

John 17:1–26 • The Prayer of our High Priest

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John 17. As we come to the 17th chapter of John where this is a pretty unique chapter in the Bible in that it really is, the entirety of the chapter is a single prayer that our Lord offered to the Father on behalf of Himself, the church and even the Father. And John tells us that this prayer was offered just before Jesus and His disciples made their way to the garden of Gethsemane, so to kind of give you just a little, sense of the time frame here.

The very fact that Jesus is praying messes with some people's minds. If I could only tell you how many times someone has asked me the question, if Jesus is God, then why does He pray to God? It's been many times and the very question only serves to underscore the fact that our puny minds can't begin to really, truly comprehend the idea of the incarnation. God becoming a man and there are some people who think they ought to be able to understand the fullness of that.

I'm not one of them. I don't entertain those kinds of lofty thoughts because they're so far beyond me and you as to be ridiculous, but it is an amazing thing. The Bible contains some pretty incredible prayers for us to read. We read prayers from Abraham and Moses and Nehemiah, what a great prayer he prayed. I mean, there's some wonderful prayers throughout the scriptures, but none matches this one.

This is God, the Son, praying to God, the Father, and we get to listen in and it's a privilege for us to be able to do that. What's challenging, is for me to sit up here and to teach this because I don't feel like I can even really teach this chapter. We're going to read through it, we're going to talk about it. I'll bring up some of the words and help maybe with some definitions, but this isn't the kind of thing you teach.

It's the kind of thing in reverence you bow before and you recognize that you're walking on holy ground and you approach it with fear and with trembling and that's the way I hope that we're going to approach it this morning. So what we're going to do is read through the chapter, it's not terribly long, and then we'll go through and we'll talk about some of the things that Jesus says.

Verse 1, *“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

⁶ *“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸ For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.*

⁹ *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.*

¹² *While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I am coming 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 ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

²⁰ *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have*

given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (ESV)

Let's pray. Oh Lord Jesus, what words, what words?

Heavenly Father, open my heart to do justice to the words that were spoken here and recorded for us of your Son just hours before His arrest. Lord, these words give us such great insight and yet we come to them and approach them not for the sake of information only, but because there is a holiness and a power that is inherent in them.

And I pray my Father God, that each and every one of us would humble ourselves here at your feet that we might receive today what you would desire us to receive as we look again at these words. We ask it, Lord, in the name of your Son, Jesus, amen. Amen.

You'll notice that the first thing Jesus says here in this prayer is, *“Father, the hour has come.”* And that's, of course, a change because throughout the course of this gospel, many times we've heard, my hour has not yet come or His hour had not yet come. It's repeated over and over and now that has all changed. His hour has, in fact, come and it is for that reason that Jesus will be arrested and will be offered as a sacrifice for our sins.

Why was Jesus arrested at this point and not before? Because His hour had not yet come before, now His hour had come. Now it's time for this all to take place, right? It's very important that you understand that. Because His hour had not yet come, they couldn't touch Him. And the reason I'm emphasizing that for you this morning is because I believe that there's something of that understanding of destiny, if I could use that word, that applies to us as individual believers.

Now, unlike Jesus, we don't know when our hour has come and I'm fairly glad about that, frankly. I just soon not know, I told the Lord that many times. But I do believe we have an hour and what I mean is, there's an hour that will come in all of our lives when we will be taken from this earth, unless the Lord comes first, which I'm also shooting for. But until that hour arrives, you will not be taken from this earth, I believe that, I believe it with all my heart.

No matter how hard the enemy might try to take you out, he won't be able to. No matter how many pandemics rise during the course of your lifetime, not one of them will take you out until your hour has come. No matter how many accidents you might be in or might happen to you, none of them will take you out until it's your hour. No matter how many health scares that might come your way, they won't take you away until it's time. I believe that, I believe that.

I've told you guys before, Corrie Ten Boom tells a story during her ministry and I think most of you know who Corrie Ten Boom was. Lovely sister who was made to endure the terrible issues of a German prison camp during World War II, where she watched her sister die and where she was released from that prison camp through a clerical error. And then after the war, was told by the Lord to take her message to the world.

