

John 17

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to John 17?

The Bible is filled with incredible prayers. Solomon's prayer (1 Kings 8), Abraham's prayer (Genesis 18), and Moses' prayer (Exodus 32), are all amazing, inspiring and wonderful prayers. But John 17 is by far the greatest prayer recorded in the Bible.

It's interesting the disciples never asked Jesus how to give a great sermon, or how to cast our demons. Rather they asked Jesus how to pray. We see this in

Matthew 6:1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Our Father in heaven,[fn]

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.[fn]

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins,

For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one." [fn]

Now most folks say this is the Lord's prayer, but Matthew 6 isn't really the Lord's prayer, because Jesus never had to ask for

forgiveness. It should be called rather the model prayer, because that's what Jesus' modeled for the disciples.

But in our text this morning, John 17, we truly see the Lord's prayer. We are privileged to listen in as God the Son converses with His father, as He is about to give His life a ransom for sinners.

The word World is used 19 times in this prayer, so it's easy to see the connection between this prayer and how chapter 16 ended.

John 16:33. "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will[fn] have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

If you and I understand and apply the truths of this prayer, it enables us to be overcomers too.

The title of this morning's message is THE PRAYER

We're going to open our study by reading all of John 17 uninterrupted, and then we'll pray

LETS PRAY

It almost feels inappropriate, like we're intruding into an area that is restricted as we witness this incredible prayer of Jesus. Yet we can take comfort in knowing this isn't the last time Jesus prayed for us. In fact the Bible tells us that Jesus has an ongoing, present work of intercession for His people **Romans 8:34, Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.**

AND

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Now, we've seen Jesus pray several times in the gospels. We know that prayer was a vital part of Jesus' ministry. But in our text this morning we're given more detail, and more insight than anywhere else.

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, When Jesus began His earthly ministry in Cana of Galilee, and Mary came to Him and said, "Son, they have run out of wine," He said to his mother, "What's that to Me? My hour is not yet come." Many times in the scriptures we read, "For His hour had not yet come."

Jesus was always aware of the hour that was coming. All through His life, Jesus was conscious of His life moving towards a definitive hour, a certain time.

And now He has come to it.

The hour is come, and this is now Jesus' moment of glory. And how will the Son be glorified? Not by a mighty throne or a majestic coronation. Rather by being nailed and lifted up on the cross. In verse 1 Jesus is talking to the Father about the glory of the cross.

2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should[fn] give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Only Jesus can grant eternal life. He alone gives us access to the Father, through His death and resurrection.

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. We live in a world with lots of gods that folk's worship. But there is only 1 true God. The only true God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God who sent His son Jesus Christ into the world. He is the living God!

This is the only time in the Bible that Jesus refers to Himself in the 3rd person. He does so as another declaration of His purpose—that mankind may know God experientially through Himself.

4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. Jesus declared the work He was sent to do clearly in **Luke 19:10** “for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Now Jesus declares His work is finished, for on the cross it would be complete.

Jesus’ last words on cross were “It is finished.” What was finished? The work of the redemption for mankind.

Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, mankind can now walk in close communion and fellowship with the God Father once again. The sin which has separated us from God is put away and we can live in fellowship with God through faith in Christ.

5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. In the halls of heaven, before time began, Jesus was with God.

And now, with the cross just hours away, that intimacy, that fellowship, that union with God would be broken. Oh, what Jesus willingly left behind for us!

Think about how Paul and John struggled to describe what heaven was like. And our Savior willingly left it, so that we could spend eternity with Him.

Jesus’ prayer now transitions as He prays for His disciples.

We see a wonderful picture of the humanity of Jesus here as He prays for those whom He loves. When a person is on their deathbed, the doctors have pronounced that end of life is near, what is it that people often think about the most—they think about

their loved ones. 'Take care of my kids, watch out for my family' type of thing.

Jesus is leaving His disciples and going to the Father, and we behold His incredible love for them in His prayer.

6 "I have manifested 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. The word manifested means to reveal or to display. Jesus not only taught divine truth, He represented divine truth by His very presence. To see the Son was to see the Father.

Now in Luke 6 we saw Jesus choose His apostles after a night of prayer, expressing His total dependence upon God the Father in the choosing of the men.

God the Father gave these 12 men to Jesus.

And shockingly Jesus says these guys, the 11 (after Judas already left), look at the end of the verse **they have kept Your word.**

We've seen countless times the failures of the apostles-on full public display. Yet despite their foibles and fumbles, Jesus said they kept His word.

7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. In these few verses we can once again see the balance between God's election and personal responsibility.

· In verse 6 Jesus explains the apostles salvation in the election of God '**the men You have given Me out of the world**'

- In verse 8 Jesus explains their salvation by their faith, saying 'they have believed that You sent Me'

We talked about it in depth a few months ago, but it bears repeating. The debate regarding God's sovereignty and mans responsibility has been around for hundreds of years, and you can point to specific scripture that declares both.

So which is it-does salvation come from God's election-God choosing us, or does salvation come by a persons own decision-them choosing God?

