

Were You There Lenten Devotional

Thursday, March 14, 2024

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The Seventeenth Chapter of John is often called "The Great Intercessory Prayer" or "The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus." Many consider the prayer "Jesus' farewell speech."

### **Jesus Prays for Himself**

**John 17:1-26:**

**Verse 1-2: "When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him."**

Lifting one's eyes to Heaven was a traditional posture of prayer.

The cross is linked with glory numerous times in this Gospel. Completing this mission would present the gift of eternal life to all flesh and glory to the Father and the Son.

Jesus glorified God by finishing the work the Father gave Him to do.

**Verse 3: "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."**

Only the true God, through Jesus Christ, can provide eternal life.

The title "The only true God" is not found anywhere else in the Gospel of John and is used here to differentiate between true and false gods.

This is also the only Scripture where Jesus refers to Himself as "Jesus Christ." (Christ is the Greek word for The Anointed One, the Messiah).

**Verse 4-5: "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work you gave me. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world existed."**

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus is identified with God. He has revealed both God's identity and His nature.

The plurality in His statement, "Before the world existed," also points to the Son's preexistence before the earth and humankind were created.

### **Jesus Prays for the Disciples**

**Verse 5-6: "I have manifested your name to the people you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word."**

The Father gave the disciples to help Jesus introduce the New Testament, The Message of Jesus, to the world, and Jesus said, "They have kept your Word." They have been faithful.

**Verse 7-8: "Now they know everything you gave me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."**

Jesus affirms that the disciples are beginning to understand the uniqueness of the relationship between Him and the Father.

**Verse 9: "I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those you have given me, for they are yours."**

Jesus now explicitly prays for the disciples, not for those in the world.

**Verse 10: "All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them."**

Everything that belongs to Jesus belongs to the Father, and all the Father has is His.

**Verse 11: "And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one."**

The term "Holy Father" is the only time it is used in the Bible. It refers to God's purity and tenderness and Jesus' intimacy with the Father.

Jesus prayed that the Father would keep the disciples after He had returned to Heaven so they would be as one, with the same unity as He and the Father.

**Verse 12: "While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you gave me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the Son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."**

Jesus guarded and protected the disciples while He was with them.

None of the disciples perished except Judas Iscariot, "That the scripture might be fulfilled." This passage is not given, but it is believed to be Psalm 41:9: "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me."

Jesus offered Judas life, but he did not accept it.

**Verse 13: "But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."**

Jesus, in His High Priestly prayer, is praying/speaking these things for the comfort of His disciples so that they might have joy fulfilled in themselves.

Jesus expresses total confidence in the Father. Joy comes from having this confidence.

**Verse 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."**

Again, Jesus refers to being in the world but not of the world. The world hated Jesus and emphasized that the world would hate His disciples.

It is impossible to be "Worldly" and "Christ-like" simultaneously. It is like trying to mix oil and water.

**Verse 15-16: "I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one." They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world."**

The world already hated Jesus' disciples because of their association with Him.

Nevertheless, they need to deliver His message, and Jesus asks the Father to protect them from Satan, the evil one.

**Verse 17: "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."**

Sanctification is different from cleansing but is related to pruning.

For this reason, Jesus could ask the Father to set them apart, as He is set apart so that they might carry on His mission after His departure.

Today's Christians have the same commission and are consecrated, set apart, and dedicated by the Holy Spirit to serve God.

**Verse 18: "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."**

Just as God had sent Jesus into the world, Jesus sent His disciples to continue His mission after His departure. Jesus was setting them apart to do the work He had called them to do.

Like Jesus, His followers are to be in the world but not of the world.

**Verse 19: "And for their sake, I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."**

Jesus is consecrating Himself as if he had been a sacrificial animal. Here, Jesus is consecrating, or "setting Himself apart," to do the will of the Father, which is to go to the cross.

### **Jesus Prays for All Believers**

**Verse 20: "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,"**

Jesus prayed the same prayer for those who believed in Him because of the disciples' testimony, who would carry His message to the world.

**Verse 21: "That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."**

In His "Great Intercessory Prayer," Jesus prays for each child of God to abide in the same unity between Him and the Father. This unity allows for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, thereby forming oneness with God.

The ultimate result will be that the world believes that the Father sent Jesus.

**Verse 22: "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,"**

Jesus is praying for those who will believe because of the disciples' testimony. This is a prophetic or proleptic statement. He is speaking in the present tense concerning the glory those born again will one day receive.

**Verse 23: "I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."**

God in Jesus and Jesus in those who have been born again separate Christianity from every other religion. To be a Christian, in the simplest terms, means having a personal relationship with Jesus, our Savior.

This prayer was for all Believers to be perfected through Him; they would be one body under one head, animated by one soul through their union with Christ and the Father in Him, by the Holy Spirit dwelling in them.

**Verse 24: "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see the glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world."**

In the closing moments of His great intercessory prayer, Jesus asks for the ones the Father has given Him to be with Him so that they might see His glory (the glory He had before the foundation of the world).

Here again, Jesus mentions His preexistence with the Father in eternity past.

**Verse 25: "O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me."**

Although the world does not know the Father, Jesus does. The believers for whom He prays, the disciples, and those who come later will know the Father sent him.

**Verse 26: "I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."**

Jesus will continue to make the Father's Name known so that the love with which the Father loved Him will be in the followers of Jesus, and in fact, Jesus himself will be in them.

His concluding prayer confirms that Jesus dwells permanently in those who have accepted Him as their Savior. He will not leave them alone and forsaken but will be in them forever.

Adapted from "Trusting in Jesus"