

9609

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1993

DEITY MANIFESTED IN FLESH

Speaker: Bro. John Knowles

Study #4

That They May Be One 'Even As We Are One'

Reading: John 17:1-26

Good Morning Brethren and Sisters.

We come to the halfway mark in our studies at the school, and as far as Session 2 is concerned, we've reached Study #4, and as we have indicated in our first three studies so far, we've endeavoured to divide this particular theme up into the two parts: The glory in a Man and the glory in a Multitude.

This, of course, is under the general theme of Deity Manifested in Flesh. And when we, of course, look at the chart which bro. Thomas had prepared, we recognize that when we look at that man in the middle, the Who I will Be, that as far as the chart is concerned, it does obviously refer to one man, but we do know also that the Lord Jesus Christ is also a multitude. We talked about the multitudinous body of Christ. And so in this concluding series of studies, in Studies 4, 5 and 6, we want to look at the way in which Deity is manifested in a multitude now.

It's going to be obvious, surely, that these studies are going to be of a very exhortational nature. Our bro. Bill [the presider] made the comment that John chapter 17 is a very beautiful chapter. I'm sure we're all quite familiar with John 17, with the reading tomorrow which is the first of John 4, and with the reading for the following day which is Ephesians 4. But I do hope, brethren and sisters, that we are going to see them perhaps in a new light. I don't mean that we are going to learn new or different things about them, but that we are going to see them now in the context of God Manifestation.

And so as we intimated, if the first study was 'The Word Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us', and it dealt with the glory in a man as the 'representative man, His Oneness with Us', what we want to consider this morning is, how that the Lord in his prayer, prayed that 'they may be one, as We are One', concerning the body of Christ, our oneness with Him. So we want to look this morning at, what we might say, the principles of that oneness, the structure of the divine family - our relationship to God through Christ, as set out in John 17 principally. And then, tomorrow, we want to look more

particularly at the characteristics that we must manifest as part of that family.

So in a sense, there's going to be principle and practice, and we'll leave Study 6 until we get there. But I'd just like to remind ourselves that we are actually basing our studies, although not very specifically, on Eureka. Nevertheless, we are endeavouring to take our themes from that section in Eureka entitled, 'Deity Before Manifestation in Flesh, Deity Manifest in Flesh and Deity Manifest in Spirit'.

I'd just like to read a short extract from pages 103 and 104, volume 1 of Eureka, which is part of this section of Deity Manifested in Flesh. And there bro. Thomas makes this particular comment. He says, 'when these, that is the people that he has been speaking about previously, 'come to know the Deity and to believe His promises with honest and good heartedness, as initiated in Jesus, and to do his commandments, they obtain participation in 'The Sonship', and become, even in this present state, Elohim, or sons of the Deity. In view of this moral manifestation of Deity in flesh, termed by Peter 'the divine nature', one of these Elohim (rather interesting way of putting it) in writing to the others of them, says, 'Behold what great love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Deity (of course he's quoting John). It's interesting how he calls him one of the Elohim. Isn't it beautiful, that in a moral sense now, he can say 'one of those Elohim'.

John, writing to others, says, 'behold what great love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God.' That, of course, is actually our title for tomorrow. So we won't say too much more about that. But coming down a little bit further, on page 104, he makes this comment, 'From the premises before us, I presume that the reader will have perceived the development of 'a Name' - a name of Deity.'

You see that's what he's been talking about, that's what we've been talking about, The Word became Flesh, Yahweh Elohim, this is My Name Forever, Yahweh our Elohim is One Yahweh. You see, a study of the name and titles of Deity is not just an academic exercise. There's a certain amount of academic exercise necessary to start with. He says, 'the reader will by this time perceive the development of 'a name - a name of Deity. The name is a divine manifestation. The Eternal Increate manifested in Jesus by Holy Spirit. This manifestation is expressed in the formula, 'of the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' (Matt.28:19.). This is the name which is above every name, and embraces everything attributable to the Father and the Son. To become an Eloah, a believer of the right stamp must be immersed into this name. He will then be 'in the name' and, consequently, 'in Deity the Father and the Lord Jesus Anointed'. A multitude may be in this name contemporaneously, that is, all at the same time and together. They in Deity, and Deity in them, by faith and obedience.'

And you see, that's where we're moving to now - the glory in a man, one Eloah, the glory in a multitude, Elohim even now, he says, in that moral sense of the term. And that is why we can be called 'children of God' now, but 'sons of God' when manifested in power and immortality in the age to come. But more of that in our study tomorrow.

