

LENT DEVOTIONAL



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SCRIPTURE

JOHN 17:1-11

1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. 5 So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name

that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

DEVOTION

Brandon Anthony Shaw '19

Two things come to mind when I read this prayer of Jesus, especially as I zero in on verse 3: namely, that “eternal life,” which is to “know” Jesus, is now, and that we are called to “know” Jesus, not in some distant or abstract sense, but personally.

First, eternal life is defined as knowing Jesus, and we can do that now. We don't have to wait to expire from this sin-cursed world to know Jesus. Sure, post-mortem eternal life is the best, because there will be no more destructive cancers to torment us. There will cease to be places of terror, like Auschwitz or the Gulag. Tears will be wiped away forever by the Lord, and the former trials of life will be in the rearview mirror. However, eternal life is to “know” Christ, and that is something we can very much do now as we wait for God's kingdom to come in fullness.

Second, eternal life is to “know” Christ. To “know” Christ is not simply intellectual acknowledgment or assent of him; it is actual, relational knowledge and experience of him. The demons, after all, know about Jesus but do not “know” Jesus. To “know” Jesus is to trust in him as the one who lived the perfect life we could never live, to embrace him as the one who died in our place (and thus saved us from everlasting ruin), and to rely on him and his resurrection as what gives us hope that we, too, might be raised from death to everlasting life one day. To know Jesus is to be in relationship with this risen Savior-Lord. We are called to “know” Jesus in a deep and intimate way. We must not be content to merely know about him but experience him as friend.

PRAYER

Father, may we comprehend that eternal life in Jesus is now. Furthermore, may we not be merely content to know about Jesus but actually experience him daily. May we share his gospel so that others might know him, too, and thus glorify you. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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