



## Sermon Reflection Guide; John 17:24

1. Have you ever considered what Jesus wants, what he desires? How do you think most people would answer this question?
2. Reflect on the Biblically clear reality that God's sovereign choice (election) of us proceeds our human choice to follow him. What does this make you feel or think about?
3. Why do you think most people want to go to heaven? Why do you want to go to heaven? Why does Jesus want you to go to heaven?
4. In what way should it be a great comfort to us that Jesus wills that the elect be at home in heaven with him?
5. What does Jesus have in mind when he speaks of his people seeing his glory?
6. How does being at home with Jesus in heaven and seeing his fully revealed glory give us hope and comfort here and now?

### Sermon Summary

John 17:24 is a verse that contains Jesus' heart, his wants, his desire, his will for all of his people. The entire high priestly prayer tells us what is on Jesus' mind and what is important to him just before he faces the cross. This verse in particular gives us a special glimpse into the heart of Christ and what he desires above anything for the people he is about to die for.

In this single verse we learn of two of Jesus' great desires for his followers. First, Jesus desires that we would be with him and second, he desires that we would see his glory. First, let's focus on Jesus' desire for his people to be with him. Jesus says, "*Father*, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am..." Even before we get to Jesus' desire, we should take note of how Jesus addresses the first person of the Trinity. He began this prayer in John 17 and this specific request by calling God, "*Father*". *Father* is clearly Jesus' preferred term of reference for the first person of the Trinity. Jesus calls God, *Father* over 120 times in the Gospel of John alone. Again, we see it is the New Testament pattern that we pray to God the *Father*, in the name of God the *Son*, and through the power of God the *Holy Spirit*.

Jesus says, "*Father*, I *desire*..." more literally Jesus says, "*Father*, I *will*...". So, there is something that Jesus wants, that he desires, that he wills to see happen. What Jesus wills to see happen is that some people would be with him. We must ask ourselves who is Jesus saying that he wants to be with him. Jesus says he wants "those whom you have given me" to be with him. This language of a people chosen by God the *Father* and given to God the *Son* is all throughout the Gospel of John. The point here is that Jesus is praying for those of us who have by faith trusted in Christ alone for salvation. These are the ones whom have been chosen by God the *Father* and given to God the *Son* to save. Although Christians can remember a point at which they chose to follow Christ, this verse reminds us that God's sovereign choice of us proceeded our choice of him.

Jesus is expressing his desire to God the Father, so what is it that Jesus desires? First, Jesus desires that his followers would be with him where he is. When Jesus says this, he has eternity in heaven in mind. Jesus has in his mind as he prays the time after he has died, been resurrected and ascended into heaven, and he desires that every one of his people will join him there in heaven. Christian, Jesus longs for the fullness of life and the fullness of intimacy with you in heaven. It is not that Jesus simply wants you to make it to heaven. He wants you to be in heaven *with* him. That is the happiness of heaven, being present with Christ. Matthew Henry writes, “Christ speaks here as if he did not count his own happiness complete unless he had his elect to share with him in it.” Do you know that Jesus looks forward to and longs to have you with him in heaven? RC Sproul writes, “The greatest benefit of Christianity is not the forgiveness of sins; that’s simply a means to an end. The greatest benefit that we have is access to the presence of God and His Son. That’s where Jesus wants us to be.” It is with this thought that Jesus comforts his disciples when they are deeply troubled in John 14:1-3, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” Jesus’ words in both John 14 and 17 are so much more than a good southern saying, “make yourself at home”. What Jesus says is that he wants us to be at home *with* him in heaven.

We see that Jesus wants, desires, wills that his people be at home with him in heaven. So, what does this mean for our lives here and now? Jesus prays this way for his disciples benefit then and Christians benefit now. Jesus’ words in John 17:24 are a declaration of certainty. They are a declaration that one day Jesus will bring all of his people all the way home to be with him in heaven. This verse is intended to be a sweet comfort to us today. This is a comfort to us because it is Jesus alone who can bring us home to heaven with him. If we ever think we can earn our way to Jesus in heaven we have gravely misunderstood the Gospel. It is only through the perfect life, sacrificial and atoning death, and resurrection of Christ that we can be saved. Only our faith in Christ allows God to credit us the righteousness of Jesus that we lack. Jesus desires that we be with him in heaven and Jesus alone can accomplish this.

Not only does Jesus desire that we be with him at home in heaven, but we are also told that Jesus desires that we see his glory. Jesus says, “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.” Although Jesus’ disciples caught glimpses of Christ’s glory in the transfiguration, Jesus has in mind his eternal glory that was hidden in the incarnation, his glory from before the foundations of the world. Jesus also has in mind his “mediatorial glory”, the glory earned by Christ’s accomplishment of redemption. Calvin writes, “At that time they saw Christ’s glory as someone shut up in the dark sees as feeble and glimmering light through small cracks. Christ now wants them to go on to enjoy the full brightness of heaven...the full vision of his glory.” This is the true hope of heaven that John would later write about in Revelation, that in heaven we are with God and see him as he is. Thomas Manton writes, “We go to heave to study divinity in the Lamb’s face.”

Jesus desires that his people be with him at home in heaven to see him as he is in all his glory. This is great hope and the great destination of all Christians. We must constantly remind ourselves that dying is not leaving the land of the living for the land of the dead, for the Christian our death means leaving the land of the dying and going to the land of the living. Halleluiah, that we have such a great Savior and such a great hope.