But just to complete what he says, he says, 'Thus, the name which comprehended only two in the beginning, (that is the Father and the Son), becomes 'a great multitude which no man can number'. And in reference to these, Jesus, in the days of his flesh, said to his Father,' and then he quotes an extract from John chapter 17, which is our reading and our basis of our study today, 'I have manifested thy Name unto the men (the apostles) which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.'

Remember that expression brethren and sisters, that's going to become, perhaps the key expression for this morning - Those which thou hast given me, those which the Father has given unto the Son, so they might be constituted Elohim even now.) 'Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE even as we. Sanctify them in thy truth; thy word is truth. I pray for them also who shall believe through their word unto me; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE IN US: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made PERFECT IN ONE'. (John 17:6-23)

Words that we read, not only this morning, but many times. But we hope to see this, brethren and sisters, in the context of this subject of Deity in Manifestation in Flesh. So we want to come back then, to this concept of the divine family, which we've been looking at. And what we do want to consider this morning, is the concept of the relationship that exists between these mortal saints on earth in this present dispensation, styled the 'children' (the teknon, tekna, tekion, tekios, whichever form of the word is applicable) 'of God', so that John could say,'now are we the children of God', having been born of water.

Oh, no! Not yet born of spirit. We are not born of spirit until we come forth from the grave and are changed into immortality, and then we become in the fuller sense of the term, the sons of God. But now, having been incipiently born into that family through the waters of baptism, the children of God. That is what is our relationship to the Father through the Son.

More specifically, what role does this Son play in our relationship with the Father? And that's what I think John chapter 17 brings out to us so beautifully. We know it's a beautiful prayer. In it's own right it's beautiful, but how much more beautiful it becomes when we appreciate the background of God Manifestation that our speakers this week have been dealing with.

And so, I'm sure, brethren and sisters, that none of us would ever dispute the true spiritual unity with God, and each other through the Lord Jesus Christ, is the highest of the divine ideals for which we should aim. At the same time, all of us would likewise recognize the difficulties, the difficulties that have faced brethren and sisters and

ecclesias from the earliest times in their endeavours to achieve this unity. And we want to talk about the practical problems that face us, but more particularly tomorrow and in the last study.

This morning we want to look at the 'perfection', we are going to aim for perfection. We will consider the practical outworking of it in due course. But I'm going to suggest, brethren and sisters, that it is possible that the difficulties experienced in many instances may have stemmed from a failure to understand the structure, shown in it's simplicity there - the structure and the functioning of the 'divine family'.

In this respect, we have before us a chapter here in John 17 that outlines for us the 'family structure', and highlights the important relationships existing between the various parts of the family; namely, the Father, the Son, and (quote) 'those given to the Son'.

I'd like to start with the words of the apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:9. There the apostle Peter introduces to us the basic principle upon which this family operates. And, as we are turning to 1 Peter 2:9, we might like to ask ourselves the question, what really is the purpose of our life in the truth? What is the one thing that God is trying to develop in us? And I guess there are various answers come into your minds, such as, a character like His own, and character like His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, people that he can use in the kingdom.

Yes, all of those are true. All of those are very true, but there is a specific application that Peter gives to this and which John, undoubtedly, picks up in chapter 17, and which to me, I think, focuses specifically on what we should be preparing ourselves for now, and see this life as a training ground.

1 Peter 2:9, he says, 'but you are a chosen generation, you are a royal priesthood, you are a holy nation, you are a peculiar people; that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.' A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. And so it is this priestly nature of our family work which we would like to concentrate our attention on this morning. You see, we have considered, haven't we, in our early three studies, how that when Deity was manifested in flesh, in that one Eloah, the principal work that was achieved there was a work of reconciliation in which, because Jesus Christ brought God to man and is able to take man back to God, he becomes the mediator, the intercessor, or in Bible language, the High Priest.

Now the role of the High Priest in early times was vested in the firstborn son of the family. That's were the role of the High Priest was vested. I know it because the bulk of the Old Testament deals with the Law of Moses as far as volume of lines and words and pages of paper are concerned. And, therefore, we get the idea that the law of Moses actually constituted a large part of human history. But when you look at it on a chronological scale, the period of the Mosaic dispensation and the Aaronic priesthood, it was only a comparatively short period, a 1000 or so years. Very small in comparison to 6000, nay 7000, years of history because the everlasting priesthood, the priesthood

after the order of Melchizedek, goes right through into the millennium. It started before the law and it goes on beyond the law.

