

2009#20 GOSPEL OF JOHN –WHEN JESUS PRAYS

John 17:1-26

Today we look at the greatest prayer that was ever prayed on earth.
We are privileged to listen to the Son of God converse
with his Father as He is about to give
His life as a ransom for sinners.

I don't know how we got this prayer,
But I do know how important prayer is to us all.

A woman had quit work to stay home and take care of her new baby daughter.

Countless hours of peek-a-boo and other games slowly took their toll. One evening she smacked her bare toes on the corner of a dresser and, grabbing her foot, sank to the floor. Her husband rushed to her side and asked where it hurt. She looked at her husband through her tear-filled eyes and managed to moan, "It's the piggy that ate the roast beef."

God doesn't care about our grammar, or how elaborate or simple,
Or incomplete our language is,
He cares only that we pray.

In Jesus prayer we uncover three areas of prayer
First for himself,
Second for his disciples
And **third** for each of us.

I. JESUS PRAYED FOR HIMSELF.

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you." John 17:1

Jesus told his Father his work on earth was finished.
and he prayed to prepare himself for the sufferings that lay ahead.
John 17:1-5

Some people say, "You should not pray for yourself because that is selfish".
Dr. R. A. Torrey said: Praying for self is not selfish.
When Jesus prayed for himself he was also praying for us.
When he asked God to help him bring Glory to God, and to help him thru his suffering,
He was also asking God to do that for every one of his children,
That through all our sufferings and trials God would be glorified.

The word glory is used 8 times in this prayer.
God used Jesus sufferings and death to bring to the Father
His greatest Glory.
And he wants to do the same in your life and mine.

Gilbert was eight years old he joined the Cub Scouts. He had only been a member a short time and during one of his first meetings he was handed a sheet of paper, a block of wood and four little tires and told to return home and give it all to dad.

That would have been easy for Gilbert to do if there was a dad at home. So the block of wood remained untouched for weeks. Finally, mom stepped in to help figure it all out.

She had no carpentry skills, she just read the directions and let Gilbert do the work. They followed the rules of what could and couldn't be done. Within days his block of wood turned into a "pinewood derby car." It was a little lopsided, but it looked good (to mom, at least). Gilbert hadn't seen anyone else's car, so he was feeling pretty proud of 'Blue Lightning.'

Finally, it was the big night. With 'Blue Lightning' in his hand and pride in his heart he and his mom headed to the race. It was obvious that Gilbert's car was the only one made entirely on his own. All the other cars were father-son partnerships, with cool paint jobs and sleek body styles designed for speed. A few of the kids laughed when they saw his crude vehicle. Gilbert was the only boy there without a father at his side.

The race was a process of elimination. One kept racing as long as you were winning. In the final run it was 'Blue Lightning' against the sleekest, fastest looking car. As the final race was about to begin, Gilbert interrupted and asked if he could pray. The race stopped. With wrinkled brow, clutching his derby car, Gilbert was on his knees praying to his Father in heaven for a very long minute and a half. Then he stood up, smiled and announced, "Okay, I'm ready."

The crowd cheered. The other boy stood with his father while Gilbert stood with his Heavenly Father in his heart. Gilbert watched his block of wood swoosh down the ramp with surprising speed to cross the finish line a fraction of a second before the other car.

Gilbert leaped into the air with a loud "Thank You" and the crowd roared in approval. The Scout Master, with microphone in hand, asked Gilbert, "So, you prayed to win, huh, Gilbert?" To which he answered, "No, sir. That wouldn't be fair. I just asked God to make it so I don't cry when I lose."

Prayers for ourselves are prayers for all of us.

From a human point of view,

Calvary was a revolting display of man's sins and cruelty,

But from the divine point of view,

The cross revealed and magnified the grace and glory of God.

²For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:2-3

It was what Jesus was sent to do.

I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. John 17:4

That work Jesus completed gave God's work back,

- a. Through the message and miracles
- b. Through the trained disciples
- c. Through the sacrifice on the cross and resurrection.

17 times the word give or gave is use in one form or another.

What more interesting here is

7 times Jesus states that the believers are the Father's gift to his son.

We usually think that Jesus is the Father's love gift to us. John 3:16

But here Jesus affirms that believers are the father "love gifts" to his beloved Son.

⁶"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. John 17:6

²⁴"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. John 17:24

We as Christians are the natural fruit of the Holy Spirit
Given to Jesus by the Love of God.

II. JESUS PRAYED FOR HIS DISCIPLES

First: Jesus prayed for the disciples to understand and obey the word of God.

⁶"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. John 17:6

Second: Jesus prayed for the safety of the disciples.

