

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Unity with God through Jesus Seventh Week of Easter Tuesday, May 30, 2017
8:15 AM Acts 20:17-27; **Jn 17:1-11a** (We now relate to God just as he does, and we share in his life, and we share in his grace, and we share in his glory.)

“But they are in the world, while I am coming to you.”

This is a soliloquy and we are listening to Jesus praying. Of course it’s a literary device that evangelists developed, but it tries to show that **there is this utter internal unity between Jesus and God the Father.** Here Jesus does not refer to himself as God, but he talks about this unity between him and the Father. **This will later be explained by the doctrine of one God subsisting in three divine persons.** That’s a way of talking about this utter unity that Jesus is expressing.

But then he goes on to say that **the same sort of unity that he has with God he wants his friends to have with God.** And in fact that’s the whole mission, the whole reason he came, to elevate their lives into God, to elevate their lives into eternity. **And how does this take place?** It takes place by belief. But what kind of belief? Belief in what? **Belief that Jesus came from God,** that simple. That’s the faith in this gospel that Jesus came from God, no special terms or titles or creeds or claims, just that Jesus came from God. That’s the belief **that allows Jesus’ disciples to enter into this relationship that Jesus has with God.**

Now as the Church grew and developed, it understood that this is **the very meaning of Baptism: that we are made one with Jesus in his body.** We become part of his very body so **that we now relate to God just as he does, and we share in his life, and we share in his grace, and we share in his glory.**

Now it says here that “I will be glorified in them.” What he means is that **just as he has glorified the Father by accomplishing what he was sent to do, now the members of his body,** this incipient Church, this group of now friends, no longer slaves but friends, **will glorify**

Jesus by accomplishing the work he gave them, which is to continue the whole process he began of Christifying the world, of sanctifying the world, of **drawing people out of the world into the light of God. And this requires a great deal of endurance.**

Now in a way the suffering of Christ is in a certain way passed over here, and it tends to be passed over in the whole Fourth Gospel. But **it was passed over knowing full well that Jesus endured an enormous amount of suffering.** So passing over is not ignoring. It's saying that the suffering of Christ and the suffering of the Church and the suffering of the disciples, this kind of suffering is all temporary. It's a temporary period that must be endured, **but the glory that awaits on the other side is ineffable, indescribable.** So in a way Jesus just doesn't focus on it at all because it doesn't matter. **What really matters is going home to the Father.** This makes everything worthwhile.