She called herself a tramp for the Lord. Not using the word tramp, like you might have an indiscretionate individual, but someone who tramps along, a homeless person almost. That's the way she saw it; homeless for the Lord. But she tells a story about being on an airplane and flying along, I'm assuming this was probably back in the 60s or so, when flight wasn't nearly as safe as it is today. And she's telling about how they're flying along, they're up at cruising altitude, whatever it was at that time and the cabin begins to fill with smoke. And then you can imagine, the tension level rose pretty significantly.

And eventually they landed safely and so forth, and everybody's getting off the plane and one of the businessmen who happened to be on that same flight came up to Corrie and asked her. He actually commented to her, he said, I was looking around during this whole thing and you were the most calm person on the whole thing, it's like the whole thing didn't even bother you. And he just had to ask her, what's up? Why in the world could you remain so calm and confident in the face of this? And she was able to kind of go on and talk about where her peace and confidence comes from, knowing that her life is mapped out from beginning to end.

And in that sense, to be able to be confident that, hey, if this is my hour, it's my hour, and there's really nothing I can do about that. But if it's not my hour, I'm not going to worry about it and she was able just to share how, that understanding can bring peace in the midst of some pretty scary stuff.

Jesus goes on here and He prays saying, “*glorify your Son* (I'm in the end of verse 1) *that the Son may glorify you,* ²*since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.*” One of the significant elements of this prayer, I'm sure you've already noticed as we've read

through it, is the fact that Jesus is primarily concerned with glory. Bringing glory to the Father and the glory that was due Him. And we'll talk more about glory here in just a moment, but I want you to focus with me if you would please on verse 3, and we'll come back to this idea of glory in just a moment.

But He says in verse 3, *“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ (or Jesus Messiah, if you will) whom you have sent.”* So Jesus makes an interesting statement here saying, that eternal life can be defined as knowing God. Isn't that interesting? I want to let that soak in for just a moment. Jesus says that eternal life can be defined as knowing God, okay? Has that sunk in sufficiently?

I mean, the fact is, when we come to know Christ as our Savior, when we come to Him by faith and we receive what He did on the cross, we come into a relationship of knowing. I want you to hear those words, we come into a relationship of knowing, but people, it is not an intellectual knowing. It is not a knowing that you get from knowing your Bible. It's like, well, I came to the Lord, but I don't know the Lord yet. Well, actually, yes, you do.

You may not know your Bible, you may not know all of the important doctrines. You may not understand what sanctification means, you may not even know the definition of grace, but you know God. Because this is not an intellectual knowing; a knowing that is gained by absorbing information like you would get by reading a book or studying a particular subject. The knowing that is referred to here when He says, and this is eternal life, to know God and to know the one He sent, He's talking about an experiential knowing, okay?

In other words, it's a knowing that is based on experience. It's kind of the same knowing that a husband and wife have for one another as they come to know one another in daily experience with time and interaction with one another. They get to know one another in ways that nobody else knows them because that's the definition of intimacy, right? We've said this many times.

Intimacy is defined as what you share with someone, and if you're in a marriage, then it would be your marriage partner. What you share with that person that you share with no other, that's intimacy. My wife knows me in ways that you don't, and I'm really glad about that and vice versa. So, it is this knowing through experience, but here's what's interesting about our knowing of God. Our knowing of God is not through time and interaction, like it is in a marriage. It's the same kind of knowing, but the way we know the Lord is not just through time and interaction, it's through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, when a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ, comes to live within someone and there is an instantaneous knowing that begins at that point and carries on through the life of the believer. It comes through the Spirit and it was something that we were told, or I should say foretold, even back in the Old Testament. Let me show you on the screen, Jeremiah, chapter 31, it says, God is talking about the new covenant. He says,

Jeremiah 31:33-34a (ESV)

... this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD.

... this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: (now I want you to notice one of the key elements of this new covenant, He says) I will put my law within them, and I will write it (that meaning my law, my righteous requirements) on their hearts. (right? Not on their minds, on their hearts) And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And (He says, and because of this) no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD.

And that's what God is talking about here is experiential knowledge. He says, in this new covenant that I'm going to bring about, I am going to so envelop them, I'm going to take who I am, my character, my wisdom, my righteous requirements and I'm going to write those things on their heart so that there will be an instantaneous knowing.

