Christ Jesus to the Son of God is altogether of grace; that the man should be taken into union with one of the persons in the incomprehensible Godhead, is all of grace; the glory, therefore, which is bestowed, and which cannot but follow the personal union of our nature to the Son of God is free favor; it is the highest instance of grace and sovereignty. And our Lord's personal glory is his own; it is essential in him; it cannot but be so, because he is one with God the Son, who

dwells in the man assumed into union with himself, so as to fill the human nature thus taken into personal union with all the fullness of God, as for all the glories of the divine nature, and all the essential perfections of Godhead, to shine forth to the uttermost manifestation of them in God-man, to the glory of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to the eternal delight of all saints. This glory I am speaking of is not the essential but the personal glory of Christ. It is the glory of the man, who is made one person with the Son of God; it is the glory which doth result from the personal union of our nature, to the only begotten Son of God; such a glory as all who see, and will for ever see it, will acknowledge it to be such as can only reside in him who is the only begotten Son of God. This glory, that is, the glory of the personal union, is all of grace; and all the glory which follows upon it is all of grace; therefore our Lord says here, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. This is the uttermost demand our Lord makes to his Father on the behalf of his people, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. As this is the uttermost of Christ's will, for his beloved Spouse, members, brethren, and friends, it opens a vast view to the mind enlightened from the Word, and by the Spirit, concerning the infinity of delight our Lord must take in them. After all his mediatory glories have been displayed, and a full shine of them have been so reflected on the saints at the coming of Christ with all his saints at the latter day, as will yield unspeakable satisfaction to all the elect in the resurrection state; when the glories of Christ will be so great, and he will so openly manifest himself in the new heavens, and the new earth, as to be personally present with them, and fill them with all the fullness of God; yet even this will not content his vast mind. His pleasure is that his church shall be further advanced, even to the uttermost glory they can enjoy, and that is to see him in his glory; they cannot partake of it, but he wills they shall see him in it: Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. It was given to Christ in predestination; he wore it before all worlds; he

was graciously pleased to lay it aside when he became incarnate, and which, on his finishing his work, he prayed for; and which, on his entrance into heaven, he was glorified with; not in consequence of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross; no, the glory which he acquired thereby, and which he sustains, and will for ever wear on that account, is a different glory: that is a mediatory glory; he is glorified with the Father and the Spirit as the Mediator, who hath put away sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, and made his soul an offering for sin, and thereby made peace by the blood of his cross. His glory which he receives and enjoys as a Savior, is a given glory; ye he obtained it by the sweat of his brow, and by the travail of his soul. He hath the glory of shining forth as the Head of his church in glory inexpressible. This is also a glory given unto him. But his personal glory is distinct from and surpassing all these; therefore he speaks of it as what is to be openly and visibly manifested, after all these have been fully discovered. Our Lord's words were, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. These words, according to the order of them, as I conceive, carry us beyond the day of judgment; they carry us to the state of ultimate glory, when and where our Lord will shine forth fully and openly in all his personal glory; and to be admitted to a sight of him in his personal glory will be the utmost summit of glory, his saints can be admitted unto. He as God-man, in his personal glory, will be the object in whom, and by beholding his person and his glory, we shall be completed in everlasting happiness. God the Father, Son, and Spirit, shall be ALL in ALL, to him God-man; and Christ in his person shall appear, with the fullness of the Godhead dwelling personally in him, and the brightness of the glory of God shining in the human nature, which he can never lay down nor divest himself of, but shall be as he is. But as he was constituted an Head, an Husband to his church, unto us, and we chosen as fellows and companions with him, he will be the object and efficient of our happiness for ever, by our beholding his glory. I have quoted a good deal of this from Dr. Goodwin, and am freely willing to make my acknowledgments.