And I mention this because under the Law of Moses, it was impossible for one to embody in himself, the role of both a king and a priest. But what God did say was this, He says under the dispensation of the Law of Moses, We are going to have to enact a particular form of worship which is going to be, as Hebrews would say, 'a shadowy institution'. The reason was obvious. Israel had been in Egypt for two or three hundred years - our Sunday School Instructor tells us. I quote the Sunday School Instructor because we don't know exactly how long. In that time they had long since lost sight of the promises to the fathers. And so they had to be brought out, and they had to be totally instructed in, even the simple issues of life: cleanliness, health, what to eat, what not to eat. And so all the sacrifices and offerings were there as a shadow, a shadow or a schoolmaster or a type, to point forward to Christ. And the priesthood that was set up, was likewise a shadowy institution.

The law was instituted to support that priesthood. Right? The law was instituted to support the priesthood. Some might say, ah! I thought the priesthood was there to administer the law. NO! It's the other way around. Hebrews tells us this. Hebrews tells us this - that the priesthood having been taken away, there remains no more need for the law. So the law was there as a means of supporting the priesthood, because you see, it was always God's intention that He would meet man through a priest. The sacrifice was necessary for God's righteousness to be declared, but it was always God's purpose that He would make man in a Man.

Now the Aaronic priest, of course, was imperfect. Now to get to the point. Under the law of Moses, God says, I'm going to take the tribe of Levi instead of the firstborn, which indicates by implication, that prior to the time of the law of Moses, the role of priest was vested in the firstborn son of the family. And you can see that in various illustrations down through the ages. We could, of course, take a side track (which we won't) and have a look at Melchizedek, and have a look at how Melchizedek was a true king-priest.

You see, he was before the law of Moses. When the time of the law came, (as another one of those means of indicating that the law, the Mosaic institution, the Aaronic priesthood and all such, could never give life), God divided up the priest from the king. And when a man like Uzziah tried to assume to himself that dual role he was, of course, smitten with leprosy, and so Uzziah was not to perform that role. But with the passing away of the priesthood, because a better priesthood had come with the Lord Jesus Christ, a priest after the order of Melchizedek, a priest who would minister in the things of the everlasting covenant that Hebrews speaks about, we have once again a return to the priest being vested in the firstborn son.

And you know what I said there is not really right. I said we then had 'a return to a priesthood' - that priesthood was always there, it was always there. It was just that the law was added, wasn't it? The law never replaced it.

I have a chart, I don't have it here, but some of you might have seen it before, a simple chronological chart going from B.C.4000 to A.D.3000. And you've got a little line there showing the Mosaic law, and you've got a much longer line showing the 'everlasting covenant'. You don't insert that little bit of the law of Moses into the everlasting covenant and say, the everlasting covenant went from there, then we have a break with the law of Moses, then the everlasting covenant starts again. Of course it doesn't! Men like David, who although living under the law, looked to the everlasting covenant. I mean, Psalm 51, his prayer for forgiveness, was on the basis of the fact that God's mercy would be extended to him, that David declared God's righteousness. He says, 'if there was a sacrifice I could have offered under the law, I would have offered it, but there was nothing.'

So I wasn't exactly right when I said there was a return, but I think you understand what I mean. It's just then, that so much of the scripture seems to be consumed with attention being given to the law, that we almost elevate the law out of all proportion, as far as particularly its time-setting was concerned.

Now, I'm taking a long time to say a little thing, but perhaps it's important that I take the time, but we've now said it: That Son is the Priest, because He is the firstborn son in the family.

Now can I just say something which perhaps most people know, but for those who don't, it's probably important to recognize it? The firstborn is really a title. It does in the first instance apply to the son who was the oldest son in the family, but, as we would all know, it was possible for that son to prove unworthy for that position and, therefore, lose the title of firstborn. So, I think it's kind of important to say 'firstborn' quickly rather than say 'first born', because, whilst ideally, he should have been the one who was first born, but if he proved unworthy of it, he lost the title 'firstborn'.

Who was God's first born son? Well, strictly speaking he wasn't born in the absolute sense of the term, but Adam, of course, was God's firstborn son. But he abdicated that title and it was taken from him, and that's why it says of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'I will make him my firstborn', higher than the kings of the earth. He becomes, therefore, the second Adam, the last Adam, because he is going to assume the role of priest.

You know, even back in the garden of Eden, when the sacrifice was offered, who was the priest? It was Adam, wasn't it? The sacrifice was offered, and like unto the law of Moses the skin was given to the priest in the case of the burnt offering of Leviticus 1, so the skin was given to Adam. So Adam was destined to be a priest. That, of course, we don't know much more about the story, we can't fill in anymore details. He didn't prove worthy; he was replaced by the Lord Jesus Christ. And as we know down through the ages, it seems that the exceptional almost became the rule; Abraham's firstborn son was Ishmael, and it went to Isaac. Isaac's firstborn son was Esau, and it went to Jacob; Jacob's firstborn son was Reuben, it went to Joseph; Joseph's firstborn son was Manasseh, it went to Ephraim. And so we go on.

