

When Jesus Prayed for Us – John 17:1-26

Introduction

- During His time on earth, Jesus prayed many times...
 - At His baptism (Luke 3:21)
 - When He fed the 5,000 (Matthew 14:19)
 - While instituting the Lord's Supper (Mark 14:22-23)
 - Before He was transfigured, took Peter, James, John to pray (Luke 9:28-29)
 - In the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-39)
- Jesus taught us how to pray
 - Not hypocritical (Matt. 6:5-8)
 - The model prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)
- But in John 17, before His betrayal and arrest, Jesus prayed...

I. Jesus Prayed for Himself (v. 1-5)

- a. In Chapter 16, Jesus has just told the disciples that a time of sorrow was coming
 - i. But their sorrow would become joy (at His resurrection)
 - ii. "The Father loves you because you have loved Me."
 - iii. They would suffer tribulation by the world, but He has overcome the world.
- b. Then, Jesus prayed...

(1) Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, (2) as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. (John 17:1–2)

- c. "The hour has come." The time for the world's greatest sacrifice was at hand.
 - i. He asked God to glorify Him, exalt Him, and elevate Him with the honor of being the sacrifice for man's sin. This glorification is mutual.
 - ii. "Authority over all flesh." God has turned it all over to Christ.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18)

- iii. With this authority, Christ is able to give eternal life to all that come to Him.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6)

(3) And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (4) I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. (John 17:3–4)

- d. Jesus declares to the Father that His work is finished, His ministry complete, yet there was one more thing to do, suffer the death on the cross.
 - i. Jesus thanks God for this awesome honor and responsibility.

II. Jesus Prayed for His Disciples (v.6-19)

“I have manifested (revealed) Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. (John 17:6)

- a. Jesus now thanks God for the small group of men, His disciples, His Apostles
 - i. Just a group of common men, fishermen, a tax collector, a physician who would soon have the great responsibility of recording the gospel message.

“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. (John 17:9)

Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. (John 17:11)

- b. Jesus specifically asks God to give them protection from the world (unbelievers).
 - i. Their job would not be easy, and most would suffer and die for the gospel.

(14) I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (15) I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. (John 17:14–15)

- ii. The same protection from temptation and the devil prayed for by Jesus for His disciples is offered to us as well...

But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

- c. Jesus then prays to God to separate them by His truth...

(17) Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. (18) As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. (John 17:17–18)

- i. When we read the words of the Apostles, we read God’s absolute truth.
- ii. From it comes authority, instruction, worship, and obedience.
- iii. It is the truth that sets us free from sin.

(31) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

(32) And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31–32)

- d. What a great blessing we have in the bible, the freedom and liberty we have to read and study it freely. Words that bring us to God through faith in Christ, ultimately ending (beginning) in eternal life.
- e. We see the results of Jesus' request in the bibles we read.

III. Jesus Prayed for Us (v.20-26)

- a. Beginning in verse 20, Jesus prays for all those who believe in Him, He prays for us.

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word... (John 17:20)

- i. "I do not pray for these alone", not only these My disciples but for the 3000 at Pentecost, those who obeyed the gospel throughout Acts, those through the centuries, those in the present
- ii. It is true according the scripture...

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

- b. Now that Jesus has identified us, he prays that we (believers) will be unified.

that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. (John 17:21)

- i. Jesus prayed for it, the bible teaches it
- ii. Unification of all believers is taught throughout the New Testament scriptures...
 1. Speak the same thing, no divisions, perfectly joined together (1 Cor. 1:10)
 2. Be of one mind, compassionate, love as brothers (1 Peter 3:8)
 3. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3)
 4. Standing fast in one spirit (Phil. 1:27)
 5. United, knit together in love (Colossians 2:2)

- iii. In this Jesus has just prayed for the whole world. God loves His creation, and wants all people to be saved in the end.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

c. Jesus continues His prayer for unity (v. 23), not just for the sake of unity, but this is a oneness based on love.

i. He request a perfect, mature love, one that is ultimate

I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (John 17:23)

ii. How can the greatest act of love be described?

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. (John 15:13–14)

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16)

d. Jesus concludes His prayer for us...

(25) O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. (26) And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:25–26)

i. Jesus prayed for you, He prayed for me.

ii. As he declares God to us, we must declare God to those around us!