Thus, I hope, some light hath been thrown on these words, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. May the Lord the Spirit open the glories of Christ to our minds from the written word, and reflect them so on our spiritual understandings, that we may have some inward and heavenly conceptions of the personal glory of our most precious Lord, as may increase our desires after a full and open view of him, in his eternal kingdom and glory! The personal union of Christ to the Son of God, is the foundation of his personal glory. He, as God-man, is the foundation of our union to God; our glory, both of sonship and possession, of our being the sons of God, and being heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, is founded upon our union with Christ. He being an heavenly man, the Lord from heaven, and it being his habitation; he being there, we must be, in due season, where he is. As he has the uttermost perfection of glory in himself, he being the Lord of Glory, we are to be admitted to behold him in his glory, which when we do, we shall be eternally and for ever swallowed up therein. I can say no more concerning it. The subject though true, yet it is infinite. I would add, of all subjects, none so calculated to spiritualize the mind. If saints were living in the daily exercises of their minds therein, they would be very dead to all inferior subjects. Sin, and the world, cannot have their influence when and where the Lord's people are engaged on the glories of Jesus. If all is gift to the God-man, how much so to us! If the Father's love to him, be the fountain from whence all his royalties, titles, prerogatives, honors, fullness, and glory originates, then we may see what grace is. Yet it is even so. The advancement of that individual humanity, which the Son of God took into union with his person, and thereby gave subsistence with it, was as truly indebted to God's free favor as we are for being the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. O sirs! We cannot fathom the grace of the Eternal Three. We may well cry out with Paul, For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to him be glory for ever. Amen. A vision of Christ, the vision of Christ in his glory, will be the uttermost

expression of God's grace to the elect. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. The beholding Christ's glory, his personal glory, his glory as God-man, his glory as God dwelling personally in the man who is Jehovah's equal, the Lord of Hosts, this will be the complete glorification of the Spouse of Christ. We shall be eternally swallowed up in the vision of him; he will shine with all his personal glories upon us, and reflect them within us; and thus we shall be swallowed up, so as never to look off from him for ever. Then this glory will so fully possess our minds, that, as I conceive, no thought beside will ever enter into our minds. Even redemption itself, and the vast displays of grace in election, will be swallowed up in the views we shall have of the personal glories of Christ, which will be the immediate medium of communion with the Eternal Three, as will be equal to the views of Christ in his personal glory. But I must come to my last head of this discourse, in which I propose,

Fourthly, to speak of the reason assigned why the Father gave this glory we have been speaking of to Christ, For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. This is the reason assigned by Christ, why the Father gave him the glory we have been speaking of. It was all out of love; it was the gift of love. He was, as God-man, the object of the Father's ineffable love; hence he is styled the Son of his love. We have it his dear Son, Col 1: 13; but in the margin it is the Son of his love. He, as God-man, was the object of everlasting love, as he was conceived in the divine mind before all worlds, and was the first-born of all God's thoughts, council, will, covenant, purposes, and designs towards all beings, visible and invisible, all creatures and things. He was God's foundation, God's center and circumference, as it respected all his vast ends and designs, in grace, nature, and providence. I speak now of Christ as God-man. This, I confess, I have spoken before, in the beginning of this course of Sermons, largely upon; therefore I do not

mean to speak of this most deep and sublime point of divinity here, any further that to give a decent introduction to the words before me, that thereby I may make a decent close. If the Father loved Christ before the foundation of the world, then his love must be fixed on his person and his person as God-man must have been infinitely precious in his sight. If the Father's predestinating his co-equal Son, to be God and man in one person, was the fruit of love, then as his election was out of the love wherewith God loved his person, so it must be of ours also. If Christ God-man was the object of election, and his election was the fruit of everlasting love, he might well make mention of it, as he doth here; saying, For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. If he ascribes the glory which the Father had given him to be God-man, one person with the essential word, and Son of the living God, to love, expressed to him before the foundation of the world, it show his high valuation of the eternity, of the Father's love. The words are so expressed, as to lead to a contemplation on the love of complacency which the Father had expressed unto him: Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world; I will therefore that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Therefore my will is, they should be where I am, that they by beholding my glory, may have admiring and adoring thoughts of thy love to me and them, it being out of the abundance and superabundance of thy love to me, thou lovedst them. It is the overflowing's of thy love to me which falls on them; I will, therefore, that they may behold my personal glory, which thou hast given me, that from thy sight they may have the most enlarged views their minds are capable of, concerning thy love to me, and to them in me, as this will be a perfecting them in the full enjoyment of thine everlasting love. Thou hast possessed my mind with it from everlasting; thou hast taken me up into the mount of personal union and communion with thee. I have shone forth before thee in all my personal glory. I have been in thy bosom, and been admitted into a full knowledge and enjoyment of all the love of thine heart. Thou lovedst me from everlasting, and my whole person, God-man, is the

object of thine everlasting love. Thou lovedst me as the Son of God, and as the Son of Man: thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, as the Head of the whole election of grace, as the Head of my body the church. Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world as Mediator. I am in every sense the object of thy love. I would open thy whole heart to these thine, and my beloved ones. I would express it unto them most openly, and freely. I would speak out in their hearing, the secrets which have passed from everlasting between thee, and me, that they may have the clearest evidence I can give them of it in my holy word. I can add nothing to what I have said. Therefore I leave it, for thy Spirit, whom thou wilt send after my glorification, to bring to the remembrance this my prayer offered up by me unto thee. That hereby they may be led unto further knowledge of thee, and me. Mine apostles, under the direction of thy Holy Spirit, will cause it to be faithfully recorded, so that it will be continued unto the end of time. It is a memorial of all which is in my heart, and thine heart towards the elect. I will seal it therefore with confessing the reason why thou hast given me glory, Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