So firstborn then, is a title that is given to somebody who earns it. It assumes that somebody has failed to live up to certain conditions and it's passed down to somebody else. Now, I'm emphasizing this point because John chapter 17 is very, very, very much the prayer of a priest - the prayer of a firstborn son.

Now the firstborn son had a lot of responsibilities. He had privileges. One of the privileges was the right of a double portion of the inheritance. That's why, of course taking an example, when the children of Israel went into the promised land, (and you look at the map there with all the tribes set out, where's the tribe of Joseph? Not there! But you see 2 tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, so, Joseph got the double portion because he was the one who inherited the right of firstborn. So there was the privilege of a double portion.

But there were the responsibilities also that went with it. And the responsibilities in the simplest terms were that the firstborn son had to care for the children in the family. He was, of course, the one, who on the death of the father, would take over the headship of that family. If that family was a tribe, he was the head of the tribe. If that tribe was a nation, he was the head of that nation. If it happened to be that that family was the only family on the face of the earth, like Noah's family, then on the death of Noah, then his firstborn son became the king-priest of the world, and of course that was Shem. And if you think I'm hinting that that's who Melchizadek was, I think I'm more than hinting. I think there is very strong evidence to that effect. And so you see, that was the position, a king-priest.

Now here's the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the great king-priest, the great High Priest, Who sees Himself having the responsibility of caring for these children. Now that's why so many times, in John 17, we read about the priest praying to the Father and speaking about 'those whom thou hast given Me'. Now this is a very beautiful thing.

I recall we spoke briefly about this in Okanagan at the end of last year, and we spoke about, 'Do We See The Lord Jesus Christ?'. And I think it would be honest to say, brethren and sisters, and if you don't fit into this category then that's good, but I think it would be honest to say that to many of us, we're not really quite sure what to do with Jesus. I know that sounds like a terrible thing to say, but please understand the context in which I mean this: We refute the doctrine of the Trinity; we refute the idea of the pre-existence of Christ; we worship GOD; we don't pray to Jesus; we don't like the idea of singing hymns to Jesus; and all sorts of things like that, because we think it's elevating Jesus out of all proportions. And so sometimes I think we get to the point of almost making him a 'mere concept' as though he wasn't a person. I can feel some of you shuttering, say, 'Oh! No! No! Of course I wouldn't go that far.'

Well, how do you see our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? We can't worship Him we say; we don't pray to Him; we've got to be careful about the singing of hymns, whether they're singing to him or about him, otherwise we might elevate him too much. But God has given Him a name, a name which is above every name, that 'at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow'. So can we then, try to get a balance? And we want

to try to do that this morning, realizing what God has said is that 'we have been given to Him'; in a sense, that He is the One that 'cares for us'.

Let's just pick up this concept of the firstborn. A couple of references, Colossians chapter 1:14-18, and it is a pity, isn't it, that so many of these references we're going to look at, we've perhaps in the past, always seen them as so-called Bible difficulties. You know, verses that have to be explained away. And sometimes there are some beautiful verses in the Bible where we never get beyond saying, 'how would you explain this to a Trinitarian?', when in fact we don't have to worry about that principally. We're saying, 'what's the beauty of the message? And, of course, Colossians 1 fits into that category, doesn't it?

Colossians 1:14-18, we know it's speaking about the Lord here, so we won't go back to the beginning of the sentence which is quite a long way back. It's a very long sentence actually, but we'll pick it up from verse 14, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the Invisible God, the firstborn of all creation'. [Now that doesn't mean He was born first, it means He has inherited the title, the firstborn of all creation] 'For by him [or through him, if you like, or in Him] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created [on account of Him] and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the ecclesia: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.'

Now remember what I said yesterday. Firstborn and firstfruits are two different things. Yes, he was the first one to come forth from the grave unto everlasting life, but that's the firstfruits. Firstborn here is being used in the context that he is the firstborn on behalf of those who were dead in trespasses and sins. Well, if someone wants to say, 'Well, who is really the first one to come out of the grave and was born to a newness of life?', well, yes, that's all true, but in the context here he's talking about Jesus being the head of the body. I'm pointing to this head, I'm not Jesus but it's a literal body he's talking about, isn't it? That's what He's talking about. I don't mean literal physical body. But he wants us to understand he is THE HEAD, we are the rest of it.

The head is the thinking part. It's our thinking that has to be dominated by his mind, 'Let this mind be in you'. Turn to Philipians, Philipians chapter 2. I think it was bro. Graham who said the other day, that during the course of the talks, someone would quote from Philipians. I think it was chapter 2 you said, Graham, wasn't it?, wasn't it chapter 2? So we're doing it, he was quite right.