**¹¹ Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—
John 17:11a**

Third: Jesus prayed for their unity.

so that they may be one as we are one. John 17:11b

In the name of Jesus demons obey,
dead men rise,
Hearts are changed,
Marriages are saved.
Sins are forgiven

If the limited Savior in a physical human body,
Could keep the disciples safe while he was on earth,
From the storm,
From the mob,
From sickness
Should not a risen Savior, who is glorified in heaven,
Be able to guard and secure the people his Father has given him?

Fourth: He prays for their endurance.

¹⁴I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. John 17:14

God gave his word to his Son John 17:8
And the Son gave them to the disciples
And his disciples passed them on to us as inspired by the Holy Spirit
And if Satan has any hatred in the world it is toward
The holy word of God,
This gift from heaven.

¹⁶They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:16-17

God's truth has been us in three editions.

His word is truth John 17:17

His son is the truth John 14:6

His Spirit is the truth I John 5:6

When we stay in the word, the Bible, we discover
 The joy, love and power to live a holy life.
 And what we need to serve as a witness in this world.

III. JESUS PRAYED FOR US

²⁰My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, John 17:20

The burden of Jesus prayer for us today

First it is to have a common focus.

²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. John 17:21

Our focus must be in Jesus.

He is the only savior with enough savvy to make us whole.

Secondly, Jesus prays for us to be true witnesses.

May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. John 17:21

Christians are those whom the world watches, and reads as Gods word.

Just who is it that occupies your life in this world?

What are the words on the billboard of your life?

Antonin Scalia said: Bear in mind that brains and learning, like muscle and physical skill are articles of commerce. They are bought and sold. You can hire them by the year or by the hour. The only thing in the world that is not for sale is character.

Godly character.

Third, Jesus prays for unity.

²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one. John 17:22

Where is the unity in the church today?

We have over 33,800 denominations, or over 450,000 churches

Counting all the little independent Churches in the world.

What a sad mess we have made of things.

Our task is to glorify God through our unity in fellowship of the church.

The NT knew nothing of isolated believers,

Wherever you found saints,

You found them in fellowship.

Why?

Because God's people need each other.

Jesus washed the disciples feet to show that ministry to one another is important.

The early disciples were selfish, prideful, in competition with one another.

Seeking who would be given the highest place of honor.

And it broke the Savior's heart.

As Christians we must do better.

Thomas Brooks the Puritan preacher wrote:

“Discord and division becomes no Christian.

For wolves to worry the lamb is no wonder,

but for one lamb to worry another, this is unnatural and monstrous.”

What kind of lambs are we?
 Mean spirited?
 Monstrous?
 Quick tempered?
 Harsh spoken?
 Lambs to fear?

If the way you live your life as a Christian is creating undue
 Tension, stress, and strife in the church,
 your home or another persons life,
 Then stop and look within,
 Something is not right in you.

²³I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:23

Christian harmony is not based on the externals of the flesh
 but the internals of the Holy Sprit

The world cannot see God,
 But they can see Christians
 And they can see how we love one another.
 Or how we fight, criticize, lie, or belittle one another.
 How well do we love one another?

Listen to this letter written to Ann Landers.

Dear Ann, I'm a 46-year-old woman, divorced, with 3 grown children. After several months of chemotherapy following a mastectomy for breast cancer, I was starting to put my life back together when my doctor called with the results of my last checkup. They had found more cancer, & I was devastated.

My relatives had not been supportive. I was the first person in the family to have cancer & they didn't know how to behave. They tried to be kind, but I had the feeling they were afraid that it was contagious. They called on the phone to see how I was doing, but kept their distance.

Last Saturday I headed for the Laundromat. The same people are there almost every week. We exchange greetings, & make small talk. So I pulled into the parking lot, determined not to look depressed, but my spirits were really low.

Taking my laundry out of the car, I looked up & saw a man, one of the regulars, leaving with his bundle. He smiled & said, "Good morning. How are you today?" Suddenly I lost control & blurted out, "This is the worst day of my life! I have more cancer!" Then I began to cry.

He put his arms around me & just let me sob. Then he said, "I understand. My wife has been through it, too." After a few minutes I felt better, stammered out my thanks, & proceeded on with my laundry.

About 15 minutes later, here he came back with his wife. Without saying a word, she walked over & hugged me. Then she said, "I've been there, too. Feel free to talk to me. I know what you're going through."

Ann, I can't tell you how much that meant to me. Here was this total stranger, taking her time to give me emotional support & courage to face the future at a time when

I was ready to give up.

Oh, I hope God gives me a chance to do for someone else what that wonderful woman & her husband did for me."

"I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." John 17:26

Jesus has assured that some will believe because of our witness,
But will you make sure that your witness is true and loving?

That is why Jesus prayed
For the glory of god,
For the sanctity of God's people,
For the unity of the church
And for our witness in sharing the Gospel with the lost world.