Yes.

Don't try and separate what God has put together. If I can fully understand everything about God, then He would be a very, very small God.

9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. Jesus isn't praying for those who aren't saved here, He's specifically praying for His disciples.

10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Throughout Jesus' prayer we see the beautiful harmony between the Father and the Son. What belongs to Jesus belongs to the Father, and vice versa. They enjoy perfect harmony.

This makes the separation that occurs later on the cross all the more shocking. When Jesus cries, "Why have You forsaken Me?" It's a feeling He's never felt.

11 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,[fn] that they may be one as We are. On the eve of Jesus' crucifixion - on the night He was betrayed and arrested - just hours before His gruesome torture and

hideous death, He prayed for unity among His disciples. We'll talk more about this shortly.

12 While I was with them in the world,[fn] I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept;[fn] and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. There was one exception to Jesus' work in keeping the disciples, Judas Iscariot. But this wasn't a surprise, rather it was a fulfillment of scriptures in Psalm 41 and Psalm 109

The only other occurrence of the title "son of perdition" occurs concerning the Antichrist in **2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin[fn] is revealed, the son of perdition,**

The fact that both Judas Iscariot and the AC are called the son of perdition has led some folks to believe that the Antichrist will be the resurrected Judas Iscariot. But that can't be, because God will not resurrect unbelievers until the end of the Millennium according to Revelation 20. Yet the Antichrist appears during the Tribulation—before the Millennial reign of Christ.

13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 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. ” For a boat to be useful it has to be in the water. But let the water get into the boat and you've got problems. In the same way the Church should be in the world, but there's always problems when the world gets into the Church.

Throughout church history, Christians have sought relief from the world's hatred by withdrawing from the world, or by compromising with it. Both approaches are wrong.

Jesus wants us to remain loyal to God, while actively serving as His ambassadors to the unsaved in a fallen world.

16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. The word “sanctify” means “to set apart or treat as special.”

And how does Jesus say we are set apart-by God’s word. Studying and obeying God’s word leads to sanctification-being set apart from the world.

We live in a world today where the truth is getting harder and harder to discern. So it’s absolutely vital that we know God’s truth, because it’s diametrically opposed to this world’s wisdom.

18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. Just as God the Father had "sent" the Son into the world with a mission, Jesus sends us into the world with a mission, doesn't He? **Matthew 28:19 19 Go therefore[fn] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.[fn]**

19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. The truth of Jesus sets believers apart from the world. **1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will^[fn] believe in Me through their word; This is an incredible verse. Two thousand years ago, Jesus prayed specifically for you and me! Here through the rest of the chapter Jesus prays for future disciples who will trust in Him.

21 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. Jesus' prayer for the church is that of unity, that we might be one. The unity Jesus prays for and desires in His Church stretches across continents, ages, cultures and generations. And what would be the result of this unity that Jesus prays for? that the world may believe that You sent Me.

I don't want to go against the prayer of Christ in any way. I want to be open to anyone who has truly received Jesus Christ as their Lord.

Paul tells us in **Ephesians 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

Jesus prayed His followers would be one just as He and the Father are one.

The Godhead is a blend of unity and diversity. God is one God, but three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All three are equal, but very different.

Our oneness as believers should also be a combination of unity and diversity.

Oneness doesn't eliminate our uniqueness and distinctiveness. A group of people can have unity and still enjoy their diversity.

In fact, spiritual oneness is not the denial of our differences, but the realization that our one commonality is greater than all our differences. When you and I obsessed with Jesus, it causes all of our differences to take a backseat.

22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 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. Jesus wanted the "unity" among believers to be so great and so clear that the world would know Jesus' message.

I know several different pastors in the area, who love the Lord and preach the gospel. Yet I often find myself having to repent because their ministry methodology is so different than mine that I can begin grumbling in my spirit about them.

Look what Paul said:

Philippians 1:15 15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: 16 The former[fn] preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

I know divisions may come, but let's make sure we're not playing a part of the division of the body of Christ.

24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 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.”

Jesus was about to go to the cross and experience all of the agony with it, all of it planned and sent by God the Father. Yet Jesus cried out in concluding this prayer, “O righteous Father!”

When tragedy or hardship falls upon us, it can be tempting to question God, perhaps even blame God. When was the last time when going through hardship you or I cried out about the righteousness of God!

Jesus ended this incredible prayer on a note of faith and even triumph. He knew that He had done His work, and would finish His course.

When you study the gospels, people threw all kinds of accusations against Jesus. They called Jesus a blasphemer, a drunkard, a glutton, and an associate of sinners, a demon-possessed pagan and an illegitimate child.

Yet Jesus didn't believe any of their accusations, because none of them were true. At the end of His life He could confidently say, “I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it.”

Finally, in verse 27 Jesus' last words in this prayer are ‘and I in them.’ Jesus prayed that His disciples would not only be filled with the love of God the Father, but that they would also know the indwelling presence of Jesus Himself.

INDEPENDENCE DAY?