

Connecting Minds

"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31)

The Gospel of John

Chapter 17:22-24

"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You have loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You, and these have known that You sent me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

"For You loved Me before the foundation of the world..." Jesus has prayed that His people would be with Him and would behold His glory. This is the reason, the argument that Christ sets before His Father for the completion of His request. It is a great argument. If rightly understood, it will bring unmeasured comfort to those who have trust in Christ. Jesus speaks of the great love between the Father and Son – "For You loved Me..." it is because of this great love for the Son that the Father will grant the request of His Son. Yes, the Father loves us in Christ. But the great guarantee of our coming into the presence of the Holy Trinity in glory is this love of the Father for the Son. We can be absolutely confident that the Father will not deny the request of the Son He loves.

We're at the conclusion of Jesus' mighty prayer of intercession for His people. Jesus says "O righteous Father..." We are reminded again of the greatness and holiness of our God. We are reminded of the personal interest He has taken in us. We are neither to be too casual with God nor too fearful of God. He is both righteous and Father. At times one aspect may seem greater than the other but both are equally true.

"The world has not known You..." Here is the great tragedy again. Jesus Christ, who is so beautiful that the saints will behold Him endlessly for eternity with joy in their hearts, is not known by the world who stands in ignorance. Christians behold His glory; unbelievers live in darkness.

We would expect Jesus to say "The world has not known You, but these have known You." But that is not what He says. He says "But I have known You..." But we might say "We do know the Father. We pray, 'Our Father...'" The truth is that we *do* know the Father, but only through the Son - "These have known that You sent Me..." We know the Father because we know Jesus Christ the Mediator, the sent One.

"I have declared to them Your name..." We looked at this "name" before. To have the "name" declared to us means to have the character of God declared to us. All that we can ever possibly know about God comes to us from Jesus Christ - "I have declared to them..."

And what is the purpose of having this knowledge of the Father? It is communion with the Father - "That the love with which You loved Me may be in them..." It is communion with the Son - "And I in them..." We're not merely in some scholastic school of learning. We're not computers, simply storing up knowledge of God in a theoretical, detached manner to be retrieved at the moment when needed. Jesus teaches us here that the love with which the Father has loved Him may also be in us. He teaches us that He Himself will be in us. This is why He declares the name to us, "and will declare it..." He says "I *have* declared... and *will* declare..." This work of intimacy, of communion is past, present and future:

TableTalk

Does your knowledge of God cause you to have a greater experience of His love to you? We can know God loves us intellectually. But do we know it experientially too?

Read John 4:14. Do you have this "fountain of water springing up into everlasting life"?