In Philipians chapter 2, let's read the words, verses 9 to 11 we'll pick up, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Now, of course, that awaits it's complete fulfillment in the kingdom, but we now, in what we might call that moral sense, must elevate the Lord Jesus Christ to his rightful position as 'firstborn Son'. He is worthy of

double honour and we have been given unto Him in the senses - well, we're going to try to explain in the subsequent talks.

It's going to get us into the area of what we might call a little bit of, can we say, spiritual imagination? Is that a dangerous term? What I mean by that is, brethren and sisters, bro. Colin has made it very clear that it is impossible to see the Invisible I (the one up in that corner), yet we have to have a picture of Deity. So all of us in some way have got a picture of Deity. It's probably all different. And probably we're all wrong in some sense, but we must have some picture. We must also have some idea, based upon the scriptures, that's why I used the term 'spiritual' imagery, if you like, of how our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ works in real terms.

This morning, though, we're looking mainly at the principle. Let's just take one more reference to confirm this fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, here as firstborn son, is also priest; and, of course, that's what that prayer in John 17 is all about. But just go to Romans 8 quickly for just a moment. Romans chapter 8 and for the moment we'll confine our remarks to verses 28 and 29, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did [predetermine] to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.'

Does that verse perhaps mean something a little different to you now than, maybe, what it meant before? Perhaps, before it was just another one of those verses that was a Bible difficulty. How do you explain 'predestination'? You notice I read that very carefully, and I did follow the punctuation, which some don't. Some read it, 'moreover, for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate', as though that was a subject in its own right. Well, of course, he's not saying that, it's saying, that in accordance with God's foreknowledge, he predetermined that those who would ultimately be called and justified and glorified. Verse 30 must conform to the image of His Son, that this Son might be seen and be recognized to be the 'firstborn' among the many brethren.

And I think at this point we can go back to John chapter 17. We could have spent more time in Hebrews speaking about the role of the Lord Jesus Christ as a priest, of the one who can have compassion on the 'ignorant' and of them who are out of the Way. That was Jesus as that 'representative man', but you see, we're moving down now through to consider now the way in which this is 'Deity manifested in a multitude'.

So we go back to John chapter 17, and we find here in John 17 that the whole prayer is concerned with the 'glory of the Father revealed in His family'. It's actually composed of three very clear sections, and they're all based upon what we might call, 'the priestly principle' in this family. The Lord prays, for example, that the Father's glory might be revealed. Firstly, in verses 1 to 5, in the Son himself - he had not yet died upon the cross. And so the first five verses speak about the way in which that final manifestation of glory during the Lord's mortal existence would be culminated in his death on the cross. And so verses 1 to 5 constitute the prayer that the glory might be revealed in the 'Son', singular.

The next section would go from verses 6 to 19, where he prays that the glory might be revealed in the lives of the 'disciples at large'. And then, finally and ultimately, in verses 20 to 26, that the glory of God might be seen 'in the unity and the love that is manifested and experienced among all the believers'.

You might remember about twenty minutes ago, I made some comment to the effect that this morning we're aiming for 'perfection', because I know all of you, as you would have heard me read those words, would have said, 'Well, we're not doing a very good job this side of the kingdom, are we?', the unity, the love, manifested and experienced among all the believers. Well, as I said, we'll reserve our discussions on the practicalities and the difficulties as we endeavour to face them, to later studies. But this morning, we're aiming for perfection.

You know, it's often been said concerning John's writings, both the gospel and the epistles, that John uses 'absolute language'. You know, as far as John is concerned, you're either in light or darkness, there's no shade of gray. You're either in life or you're in death, it's either truth or it's error. John uses absolute terms. That's why John could say, 'know ye not that ye have eternal life.' 'Well,' you say, 'but we don't have eternal life, we die'. But John says you've got a choice. You are either dead in your trespasses and sins and you've got no hope, or else, on the basis of the fact that you're 'in Christ', and by a figure, 'in life', and that life by a figure is 'eternal life', then you must have eternal life. But it's only John who says that. Someone else says it and we'd have problems.

So John uses absolute language. John, therefore, is going to be recording the prayer of the Lord, which is a prayer that asks that 'perfection' might be seen in us. You know, we've got to aim for it, don't we?, 'Be ye therefore, perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.'

Look, if we aim for anything less, we will achieve less, so we must always aim for perfection, so that's what we're going to be talking about this morning, and if every now and again to say, 'Ah! but that's not realistic.', well, we're not talking about what really happens, we're talking about what we must aim for. And that last section is an aim, that we might achieve the perfection of unity and love, that we might see it manifested and experienced. That's what we're aiming for.

