

Week 34

Jesus Prayed for Me

We come in our study today to John 17, the LORD's Prayer, the prayer Jesus prayed for us the night He was betrayed and handed over to the executioners. He was praying for you and for me and for those very men who were planning to kill Him.

Have you considered what privilege we have that we can hear what One Person of the Trinity says to another? These next 26 verses contain things that are difficult to fathom, nevertheless, we will trust the Holy Spirit to keep the promise to show us the things of Christ. Even though we may struggle to understand, it will be worth it, just as men struggle to unearth diamonds from deep in the earth, we will dig out the treasures of God's Word, with His help.

John 17:1-2

Now we have confirmed that Jesus has the power to give eternal life, the keys of heaven are in His hands according to Revelation, He has power over all flesh. This again proves Jesus divinity, what person or great teacher could stand before God and say, "glorify Me that I may glorify You"? Nothing brings so much glory to God as the redeeming work of Jesus. God did not spare Him but gave Him up for us all.

John 17:3

The definition or human understanding of eternal life is this; that you may know the only true God and Jesus Who God sent to us. Jesus is the exact image of what God is like, do you want to know God, look at Jesus? So when we know the Son we know the Father. Do you see anywhere here that there are many paths to God? Jesus makes it clear again, He is the Way to life. There are no paths. It's clear too that you cannot lose your salvation, how could you lose knowing Jesus if you really know Him? This knowledge that is in the heart as well as the head and guides the life, this is life changing, this is eternal life.

John 17:4

Jesus did everything He was sent to do; He finished the work of redemption. Comparing Jesus to Adam we see that Adam did not finish the work God gave Him to do, Adam disobeyed and brought sin into the world, Jesus (Who the bible refers to as the second Adam) obeyed and completed His work.

Jesus kept the Law perfectly and by keeping it brought eternal righteousness for all who believe. Don't be confused by the accusations of the Jewish leaders that He broke the law. Jesus kept God's Law perfectly, however, He ignored all the additions of the Pharisees because they were just made up by men. What you see in the bible is what we are commanded to do. Man is forever adding burdens by adding to God's Law, and God forbids this. Are you right now following rituals and rules that are taught by your church but found nowhere in scripture. You should know this.

John 17:5

Again we see that Jesus was before all time, He was not created by God; He existed before the world was. The Father and the Son are two distinct Persons and equal in their glory. Many of the cultic teachings are addressed in these first 5 verses. All cults have this in common; they do not believe Jesus is divine. Do not let ignorance of scripture lead you astray and cost you the prize of eternal life that can be yours.

I thank God that my salvation rests on the solid Rock of my Divine Savior and what He did, not on anything I do.

John 17:6

Jesus knew the disciples hearts, they were weak, their knowledge was faulty, and they all deserted Him in His hour of need. Jesus sees far more in them than we can. Never had such a great Master had weaker and more unreliable followers. And such are we. But do you see that Jesus honors even the weakest faith, His mercy and compassion are great.

Do you get discouraged at your failings and weaknesses? I do. But we see here how quick Jesus is to see the smallest faith as excellent, we can lean on Him for our help, He never changes.

John 17:7-8

Jesus is giving an account for the disciples saying that they understand His mission. Jesus had given them all that Father wanted them to have in terms of teachings, signs and miracles (and so have we since John recorded them). The disciples accepted and believed what He taught, while vast numbers of Jewish people and their Leaders had rejected Jesus. Have you accepted these teachings of Jesus or have you rejected them? Do you believe His signs and miracles, what miracle has He done in your life?

John 17:9

Do you notice He is not praying this prayer for everyone, but just for believers? This is His special intercession for us, His followers. You do not have to be left out of Jesus' prayers of intercession, the door is open, the Way is clear. Remember Jesus said "I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice and opens, I will come in".

Hebrews 7:25 says "Jesus is able to save them to the uttermost who come to God by Him, because He ever lives to make intercession for them". This is the secret of the eternal security of the believer.

John 17:10

Jesus holds all things in equality with God, more confirmation of His divinity. There is perfect unity and yet distinction of Persons.

John 17; 11-12

Now we see again why the disciples needed this prayer, and so do we, that is, Jesus had been with them to protect them but now He was leaving.

What does it mean that Jesus keeps those of us who believe? He makes our dead spirit live, He calls us by His grace, He washes us in His blood, justifies, sanctifies and keeps, leads and continually intercedes for us that we may not fail.

How can we lose?

The son of perdition, of course refers to Judas Iscariot. This is saying, "of all You gave Me I kept and not one is lost. There is one man who was never given to me and he is lost, Judas, who I declared to be "a devil", a man whose hard heart led him to destruction. The words "son of perdition", literally mean "one fit to be lost and cast away, by reason of his wickedness". These are strong words from our loving Savior.

John 17:13

Jesus knows we often want to be out of this world and His disciples no doubt felt the same way. Remember David said in PS 55:6 O that I had wings like a dove and could fly away". Jesus thinks its better for us to remain in the world and be "kept from its evil" than to be taken out.