They will know me and nobody is going to go around saying, well, you need to know the Lord if somebody's already come to faith, because they will know me. From the least to the greatest, they will know me. There will be an intimacy, a joining. Do you know the apostle Paul talked about this? He described this intimacy. Let me show you, 1 Corinthians chapter 6, he says,

1 Corinthians 6:17 (ESV)

...he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

Think about that, you guys. You've come to know Christ as your Savior, you are one spirit with Him. So there is a joining, and now we know a little bit more

about how this joining takes place. It's on a spiritual level, it's not on a physical level, necessarily. It's on a spiritual level and you are one spirit with Him. And this intimacy of knowing goes both ways now, you know Him, and He knows you.

Look what Jesus said in John 10, we went, going back in time here in our study. This is Jesus talking, He says,

John 10:27 (ESV)

My sheep, hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

My sheep, hear my voice, (and look at this) and I know them, (I know them) and they follow me.

We talked about this when we studied through John chapter 10, what that means about the shepherd knowing his sheep, calls them out by name. All right, now, I promised you, we talk a little bit about this issue of these references to glory. He goes on talking about it in verses 4 and 5, look with me in your Bible.

Verses 4 and 5, He says, *"I glorified you on earth, (Jesus talking to the Father) having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."* All right, these are great verses.

Jesus is pointing to the things that He has done or had done during His earthly ministry and He said, I did those things in such a way as to bring glory to you, Father. But now His prayer is that the Father would give glory to the Son. Isn't that interesting? And He describes this glory that He is praying for as the same glory that they shared before the world began.

Now if you have a different translation that you like to read, this statement is made in slightly different variations, although they all mean the same thing. Let me put a few of them up on the screen for you.

NKJV: *"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."*

NASB: *"And now You, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world existed."*

NLT: *"Now, Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began."*

The New King James (NKJV) says, *“And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”*

If you have a New American Standard Bible (NASB), the latest revision, yours says, *“And now You, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world existed.”*

And then the New Living Translation (NLT) says, *“Now, Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began.”*

They're all saying the same thing, it's just different shades of the same thing. And you can see from all of these different renderings that Jesus is very clearly communicating that He and the Father shared glory from eternity, from eternity. And now Jesus is praying that God the Father would restore the glory to God the Son that He had and that they shared from time eternal past, which is an oxymoron.

Who else can pray this prayer but God Himself? Who else can pray this prayer? Again, I've told you many times that people like to say, well, Jesus never ever claimed to be God and those are the kind of people who I don't think I've ever really read or understood the Bible. If you understand what Jesus is praying here, you know that there's a human..., a purely human being who is not God, cannot pray this prayer, can't pray this prayer.

I mean, it would not only be ridiculous, it would be blasphemous because, especially in light of what we know from the Old Testament in Isaiah 42, let me show you this on the screen. This is an important verse, God's speaking here.

Isaiah 42:8 (ESV)

I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other...

I am (YAHWEH) the LORD; that is my name; (look at this) my glory I give to no other...

Who's talking here? Well, we know who's talking, this is God. He says, *“I am the LORD; (YEHOUA, YAHWEH) that is my name;”* I share my glory with no other, I give my glory to no other and what is Jesus boldly praying? Lord, give me the glory that we had before the world began.

Jesus is God, there's no getting around it. If you understand your Bible, you understand the reality of what Jesus is saying. He prays for that very glory, which God says I share with no other.

In verse 6, Jesus says, *“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.”* What does Jesus mean when He says, I have manifested God's name? What does He mean? Well, the important thing to remember, as we've said many times, is that someone's name in the Bible speaks of the person. Talks about who they are as a person, it talks about their attributes, it talks about their character.

We've talked about that even as it relates to Esau and Jacob in the Old Testament study we've been doing through Genesis. Names reflect character, names reflect attributes, they reflect the person, right? So what does it mean when Jesus says, I have manifested to these men your name?

Well, obviously you know, He's saying, I have revealed who you are as a person, I have revealed your attributes, I have revealed your character to these people, I have given them these things. And that's why we read, way back in John chapter 1, let me show you this on the screen, what John wrote when he said,

John 1:18 (ESV)

No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

No one has ever seen God; the only God, (and he's talking about Jesus there) who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

You know how you could also translate that? “Has manifested him” or if you will, “has revealed him.” I like the New American standard Bible, it says, *“He has explained Him.”* That's good, I like that, but it doesn't go far enough because it's not just an explanation, it's a revelation. Jesus revealed the Father and He will continue to reveal the Father.