Well, the first section, verses 1 to 5, commences with the word in verse 1 there, 'Father'. Actually, the Lord addresses or readdresses the Father three times in this particular prayer. The first one is 'Father', a little later on He says, 'Holy Father', and finally towards the end, 'Righteous Father'. And each one of those forms of address are applicable to the theme that the Lord has in mind, not just from the point of view of his part because he knows that the disciples are listening to what he's saying. And I think that the words of this prayer were as much for the benefit of those listening as they were being addressed to the Father, and that the Son, of course, desired an answer to the prayer.

So in those first five verses, we have that very simple but expressive address. He is the 'firstborn son' and therefore, speaks to the Father. You see, if it had been Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, it might have been 'Yahweh Elohim of Israel' or something like that, mightn't it? It could have been a prayer which was addressed to 'Ail Shaddai'. It could have been a prayer addressed to any of the other titles, but the most simple, but the most expressive as far as this chapter is concerned, was the simple word 'Father'. 'These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee.' And so, this can be said on the basis of what Jesus could claim to have already achieved in verse 4, 'I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do', That is, the work was the work of John chapter 1 verse 14, 'we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'. So he had completed that work in his mortal life, he had manifested that glory.

Now, of course, he's asking for the ultimate glorification. The glorification to be achieved through a death, through a resurrection and through a change from mortality to immortality. Hence, he says in verse 5, 'and now O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' Now, that's not one of those verses that we are going to see as one of those Bible difficulties in future, are we? We are going to see it with the concept of that chart, the principles on that chart in mind. That's why, you know, when we look right up at that top right hand corner there, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, Who Is, Who Was, and Who Is to Come, the Almighty'. Jesus calls Himself, The Almighty. You see, it's Deity in manifestation and so if we are talking about, then, the glory which he had with thee before the world was, as the result, of course, of our studies now at the Bible School, we recognize that that glory was the glory which is embodied in the beginning in that Word, that Word which became flesh.

Well, we want to move on from that because we want to particularly look at the prayer he offers on behalf of his disciples; but, remember what he has just said. He says, 'This is life eternal, (remember the words in verse 3), 'this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'

In the opening words of the book Phanerosis, which is page 325 of this edition, but it's still the opening words of this book, bro. Thomas says, 'The vital importance of understanding the Bible revelation of God, will be manifest to those who admit the authority of the New Testament, in matters of faith and practice. In considering the testimony of him who 'proceedeth forth and came from God, and who in giving to the disciples the words which the Father gave him said, 'Thou giveth to thy Son [jurisdiction] of all flesh, that everything which Thou hast given to Him, He might give to them, [aionios], that is eternal life. And this is the life of the [aion], that they should [understand] thee, the only true God, and Jesus [Anointed], whom thou sendest'.

'Now,' says bro. Thomas, 'from this testimony we learn three things; 1. the life of Messiah's 'aion' is not for all mankind; 2. that the life is for those specially donated to the Son;' notice the language, those specially donated to the Son. That's the theme we're

now going to be picking up - Those whom thou hast given me; and the 3rd. point is that the attainment of this life by those specially given to Him is consequent upon their intellectual enlightenment concerning what constitutes the only true God and the relation to Him of Jesus, in his begetting and anointing. And then he comments, 'this intellectual comprehension of the true God is renewing, and capable of developing the likeness of His moral or spiritual image, in those who are so illuminated.'

I do think, brethren and sisters, in a very small way, our Bible School this week has perhaps done a lot to help us get that spiritual illumination. We haven't learned new facts as such, but it's brought a lot of things into perspective, that we can come to see the principles of God Manifestation and, therefore, make exhortational chapters such as this, so much more powerful.

Well, let the chapter now speak for itself. Let's read verses 6 to 12, 'I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; [because] they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, [for the purpose] that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled'.

Notice this term 'given' and 'gave'. Look at it there in verse 6, we've got it there twice. The men which thou 'gavest' me out of the world, thou 'gavest' them to me. Verse 9, 'I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast 'given' me'. Verse 11, 'Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast 'given' me'. Verse 12, 'While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou 'gavest' me I have kept.' And later on in verse 24, 'Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast 'given' me.' And even in chapter 18 verse 9, 'That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou 'gavest' me have I lost none.'

Do we fully appreciate what the Lord means when he repeats time after time, in his prayer to the Father, 'Father, you have given to me, you have given these to me.' Actually, the basis of the idea is found earlier in John, if we go back to John chapter 6. John chapter 6 we probably recognize as being a chapter which starts off with the miracle, of the feeding of the five thousand. In chapter 6, it's the 4th sign, the feeding of the five thousand. It goes from verse 1 through 14, and then we get the sequel to that sign.