As nice as it would be to go home to heaven, we can't do much good for this world if we are not here. To go to heaven immediately after conversion would be the easiest but as you know, easy is not always best. 2 Timothy 2:12 says, "If we suffer with Him we reign with Him". Someone has said "He

who would win the crown must carry the cross and show himself light in the darkness and salt in the midst of corruption". Jesus knows better than I do what I need. Thy will be done, the prayer that never fails is best. And He is praying we will be kept.

John 17:14

The disciples have received Jesus' teachings and are persecuted for it, the world often hates the disciples of Jesus. The good opinion of the world is the last thing the true Christian should desire.

John 17:15

Repeating, since they are remaining in the world, I ask You to keep them, just as I have. And Jesus intercedes for us in just the same way.

Jesus disciples were the first preachers of the gospel. If God had taken them out of the world, we would never have heard the glorious truths Jesus taught.

John 17:16

Repeating the 14th verse to add emphasis, note He is emphasizing the evil in the world from which He is praying we will be preserved. It would appear that being kept from evil by God is a major need in our life. Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount to ask for God to deliver us from evil.

John 17:17-19

Jesus prayed for us to be sanctified. Sanctify means to be holy or set apart. Vines dictionary says; Sanctification is that relationship with God into which men enter by faith in Christ. Sanctification is also used in the New Testament to describe the separation of the believer from evil things and ways. This sanctification is God's will for the believer, it is His purpose in calling us by the gospel, He teaches us this by His word and it must be pursued by the believer. It is an individual possession built up little by little as the result of obedience to the Word of God and following the example of Christ. It is about character, it is separation from the world's behavior and morals.

It is the Lordship of Christ in my life.

Sanctification is the state into which God, in grace, calls sinful men, and in which they begin their life in Christ.

Summing up all this; sanctification is the setting apart of the believer, it is what happens at the moment of salvation, made possible by Jesus' death burial and resurrection. It then is the process of becoming more like Christ by His Word. And 1 Thessalonians says it is God's will for everyone. Do you ever wonder what God's will is for your life? Here is one part of it; that you be sanctified, that is mature in your character by the study and application of God's Word to your life. Holy living is the great proof of the reality of Christianity. People may refuse to see the truth of God's word but there is no ignoring a holy life. Christ's blood alone fits us to enter into our inheritance of eternal life. Sanctification gives us the capacity to enjoy it.

The bible talks about being purified by the washing of God's Word. I cannot tell you how this happens, but I can promise it will happen if you will make the commitment to study and then obey what you learn. Just look at what Jesus says is the way God will sanctify; by the Word of God which is truth.

There is absolute truth, here again Jesus confirms this. Those who insist there is no truth will have to face Jesus Christ someday and receive His just condemnation for ignoring His Word and the solid truth it represents. I urge you today to seriously consider this matter.

John 17:20-21

Now Jesus includes us in His prayer. Here we can see that just as Jesus prayed for us, we can pray for future believers; how about your children and grandchildren, claim them for Christ. Jesus may be praying for them at the same time you are.

Jesus lets us know here how important oneness within His body is to Him.

John 17:22

This oneness Jesus desires for us will be made possible by the presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling us.

John 17:23

Jesus has asked God the Father for 3 things for the disciples who were present there with Him and also for us, His followers in these later times; first, preservation, then sanctification, then unity and lastly participation in His glory.

He requests here that we will be with Him in the glory yet to be revealed and share it.

And here is the definition of heaven, its where Jesus is.

John 17:24

Jesus wants the disciples and us to be with Him in heaven so that we can be part of the glory, which has been His since before time began. He not only wants us there, He has made it possible for us to go there, He is the Way. Again more evidence of His divinity, God assigned Him glory before the world was created.

John 17:25

The world has failed to know the righteousness of God, the world would not believe or know that Jesus was His communication with them. Jesus is our living connection to God.

Think about Jesus' statement; the world does not know Me: what are some reasons for this in our time?

1. Currently our media portrays God, Christians and the bible in connection with perversion, child abuse, and dishonesty. Religious people are often portrayed as mentally ill or made to look foolish
2. Historical accounts are often written to blame Christians for the evils in the world. They often imply that God or the bible was responsible for injustice.
3. Faulty religious training can keep us from knowing Jesus. Wrong opinions taught by well meaning teachers or even truth taught in an unloving way can devastate children's idea of God.
4. Philosophy where God is reduced to a concept for discussion. If God is a concept then you are free to invent any number of creative ways to see Him. When we allow God's revelation of Himself, the bible, to teach us the philosophies and new age ideas will be shown to be in error.

John 17:26

Jesus asked that the Father love us as He loves us and that His love would be in us. By the power of the Holy Spirit He sent to us, we can love and our love will increase as we are sanctified. Remember back to the sign which Jesus said would identify all believers; our love for one another.