I have, beloved, in my very poor way, aimed to decipher, and explain, our dear Lord's words unto you. I am very sensible of my great insufficiency. I will tell you what my dear Lord hath done for me. He, by showing me, heretofore, and also now, in all I ever have spoke, wrote, and preached of, and concerning him, and also in the course of these sermons on this most important prayer, how very far, and short I come of the subject I am aiming at; from hence my Lord has really shown me, nothing of mine; no, no part of my testimony for him, is worth of his acceptance. And if he does not condescend to shine upon it, I have nothing to complain of. If he does shine on it, on any part of it, this is astonishing grace, for which I cannot but give him glorious praise. I do account it great grace in his majesty, for giving me this sight and view of my own doings. I shall never get above despising myself, and abhorring myself, and renouncing all belonging to myself, and proceeding from myself, whilst I am

out of heaven. And when I am where Jesus is, and see him in his glory, I shall be so swallowed up in him, as for ever and for ever to forget myself, and be wholly swallowed up in him. Our Lord's conclusion for his church, with these words, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, are the greatest words in the chapter, as they concern us. As his greatest request to his Father, on his own behalf was, And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was, verse 5. And with that he concludes his prayer, so far as it concerned himself. So our Lord's conclusion for his whole church, is a demand on their behalf, of heaven and glory. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. Every word is more precious than ten thousand worlds. Father, the word bespeaks the nearest and dearest relation. As it respects the relation between God and Christ, it is beyond the utmost of our ideas, or words to unfold. I will. Christ's will is in every thing which concerns his people's good. His will is often expressed as deeply engaged in their salvation. Here it is expressed by himself, and uttered unto his Father, as the good pleasure of his will, that his whole church should be completely glorified, I will that they also whom thou hast given me. It will never be out of his remembrance, that all his children, his people, his beloved ones, were given by the Father unto him. He will never cease to love them in heaven upon that very consideration. He will never forget the everlasting love of his Father, who loved all their persons in him, before the foundation of the world. I will, says Christ, that they whom thou hast given me, be with me. I love the sight of them. It is delightful to me, they should be with me. I will they should be in heaven with me. I will that they may behold my glory. I will, they should know, that thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world. And that thou hast loved them in me, from the same date. That thou hast loved me, and them in me, with the same love wherewith thou hast loved me their

head. We see then the uttermost of all the vast designs of the holy Three towards us. The ultimate of all will be, to advance the elect to such a state of immediate union and communion with God, and to admit them to such a vision of the person of Christ, as will fill them so through and through with glory, in admiring and adorning his person, as will raise up to the height and utmost pitch of blessedness. May the Holy Ghost let in some heavenly beams of his own light upon this subject, or we shall not be able to apprehend a tittle of it. Beloved, learn to study the glories and royalties, the dignities and honors, the titles and epithets, given to our Lord. In his relation to God, he is the image of God. All the essential blessedness, perfections, and fullness of the Godhead is in him. Because the Son of God is personally united unto him. It is, as he is, the image of the invisible of God, he will shine forth in the sight of all the elect, and that with such a blaze of majesty, and refulgence, as will put glory on them for ever. His glory will exceed all enjoyment. Yea, it will be beyond all communion they will have. Yet they will have communion with him who shines forth in all this glory before them. Yet his glory will be admired by them, above and beyond all. It being what in the primitive designs of the Three in Jehovah, they were principally designed for. And it will be the everlasting and infinite spring of all their eternal blessedness. Our Jesus will be glorious as an Head, as a Mediator to all eternity. Yet his personal glory will far exceed this, and in a sense will in the state of glory I am speaking of, exceed this. Oh! For deep, spiritual meditations on the subject before us. The Lord lift up our hearts where Jesus is! Surely, under the prospects Paul had, the sights, the views of Christ, God-man, he was favored with, and the certain expectation he had of living with Christ for ever cheered his mind, his words are very well suited to all these vast ideas of Christ, God-man, wrought in his mind by the Holy Ghost, which he expresses thus, Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him. May our views be the same. Amen.