

Jesus Prays for Us!! (Slide 1)

John 17

Reading: John 17:20-26

Last week we learned: (Slide 2)

1. The value of a “*fervent*” prayer from the example of *King Hezekiah* in 2 Kings.
2. That His Apostles would be protected from the “*evil one*”
3. That Jesus prayed that His Apostles would be unified
4. The necessity of prayer for church leadership

Today, we will look at Jesus’ prayer for those who will believe in the future, which includes the church today.

In **John 17** beginning with verse **20**, Jesus prays for those who will hear in the future and believe the word spoken (written) by His appointed Apostles.

John 17:20 (Slide 3)

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word”

We can be certain that Jesus’ prayer includes us today as we have the written word of the Apostles teaching.

It is an awe-inspiring concept to think that Jesus Himself would pray for you and me!!

Jesus' prayer is that the word will “*fall*,” as it were, on good ground and bring forth fruit. We know that Faith and the development of our faith, comes from hearing the Word of Christ. **(Romans 10:17)**

If one never hears the word or isn't given the opportunity to hear because we neglect to tell them, what will their fate be? What will our fate be?

We sing this song from time to time:

“You never mentioned Him to Me!!” (Slide 4)

The lyrics for the first verse are as follows:

“You never mentioned Him to me,

You helped me not the light to see;

You met me day by day and knew I was astray,

Yet never mentioned Him to me.”

“Where do we think that two or more souls would have this conversation?”

Certainly not in the safety of those who enter through the narrow way to Heaven! Certainly not amongst the saved!

The picture is one of a conversation, had during the day of *Judgement!!*

I am persuaded that the composer of this song didn't intend it to be a way to make us feel guilty about our inaction. Rather, it is intended to cause us to act. To prevent this guilt. The following verses read:

*(Slide 5) O let us spread the word where'er it may be heard,
Help groping souls the light to see,
That yonder none may say, "You showed me not the way,
You never mentioned Him to me."*

*(Slide 6) A few sweet words may guide a lost one to his
side,
Or turn sad eyes on Calvary;
So work as days go by, that yonder none may cry,
"You never mentioned Him to me."*

We are to be a watchman, ready and willing to tell others of Jesus:

Ezekiel 33:7-9 (Slide 7)

7 "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me. 8 When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak (Slide 8) to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. 9 Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.

If we have faith that what the Bible says is true and we recognize that there will be a “*day of reckoning*,” We need to be a watchman!

We plant the seed and allow God to cause the growth:

1 Corinthians 3:5-8 (Slide 9)

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7

So then neither he who plants is anything, (Slide 10) nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

The focus of Jesus' prayer is that after hearing the word expressed to us from the “*Apostles*” teaching that we would be unified in the same spirit. That all would be one in Christ as “*He and the Father are one.*”

1 Corinthians 1:10 (Slide 11)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

The significance of unity can be easily seen through the lack of unity. For the church, there exists no greater destructive force than division. Division generally begins on a small scale but allowed to gain full steam, it divides

Christians and jeopardizes the integrity of the church as well as puts the souls of men in jeopardy.

However, true unity provides great strength. A unified group of people that is; those who are unified in the spirit can accomplish great things for the Glory of God. The old adage applies; *"there is strength in numbers."*

Ecc. 4:9-12 (Slide 12)

9 Two are better than one,

Because they have a good reward for their labor.

10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.

But woe to him who is alone when he falls,

For he has no one to help him up.

(Slide 13) ***11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;***

But how can one be warm alone?

12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.

And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Unification can come from no other source than that of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The doctrine of the Apostles has its foundation in the Good News.

Jesus prays that His disciples to come, will follow the inspired word of the Apostles. Inspiration as provided by

the comforter, the Holy Spirit. The difficulty for humanity and Jesus knew this, is that men begin to *"Lean on their own understanding"* and still often do. We fail every time that we put our trust in ourselves or in another person.

We as christians also have to be cautious. Though we can certainly benefit from commentaries and other resources men have compiled regarding the scriptures (and I use them alot), ultimately we don't follow their word but the Holy Word of God. However, their writings are good tools for our learning.

Jesus' prayer hits the target for Unity. The Apostle Paul encourages unity in his letter to the **church at Ephesus, Philippi, again to the church at Corinth. Peter** describes the importance of unity, the Psalmist speaks of unity:

Ephesians 4:3 (Slide 14)

endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Philippians 2:2

fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

2 Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Psalm 133:1 (Slide 15)

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is

For brethren to dwell together in unity!