Remember the sign of the feeding of the five thousand? What was the principal result of that miracle as such? We read in verse 10 of John 6 that he made the men sit down

on the grass. Verse 11 says, 'when he had given thanks, he took the loaves and distributed them, and likewise of the fishes, and when they were filled he said to His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. And they gathered up the fragments and they filled up 12 baskets full of the loaves.'

What was the most important thing in that whole miracle? Well, the most important thing was the gathering up of the fragments that were left. It wasn't a matter of saying, 'Okay! we've had our picnic, let's clean up the mess.' It was nothing like that at all, nothing like that at all. The twelve baskets full of loaves, and notice that John makes no reference to the fish, there was some fish gathered up, (the other writers say it), John says the end result of this was that, after the people had been fed, there were 12 baskets full of loaves gathered up. For what purpose? He says, verse 12, 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.' Have you heard that expression somewhere before? - that nothing be lost. Did we read that a few moments ago in John 17? 'Of all that thou hast given me, I have lost none.'

Do you think there's a connection? Read verses 37 to 39. He is the sequel to the sign. He's previously in the intervening verses which we are going to have to miss out, spoken to them about the fact that he's the true bread that came down from heaven. This is the work of God that ye believe and, of course, they didn't understand what he was talking about. Well, he said, this is what it all means, verses 37 to 39, 'all that the Father giveth me', [here we are again] 'shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven'.

Of course he came down from heaven, he was Deity, wasn't he? If we'd said that this time last week, how many would have got shocked? We say it this time this week and no one gets shocked. Of course he came down from heaven, he was Deity, he was The Almighty in manifestation, wasn't He? 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will'. Oh! No, not to do the will of Jesus, the man, but to do the will of Deity, the Word made Flesh. 'I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.'

Now, here's the summary of all of the things that we might use to summarize what was Christ's work? He says, 'THIS is the Father's will, which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing. That's what the twelve baskets full represented - 'That I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'

And that is also connected with that 4th sign because, What sort of bread was it? It was barley loaves, wasn't it? And the barley was used in the firstfruits, and the firstfruits represented resurrection, and so twelve baskets full of barley loaves is what John saw, gathered up that nothing be lost. And there it is, the Lord brings it all together, and so you can see then the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we are now seeing it in the concept of God Manifestation. He is the One who has brought God to man; he is the One that has brought man to God; he is the One who was the 'representative man'; he is the One who was the manifested Deity, so he is the One in whom God meets us. Now, in that sense, therefore, he could say, 'the Father has

given them to me, and I will lose none of them, and furthermore, this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'

As I said in our consideration this morning, we are looking at the principles of this. In tomorrow morning's study, we want to look at the practical outworking of it, and I don't want to get into that aspect of the subject at the moment. But if we turn over to John chapter 10, we get the same idea. John 10 verses 27 to 30 - you might remember that this is again the sequel to the story of the 'good shepherd'. I didn't want to use the word 'parable' because there are no parables in John's gospel to spite the fact that it's his parable in verse 6. It's really a proverb or an allegory. So as a sequel to the allegory of the good shepherd we read in John 10:27, 'My sheep hear my voice,[for] I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.'

Stop there. Don't read on to the next verse for a moment, please. Don't read on. Flesh says I must read on to see what it was. See what he's saying. He says, 'the Father has given them to me; NO MAN is going to pluck them out of my hand.'

Okay, look at the next verse. 'I and My Father are One'. Ever seen that verse in that context before? Well, the first time we saw it, it was probably [when] trying to explain to somebody that Jesus isn't God. So, we saw it as a Bible difficulty. Then we came to see it, perhaps earlier this week, in the sense of, well, eh!, yes, eh! - Jesus was the Word made flesh. And at a mental level, he and His Father were One. And we considered the so-called temptation of Christ, and we considered how, through the spirit dwelling in that One, he was able to bring the propensities into subjection.

Good! That's fine as far as it goes, but we're going further now, aren't we? Let's read those verses again, and see then, how that, the sense in which these are given unto the Son is that the Son is Deity. He is the Almighty, but he is also man. Even when he is in heaven, he's man, isn't He? Timothy said that, Paul said that to Timothy, 'there is One God, and One Mediator between God and man, the Man, Christ Jesus.'

So here is the God man. Can we use that expression without people getting worried? Yes, we can, of course, can't we? So here he says, I've come down to do my Father's will, my Father's will is to make sure that none of those be lost.

