

John 17:20-26 The Lord's Prayer Pt 2

A sermon delivered at Calvary Chapel DC Metro
www.calvarydcmetro.org

Last week we looked at the first two sections of what is referred to as Jesus' High Priestly prayer – His longest recorded prayer in Scripture. There were times when He prayed longer, even praying all night, but we don't have a record of what He said then. This is the longest one that was actually written down.

It's what He prayed just a few hours before He was arrested and crucified the next day.

Now, He knows all of that is coming; He's been preparing His disciples for it. He's been telling them what is about to happen to Him and what will happen to them as a result and finally, He prays.

Last week we saw that He prays for Himself in verses 1-5, then He prays for the apostles in verses 6-19. As we pick things up this morning we see Him praying for us – those of us in this room this morning.

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 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. 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. 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."

So, if you're taking notes this morning,

On the night before the cross, **1. Jesus prayed for us.** Now, I love this. It's almost too much for me to think about. We say things like "Jesus loves you." But do we really understand that? Do you realize that Jesus looked down through the passage of time, and saw you, that He saw me, and He prayed for us?

He says, "I don't just pray for these alone, but for those who will believe in Me through their word." *That's us!*

And it says something important – **2. He knows His prayers will be answered.** Before praying for us, Jesus prayed for the apostles, right? He prayed that God would keep them from the evil one, that He would sustain them as people hated them. And now, He is able to pray this for us because He KNOWS things will work out for *them*. He knew it wouldn't be

easy for them, but He knew their mission would be completed, that they would be able to pass on their testimony and we would be able to hear and receive their word.

Which brings us to the third thing we see here **3. we believe in Jesus, through the words of someone else.** Back in verse 8 Jesus said that He had given the apostles the words the Father had given Him, “[and they have received, and have surely known that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.](#)”

Jesus said that He brought a message from God to men – to the disciples. The message is what we call the gospel –that God was willing to forgive us our sins if we would repent, or turn, from our sins, ask forgiveness for them, and place our faith in Christ.

He gave that message to the disciples, and then went to die in our place on the cross, to suffer the punishment for all the crimes against God and man that we have committed – He was innocent of the crimes, but He took the punishment. And then He rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven where He still sits today waiting for the day when He will return to claim all that is His and to judge all that have rejected Him.

That’s the message that Jesus gave, and demonstrated, to the Apostles. They believed it themselves after seeing the events first hand and they told others who believed.

Eventually they wrote it all down. So John, the author of this gospel that bears his name, wrote down the things He knew about Jesus in a biographical form. And Matthew, another one of the apostles did the same thing. Luke who was not apostle went around and interviewed all the eyewitnesses and wrote his gospel. And Mark, who was also not an apostle, wrote down everything he had heard from Peter who was. So, we have the four gospels you find in your Bibles – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John because these men knew they received something *from God* and they knew it needed to be passed on.

John makes the point again in one of the letters he wrote. Turn with me to the back of your Bible and look at **1 John 1**. His gospel is a biography of Jesus, this is a letter he’s writing to others explaining some things about Jesus – but notice what He says about how He received all this stuff he’s sharing:

[1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.](#)

And then he goes on to explain more of the message they received. But you notice, he says, we didn’t just make this stuff up; we didn’t determine it by a committee. We received it from God, and now we’re passing it on to you. And you, and you, and you and you, until it finally got to you sitting here today.

Most of us came to faith because of someone else's involvement in our lives. Some people are just randomly saved by a Gideon's Bible in a motel room, but most often, there is someone in your life telling you – this is what I have received from God *and you need to know it too!*

And so, if you've received it, now it's time to pass it on. It's your turn to say, like John, *"that which I have seen and heard I declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us."* Who does Jesus want to use you to share this good news with?

People around you have questions about God – little kids have questions, students have questions, people on your team and at your gym have questions. Your neighbor has questions. People have questions, and you have knowledge – you may not have all the answers, and I'm not saying that the point is for you to be able to win every argument, but you can give answers about what you have heard, what you have read, what you have experienced, and you can share those things with others so that they too can believe and be included in the stream of men and women through the ages that Jesus looks down and prays for so that He's not just praying for you, "but also for those who will believe in [Him] through [your] word."

And one last thing, while we're on the subject, yes, Jesus stood and prayed for you on the night before He was crucified, but did you know that **4. He is still praying for you?**

It wasn't just a one-time deal. Make some time this week and re-read Romans chapter 8 – it's full of all kinds of important stuff for you to know and remember. It tells you in vs 34 that Christ died, but is also risen, and *"is at the right hand of God, [making] intercession for [us].* It also tells us in verse 26 that, *"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what should pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."*

Jesus prayed for you back in Jerusalem, but He also prays for you today, and so does the Holy Spirit. As we have said so many times lately in our study of John – Christian, you are not alone!

