

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 εἰμὶ ἐγὼ κάκεῖνοι ὥσιν 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 ἡγάπησάς 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 ἦν ἔδωκάς μοι θέλω τίνα ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγώ¹
Father which thou hast given me I will that where am I
G3962 G3739 G1325 G3427 G2309 G2443 G3699 G1510 G1473

κάκεῖνοι ὡσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ τίνα θεωρῶσιν τὴν δόξαν²
they also be with me that they may behold glory
G2548 G5600 G3326 G1700 G2443 G2334 G3588 G1391

τὴν ἐμὴν ἦν ἔδωκάς μοι ὅτι ἡγάπησάς με πρὸ³
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.