

THE FINAL PRAYER

May 24, 2020

John 17:1-11

It was Good Friday, 1961. My hometown Pastor had asked me to give a seven-minute sermon on the fourth word of Jesus' Seven Last Words. I was a freshman at St. Olaf College. I never worked harder on a sermon than that first one. I used late hours, the school library, lots of prayer, and finally it was done. I accomplished what my Pastor asked. He, of course, glorified me. I basked in the glory. My Pastor's pride in me spilled over into the congregation of First English Lutheran Church of Faribault. I was truly a son of the congregation.

My puny effort should not be compared to the effort and accomplishment of Jesus, but I'll do it anyway. My effort helps me to understand what Jesus accomplished. My Pastor and I gloried in each other. Jesus and the Father shared the same glory. I gave a seven-minute sermon. Jesus gave us eternal life. I accomplished some of my Pastor's mission. Jesus accomplished the mission the Father gave him to do. I even did my parents proud. Jesus received the same glory which he had with the Father before the world was made. I did my feeble best to preach about the only true God. Jesus wanted the world to know about the only true God.

So, I am comparing the infinitely little to the infinitely large. However, both Jesus and I had a similar mission, to point to the Father, to glorify God, to further God's work. So, for me to glory in my little accomplishment is almost laughable to compare it to the eternal life saving work of Jesus. The real glory is that Jesus called me into His glory through my Pastor and by grace, I got to share in that glory and to share it with others.

Prayer: (ancient): Dear Jesus, may all the world be drawn into your presence. Amen.