

## The World's Most Majestic Prayer

One of the most awesome discoveries of Scripture is that God Himself, through His Son Jesus Christ, prays a prayer on behalf of His believers. God is our Creator, He is our Savior and He is our Petitioner. In John 17, God the Son voiced the prayer, God the Father received that prayer, and God the Spirit communicates God's love to us through that prayer. What an incredible reality!

John 13:1 gives us the setting preceding the prayer. *Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.* On this journey to the cross, Jesus proved that He loved His own. He lived for them, He prayed for them and then He died for them. If you are a believer, you are *His own*.

Many times before Jesus had said, "*My hour has not yet come*," but now, He knows it is here. The first thing He did in this hour was to wash the feet of his disciples. He washed the feet of ALL the disciples, even Judas Iscariot. After Judas had gone out to betray Jesus, He tries to prepare the true believers for the horror that will follow. The last thing that He does in this precious time alone with *His own* was to pray for them and us. See John 17:20.

His prayer is for believers (John 17:8-10). The prayer that He prays for unbelievers is for belief.

- Jesus prays for our **security**. "*Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me*" (John 17:11).

Our salvation is eternal because we are kept by God. Our eternal security does not depend on anything that we can do, but God Who keeps us. God is the one who justifies. See Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Peter 1:3-5, 1 John 5:13, Romans 8:33-39.

- Jesus prays for our **unity**. See John 17:21-23.

The mystery of the Trinity is played out in the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ. Jesus prayed for all the generations to come who would receive Him because of the testimony of those who had seen Him in the flesh. He prayed for us today that we may be one in God SO THAT the world would believe (v.21, 22). 1 John 1:3 states *that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you may also have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

- Jesus prays for our **joy**. Earlier, when Jesus was talking about the vine, He said, "*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy will be full*" (John 15:11). Here, in His prayer, He asks the

Father *“that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves”* (John 17:13). We know that John was listening to this prayer as in 1 John 1:4, he says, *these things we write to you that your joy may be full*. See also Galatians 5:22, James 1:2.

- Jesus prays for our **protection**, *“that You should keep them from the evil one”* (John 17:15). See also 1 John 5:18, James 4:7-8, Romans 12: 2, Ephesians 6:11 ff. We are not of the world, but we must live in it and our Heavenly Father protects us. See Matthew 4 for one example of God’s protection in Jesus’ life. The promise is protection from sin, not protection from trial or difficulty. Many of the lessons of the Christian life are learned *through* the trials (James 1:2-12).
- Jesus prays for our **sanctification**. *“Sanctify them by Your truth”* (John 17:17). He went on to say, *“Your Word is truth.”* We know that He declared Himself to be the *“Way, Truth and the Life”* (John 14:6).

John 1:1 tells us that God’s Word became flesh. We are sanctified by Jesus, the Living Word of Truth which is revealed by God’s spoken words of truth as recorded in Scripture. In the armor of God (Ephesians 6:14), truth is what girds our waist or holds us together!

- Jesus prays for our **glory**. *“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them. . . that they may behold My glory which You have given Me”* (John 17:22,24). Paul said that *Christ in you, the hope of glory. . . . Him we preach . . . that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus* (Colossians 1:27, 28).
- Jesus prays for our **perfection**. *“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”* (John 17:23). The perfection that Jesus prays for is our completeness in Him. Without Him, we have no merit at all. *“In Jesus”* we may *stand perfect and complete in all the will of God* (Colossians 4:12). Previously, Jesus had stated in His sermon on the mount that *you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect* (Matthew 5:28). See Romans 12:2, Philippians 1:6.
- Jesus prays for us to understand the magnitude of His **love**. As He sacrificed Himself for us because of His great love, in His prayer He tells the Father, *“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”* (John 17:26). He had already promised that *“the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you”* (John 14:26). One of the things that the Holy Spirit continues to bring to our minds is the incredible

love of God. Again, we see the picture of the Triune God doing all the work on our behalf. God loves you and me!

Questions for Reflection:

- How does it make you feel to know that God, in all three of His persons, preserved a prayer for you?
- Security, unity, joy, protection, sanctification, glory, perfection and love are all petitions in Jesus' prayer. Did any of these requests surprise you? Why?
- Do you feel the need for any of these in your life right now?
- Can you communicate that message to some other believer who needs encouragement?
- Paul said that nothing *shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 8:39). How does that affect the way you live your life?

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