

Fervent Prayer of the Most Righteous (Slide 1)

John 17

Reading: John 17:6-18

I just want to make a few points about Jesus' prayer and then look more closely at what is meant by "fervent" prayer.

Jesus specifically prays for His Apostles:

(Slide 2) ***"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me"***

The Apostles believe what Jesus has taught, what He stands for and where He came from. It is well established that up until the day of Pentecost, they don't completely understand all that must come to be and that there will be some confusion, thus the coming "Helper" sent by Jesus.

Nevertheless, Jesus knows that His chosen apostles "are made of the right stuff" to lead!!

.....they have kept Your word."

They know God and they know that Jesus came from God:

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world."

(Slide 3) *Speaking about the Apostles and what they believe.....and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me."*

The basis of our faith is stated in Jesus' prayer here in John 17, that is, to believe in who Jesus is and that God sent Him to teach the path to eternal life and to make it possible by His death, burial, and resurrection.

The inspired Apostles will preach the word, will establish the basis of Worship, how we should worship, and establish the church and church doctrine. They are the founding leadership for the church.

I believe Jesus' sets a precedent in His prayer for the necessity of praying for those who are in church leadership. It is often a difficult position to be in and needs Spiritual guidance for decision making.

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

There are several ways the word "Sanctify" is applied. In this case it is that the Apostles are set apart to carry out the mission of teaching God's word which is "The Truth." In order to do that they must remain in the world physically.

Jesus Prays for Unity in Leadership:

Jesus prays that as they go on about their mission that they would be unified as Jesus and The Father are unified!

(Slide 4) "Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are."

Wouldn't it be something if all leaders were unified. In our schools, in our workplace, in our federal, state and local governments, and most importantly in Christ's church!!

Unity is the momentum of the church. It's a drive toward Spiritual progress for those that are lost. The lack of unity is often the downfall for those who could be reached and for those lacking Spiritual maturity because the lack of unity acts as a stumbling block.

We will talk more of unity from Jesus' prayer in the coming lesson.

....."keep them from the evil one."

Evil comes in many forms and places. Evil is the destroyer of Christian unity and its mission. Some, because of Satan's devices and evil's enticements,

follow after their own way such as those the Apostle Paul calls out in his writings.

Because of today's culture and immoral standards, the call for Christian unity is paramount in progressing God's Holy Word.

I am convinced that Jesus' prayer can be identified as "fervent."

"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." *There is and has never been a man more righteous than Christ Jesus! Righteousness is the make-up of His entire character!!*

"Fervent"-*A situation that calls for an "earnest, urgent, and intense need for prayer." That is what Jesus felt He needed to do at the time.*

There are times when we should feel the urgent need to pray. An intense petition perhaps on our own behalf or that of others.

The prayers of a righteous man availeth much!

Listen to this story as told in 1st person narrative about the need for a fervent prayer:

I am so amazed at the things that the people did under the leadership of the kings before me. (Slide 5) Despite the warnings, times of captivity, their sin was so great that they conspired in secret to do things that were not right in God's sight, as if Jehovah God would not find out!!!

(Slide 6) They built for themselves safe spaces for pagan worship in the High Places, in their cities, from the watchtower to the fortified city.

*They set up idols everywhere!! In the hills and under every green tree. They burned incense like all the nations around them had done, despite witnessing our Holy God destroy these wicked nations right before their eyes and with their hands. (Slide 7) They served idols day and night even though God said; **"you shall not do this thing."***

They constantly provoked God by the wicked things they did as if they were intentionally trying to tease and mock Him!!

Yet, my Lord did not give up on them. He sent prophets before them and testified by them: (Slide 8)

“Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.”

But they would not listen!! They rejected God and became like the nations around them and angered “The Great I Am” and disregarded the covenant He had with their forefathers.

(Slide 9) They made golden idols and sacrificed their sons and daughters to the golden images by burning them to death!! How sick and twisted they had become. Practicing witchcraft and fortune telling of which God forbid them to do.

(Slide 10) God removed Israel from His sight to the point that only Judah was before Him, but in spite of His merciful care and glorious love, they too abandoned Him and followed after the practices of all of Israel.

(Slide 11) Jeroboam came along and drove Israel even farther from the true God and caused them to practice even greater sin. It was so bad that God allowed the Assyrians to take them away as slaves to serve them so that they may learn from harsh discipline and slavery.

Despite all that God did for them and His promises, the people continued in the rituals of those Nations around them.

Then I came along as king of Judah. I was a young man of 25 and lived according to what was right in God’s eyes just as my father David did. I reigned as king for 29 years.

(Slide 12) *I tore down the high places and the wooden images. I even destroyed the bronze serpent that Moses had made. What was intended to save the life of the people became another idol to them.*

"Left to their own devices, mankind so often perverts and corrupts that which is intended for their own good."

(Slide 13) *Nevertheless, I did what was right in the sight of God and followed the old way established by God through Moses that was handed down from generation to generation.*

Life was good and we prospered because we followed God. (Slide 14) With His guidance we broke from the stronghold of the Assyrians and God enabled us to defeat the Philistines.

(Slide 15) *However, our brothers of the tribes of Israel continued their worship to foreign gods and essentially took our place in captivity in Samaria.*

A great deal transpired in my time as King. Threats of war and trouble in every corner. Yet, the Lord God was with us because we submitted to His will. In such a time of duress and temptation to be drawn away from the God of our fathers, I took preventative measures. I prayed to the God of Heaven. (Slide 16)

"O LORD God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, (Slide 17) which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands—wood and stone. (Slide 18) Therefore they destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God, You alone."

The Lord heard my prayer and answered through His prophet: (Slide 19)

"Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.'"

And my enemies were defeated!!

(Slide 20) Shortly after, death was at my door. The Lord's prophet spoke the word of God to me telling me to set my affairs in order because I would die.

(Slide 21) Upon hearing his word I turned my face to the wall and fervently prayed to my God:

"Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight." And I wept bitterly. *(Slide 22) I didn't ask for more time and I simply asked God to remember me and He did, even granting me 15 more years of life.*

(Slide 23) He caused the day to go backwards a portion of time as a sign of His promise.

(Slide 24) My friends, we serve an awesome God who responds to the prayers of a righteous man. -King Hezekiah: Taken from 2 Kings Chapters: 17-20

We must with a sincere and contrite heart, speak openly to God and He will hear!!

If we don't believe that, then why pray!! Today, I don't believe God will turn the Sun back 10 degrees but I do believe He answers our prayers. Certainly not always the answer we want and perhaps it's not always immediate. But He answers!!

Invitation

Today my prayer is for any who are not right with God. That they will make the conscious decision to get right with Him and be baptized into the blood of the Lamb. Become a child of God and Jesus our Lord will add you to His church!! If you need to do that, please respond to this invitation.

If you are a child of God and need the prayers of your Brethren for any reason please let us know.

Let us know how we can assist you this day.....

Reading:

John 17:6-18

6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 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 of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

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