

John 17:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am (Πάτερ, ὃ δέδωκάς μοι, θέλω ἵνα ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ κάκεῖνοι ὦσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ, Pater, ho dedōkas moi, thelō hina hopou eimi egō kakeinoi ōsin met' emou)—Jesus uses θέλω (thelō, 'I will, desire') expressing authority as well as affection. He wills believers' eternal presence with Him. **That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world** (ἵνα θεωρῶσιν τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἐμὴν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι, ὅτι ἠγάπησάς με πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, hina theōrōsin tēn doxan tēn emēn hēn dedōkas moi, hoti ēgapēsas me pro katabolēs kosmou)—Heaven's essence is beholding (θεωρῶσιν, theōrōsin, 'behold, gaze upon') Christ's glory (δόξαν, doxan) which He possessed πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου (pro katabolēs kosmou, 'before the foundation of the world')—His pre-incarnate, eternal glory.

This defines eternal life: not merely duration but quality—experiencing the love between Father and Son that existed before creation. The beatific vision (1 John 3:2) is seeing Christ as He truly is, sharing in the glory He had with the Father eternally. This surpasses all earthly joys.

Historical Context

This prayer anticipates Christ's ascension and believers' future glorification. Paul echoes this: 'that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection' (Philippians 3:10); 'we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is' (1 John 3:2). Heaven is Christocentric—the Lamb is its light (Revelation 21:23).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does defining heaven as 'beholding Christ's glory' differ from popular notions of heaven as eternal pleasure park?
2. What does it mean that Christ possessed glory 'before the foundation of the world'—how does this affirm His deity?
3. How should the hope of eternally beholding Christ's glory shape present priorities and values?

Interlinear Text

Πάτερ	ἣν	ἔδωκάς	μοι	θέλω	ἵνα	ὅπου	εἰμι	ἐγὼ
Father	which	thou hast given	me	I will	that	where	am	I
G3962	G3739	G1325	G3427	G2309	G2443	G3699	G1510	G1473
καὶ	οἱ	ἄλλοι	ἔμοῦ	ἵνα	θεωρῶσιν	τὴν	δόξαν	
they also	be	with	me	that	they may behold		glory	
G2548	G5600	G3326	G1700	G2443	G2334	G3588	G1391	
τὴν	ἐμὴν	ἣν	ἔδωκάς	μοι	ὅτι	ἠγάπησάς	με	πρὸ
my	which	thou hast given	me	for	thou lovedst	me	before	
G3588	G1699	G3739	G1325	G3427	G3754	G25	G3165	G4253
καταβολῆς	κόσμου							
the foundation	of the world							
G2602	G2889							

Additional Cross-References

John 17:5 (Glory): And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

John 12:26 (Parallel theme): If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

John 14:3 (Parallel theme): And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

2 Corinthians 4:6 (Glory): For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:2 (Love): Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Genesis 45:13 (Glory): And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

Matthew 25:21 (Parallel theme): His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (Glory): But we all, with 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.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (Parallel theme): Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Luke 12:37 (Parallel theme): Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.