Let's read those words again, John 10:27-30, 'My sheep,' ah! there's the clue, brethren and sister, there's the lead-in to our final talk. If we are going to see the role of this One, we see him as the Shepherd. We've got to be the sheep. We've got to follow that Shepherd.

But who is the good Shepherd? The good Shepherd is Yahweh. Psalm 23 said so. 'Yahweh' my Shepherd. It doesn't say the Lord is my Shepherd, it's a title - Yahweh my Shepherd, I shall not want. But Jesus is Yahweh Manifested, and in the terms of John

chapter 10, he becomes the Shepherd. We follow him, and we follow him in his role of the firstborn son.

So let's read those verses in John 10:27-30, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are One.'

Doesn't it really make the subject of God Manifestation a really beautiful one when we start to see it now, as we begin to move into the practical outworkings of it?

We really should conclude at this point time wise, and we will endure to do so fairly quickly. I'd just like though to move on to the third part of John 17, but essentially as laying a basis for our study, God willing, tomorrow. The third part, which is verses 20 to 26, speaks of the Father's glory revealed in the unity and the love which will exist among all the believers of the truth. In verses 20 to 22 he says, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;'

So he looked down through the arc of time and he could see us here this morning, praying for us, 2000 years later, 'that they may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me'.

Isn't it a fact, brethren and sisters, that we can feel a unity in a Bible School like this, when we're studying a subject like this? Christadelphians are allowed to have feelings. Christadelphians are allowed to have experiences. We're not talking about charismatic experiences not based upon the truth, but 'love' is an experience. It's not just some theoretical concept, and don't we feel a oneness when you have minds all working along the same channel, and isn't that what we want in the brotherhood throughout the world? That's what we want. That's what we'll aim for. We have to say, unfortunately, because we are human, we'll never get it this side of the kingdom, but we never aim for anything less than absolute perfection. We don't lower our standards in order to be able to say, 'Well, we'll accommodate more.'

The standards must be maintained, but we recognize it's not our work, it's a work of God. We are simply but instruments in God's hands. Let us as sheep follow the Shepherd, let us show the attributes of that Shepherd and shepherd others, as others are shepherding us. That's what we aim to do, and don't forget, over and above all of that, Christ has prayed for the success of our work. Could you think of anyone greater who could pray for us? Our presiding brethren pray for blessings on our meeting. Can you imagine the firstborn Son praying for us? Do you think the Father is just sitting up there saying, 'Ah, well! I'll think about it.' Well, that's, that's terrible to say something like that, but we can almost think that way, can't we? That Son has prayed for us. What can we do? Nothing more than submit as sheep to that Shepherd, because it's not us that's important, is it?

Verse 22, 'the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one'.

So you see, brethren and sisters, it's not just a nice social gathering, where you and I like each other because we're nice people. It's God's glory that unites us, because everyone of us, submerges our own identity, we submit the one to the other, because we are submitting to God and to the Son. It's God's glory that unites us.

And so as we look through the concluding verses of that chapter, I have happened to have coloured the particular word in and that's why I can see it quite clearly, the word 'love' then becomes a very dominant word in this particular section. But we are going to consider that in our study tomorrow. So, let's just conclude it then by reading the last section of this prayer as we might have noted in passing back in verse 11, that the Lord had readdressed his Father there, by the title now, 'Holy Father'. See it there about halfway through verse 11. Why 'Holy'? Well, of course, holy means separate, he's going to ask the Father that He keep the disciples separate from the world. He doesn't say, take them out of the world, but keep them from the evil. So because the theme is now going to become the 'holiness of the disciples', he readdresses the Father by the title 'Holy Father'.

Why then, in verses 25, does he now readdress Him as 'righteous Father'? Well, everyone knows that God is righteous, but hasn't the whole theme of God manifestation centred on the righteousness of God, revealed in the Son, and in those whom the Son has been given? Verse 25 says, 'O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me'. Isn't that exactly what Paul says in Romans 1, 'I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth that therein is the righteousness of God revealed'.

So we have come to know a little more this week about the righteousness of God, which is equivalent to God Manifestation, isn't it? And so he can say, 'I have declared unto them thy name'. Thy name? He didn't just get up and expound the meaning of the word 'Yahweh' did He? But all of the things embodied in that Name, seen on that chart, seen in the scriptures, 'I've declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

Might that be our aim, brethren and sisters, and might it be with the Father's blessing, when we go away from this school, we will achieve wonderful things, not merely in our lives, but in the lives of our brethren and sisters and in the community of which we are a small part, that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, he will find a body of people, tightly knit together to the Head, and to each other, bound together with the true spirit of unity, based together on the true principle of divine love.