“Unity is a commitment to one another. To walk according to the same faith!”

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

And we could cite many more examples of unity-Old and New Testament!!

*If we believe as the Apostles (.....**and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.**”) we will have and maintain Biblical unity!!*

Unity is so important that Paul expresses that we must with diligence preserve unity and in the “*bond of peace.*” It certainly seems that in all circumstances, unity is a measurable factor in producing peace. Even when brethren may disagree on some non-essential point.

“We cannot be impactful if we don’t have peace amongst ourselves!!”

If you hold something against someone before worship, get together and resolve the issue! The same principle Jesus illustrates in **Matthew 5** applies:

Matthew 5:21-24 (Slide 16)

21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of

the judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. (Slide 17) And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ (Aramaic: empty-headed or fool) shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, (Slide 18) and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Unity has a tremendous impact on the “effect” of the “Word.” The world can see Christians on a united front and believe the Word. That is the summary of verse **21**.

John 17:21 (Slide 19)

that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

Unity, therefore, is submitting to one another, to the word and to following the pattern of Jesus who submitted to the will of His Father.

The Apostles themselves were led by the Spirit in all truth. Their word is truth because it is sanctioned by God. *“Your Word is Truth!!”*

We are expected to be unified in following that truth. I believe that includes how we worship.

From my study, we don't serve a God who just made things up as the world moves along. He pre-planned

before the world began. That includes the appointment of the Apostles and the establishment of the church.

Nothing was done by happenstance or it seemed like a good idea at the time. All of these things were produced by the thoughts of the Father before the foundation of the world, just as the coming of Jesus to die on the cross!!

In verse **24** Jesus prays that we will see His Glory.

John 17:24 (Slide 20)

"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

We are included in that portion of His prayer as well, when He says, ***"I desire that they also,"*** speaking of his Apostles would most certainly apply to all who have believed in their teaching about Christ Jesus.

It is clear that our belief and obedience to the Holy Word and its testimony about Christ are essential for us to be afforded the opportunity to see His Glory.

Verse **3** of this same chapter, Jesus says that Eternal life hinges on knowing the Only true God and Jesus Christ who was sent by God.

John 17:3 (Slide 21)

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Our heart's desire is to one day have eternal life with God and with Jesus and with the saints who have gone on before us. That is Jesus' prayer on our behalf.

We wonder sometimes when we read that Jesus now intercedes on our behalf with the Father and what that means. **John 17** gives us a good idea.

Verse **25** Jesus says the world doesn't know God. But we can demonstrate that we do know Him by carrying the Good News to men and in our conduct through our unity in Christ.

John 17:25 (Slide 22)

O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

(Slide 23) Finally, He says that knowing God is knowing Love.

the love with which You loved Me may be in them

God is Love. Love trumps sacrifice of the Old Law and many other things men want to bind on others. Love is the central theme of unity and why we should present the Good News of Christ to the world.

With Godly Love, we taste the depth of Love God has for His only begotten Son. Because of His love we can be counted as Heirs. As children of God. Sons and Daughters.

(Slide 24) Our love for God is at the forefront of everything we do.

1. Our diligence on preserving unity is based on our Love for one another.
2. Our worship is based upon our Love for God.
3. Love should be our approach for every aspect of our lives.

Jesus' prayer certainly hits the target for His church. God's Love rules in our hearts and thus we are bound by unity in the Spirit!! Jesus prayed for us because He loves us dearly.

Our prayers for one another is because we have concern and deep love for each other!

John 13:34 (Slide 25)

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Invitation

“You never mentioned Him to Me!!”

Today I am telling you about Jesus! He is the Messiah, The Only Begotten Son of the Living God!! He is the truth and the Life!!! He is the only way!!!! No one comes to the Father but through Him!!!!

Have you crucified the flesh and become a child of God through baptism? If not, why not!! Do it today!!

If you have been baptized but need the prayers of your Brethren, Jesus is the great listener, the great intercessor.

We will pray for you and I am convinced God will hear as Jesus speaks on your behalf.

Whatever we can do to serve you, please let us know.....

Reading:

John 17:20-26

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 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.

24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 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."

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