And that leads us perfectly into the very next thing Jesus says:

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 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.

5. Jesus prays for our unity. Christians should not be fighting and bickering among each other. We shouldn't be gossiping about so-and-so and how they don't do things the way we like them done.

The church should be a safe place where people can remove their bandages and let their wounds be treated and healed. Now, it doesn't always work out that way, because not

everyone in the church is what they ought to be. We're all at different points in our walk with the Lord; some are more mature than others. This is a big one-room schoolhouse with spiritual kindergartners sitting next to spiritual seniors. And you can't tell who is who just by their physical age. But the ideal, the thing that we all ought to be striving for, is unity, agreement, and peace.

And how do we get that? By becoming one in Christ. [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.](#)

I tell this to people all the time in relationship counseling, whether marriage or pre-marital. If the two of you have unity, if you have agreement on what life is about and what you're trying to accomplish, your marriage will go well. Life will throw some major curves your way, but if the two of you are headed in the same direction, working together, in unity, you can survive just about anything. What destroys relationships is when one or both begin to head in different directions, and that can happen subtly if you're not watching for it. If two people are seeking two different things, there's only so far they can go together.

And the same is true in the church. If people get their eyes off Jesus and make other things important, problems will arise. If people start getting fixated on their pet ministry or their way of doing things they can cause murmurings and give root to the seeds of discontent that will divide a church. It's OK to have different convictions on how to serve God and how to best worship, but we need to hold our convictions loosely enough not to divide over them unless division is absolutely necessary. We need to ask ourselves, is this really a division that Christ would approve of as He prays for our unity?

He wants us to have the same kind of unity with each other that He has with the Father. He wants us to be united to each other and then united to Him *so that* there is harmony in the body and that our harmony might be a testimony to those on the outside. He says, "[that the world may believe that You sent Me.](#)"

So again, that really ought to sober us up – before we go drawing any dividing lines, before we go searching for other people who think 'our way' about a divisive issue, we need to ask – is doing this going to make the church look better in the eyes of the world, or worse? It's a very serious question.

So, He repeats the idea of unity again as He continues praying:

[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.](#)

This is one of those things that you have to really read it to believe it. You have to see it with your own two eyes in black and white in vs. 23 because it says **6. God loves you and me just as He loves Jesus**. When we have this unity – when we are in submission to Him as our head – when we submit to His leadership and direction in our lives, when we spend

ourselves serving Him He says the world can tell that there is something magnificent going on and it's because God loves us AS He loved Jesus.

And because of the love He has for us, and because we are one with Him, He wants us to be with Him where He is – which is in Heaven, of course. Do you remember how He told the disciples earlier that He was going to prepare a place for them and for each Christian? He said, “In my Father’s house there are many rooms” – we talked about how we get it wrong when we think of heavenly mansions, that the meaning of the word has changed too much over time – it’s not us doing our own thing in our place, it’s us living *as one* with Christ.

Notice what He says next as He wraps up:

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.

7. Jesus wants you to come over to His house and see His glory.

My kids know what this is all about – they always want other kids to come over to our house. They want their friends to be with them where they are so their friends may behold the glory of the toys that they have been given. And so, we have play dates so they can hang out with each other in the midst of their juvenile glory. Jesus is far more mature than that, but you understand the idea.

What does Jesus’s glory look like, what is it like to be invited over to His house? Turn with me to Revelation – the last book in your Bible.

Revelation 5:1 And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying:

“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,

And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
10 And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.”

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living
creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand,
and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as
are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and
worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

That’s what Jesus wants you to be a part of – to see Him as He really is – not just a man of
average height and build with Middle Eastern features, but Almighty God, Creator and
Savior and Sustainer of the World, worthy of all worship and praise. That’s what it’s like to
see Him with the glory He had before the world was. That’s what He wants you to see, and
that’s where He wants you to be.

Flip with me back to John 17

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.”

So here again is what Jesus is praying will come out of all this – that we would hear the
gospel – the words given from the Father to Jesus, given from Jesus to the apostles, passed
on to us from the apostles and finally given by us to others.

And all of this so that we would know Him and each other, and be unified under Him, that
we would know His love and reflect it to others.

Jesus was the first evangelist, the first missionary. He left the place where He was
comfortable and all was well and came to earth, which was perishing without Him. He
offers to save us, and to use us to save others.

Where do you fit into that story? Are you an active participant, or are you just collecting data? Now is the time to make a decision. A decision to receive the love of the God who has prayed for you and who wants you to be with Him. And, the time to make a decision for unity – to give up the things that divide unnecessarily, and pursue unity instead because the whole world is watching and what you do will affect the way they see the church. And finally, a decision to speak to others – to invite them to church, to read your Bible with them, to pray with and for them that they might receive all of this as well.

You can do it. You can do it because God loves you, He has called you, He is equipping you, and He is praying for you.

Now let's pray to Him.