So He says in verse 7, *“Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.”*⁸ *For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.”* And this is a sort of an interesting statement here.

Jesus is kind of telling, He's saying to the Father, they now know. The revelation has been made known to them that I am here from you, I came from you and I came to them and they know that now. And the implication of that statement is that these guys are now ready for the next step of the revelation.

And the revelation that they need now to embrace, which will now take some time for them to embrace is why I've come. I have come to die, I have come to die for them and you can tell that's the implication. Because in the verses that now follow, Jesus begins to pray for His disciples for their strengthening, because knowing as He does that they're about to go through a very dark few days, He begins to pray for them in earnest.

In verse 9, He says, *"I am praying for them."* I mean, those words right there are just beautiful, *"I'm praying for them."* He says, I'm not, this isn't for the world. *"I am not praying for the world but (I'm praying) for those whom you have given me, for they are yours."*¹⁰ *All mine are yours, (He says) and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them."* But here's the deal, it's time for me to depart.

He says, *"...I am no longer in the world, but (you know what? Father, you know that I'm going to be leaving them behind) they are in the world, and I am coming to you."* They're staying here, so He says, *"Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one."*

This is such a lovely prayer spoken with simplicity of wording, but Jesus simply says, Father, keep them, keep them. But notice He says, *"keep them in your name."* We just talked about what the name is; the person, attributes and character of someone. So Jesus is saying, keep them in who you are, keep them in what you are, keep them in the character of your heart, your love, your kindness, your power. Keep them in who you are, kept in the name of God. Now you know what that means, to be kept in the name of God. You can pray that for other people. You can say, Father, keep this person in the power of your name.

David understood what this meant 700 years before Christ was born. Let me show you, David said, Psalm 20.

Psalm 20:1 (ESV)

May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!

When he says the name, he's not saying that you're going to utter his name as if it's a magic formula, like some people treat the name of Jesus. Like it's a magical name, "in the name of Jesus, voila!" He's talking about the purpose, the character, he's talking about the attributes, the power of the name of the person to be kept in the name of God, to be kept, it's all about the person.

When we are praying, we talked about this last week. When we're praying and we're saying at the end, in the name of Jesus, we're saying in the authority, in the power, in the person, in the attributes, in the character of Jesus, I pray. It's way more than just a magical formula.

Jesus goes on, verse 12, *"While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction,"* and He's talking about Judas here. People ask me every so often, do you think we'll see Judas in heaven? Not if you read your Bible, you wouldn't ask that question. Jesus refers to him as, the son of destruction and He says concerning Judas, it would have been better for him to not have been born. Your Bible may say, *"son of perdition."* It sounds kind of nastier, doesn't it? It means the same thing, son of destruction, son of destruction.

But He ends that by saying, *"that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* Did the Bible foretell of one who would betray the Lord? Yeah, of course, several passages. I'll show you one, Psalm 41:9,

Psalm 41:9 (ESV)

Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

Verse 13, *"But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy..."* In other words, what Jesus is saying, these things, I speak in their hearing at this time, *"that they may have my joy in them."* And He was aware that they were going to think back on this prayer and that it would give them joy, a joy that nobody could steal.

He says, *"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."* I like what He goes on to say, *"I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one."* I want you to think about what Jesus prayed and I want you to think about the power of His prayer. And the reason I want you to think about it is because I've met Christians and I'll bet you have too, that are just

constantly talking about the devil, and running from him, and scared of him, and they see him everywhere.

And there's just this constant sort of a thing that just envelops their hearts and minds about the work of the devil and they're always... There's truth to the fact that we battle an unseen enemy, there's no question about that. We know that spiritual warfare is a real thing, we know that there is one who, like a roaring lion, seeks whom he may devour and we're to be on the alert, we know that.

But listen, if you take just those verses that I just quoted and that's your fixation, and you don't also realize that Jesus prayed for you. That though you are not taken out of this world, you will be kept from the evil one, you're not going to have a proper balance.

Almost every truth of the Bible has to be held in tension. Do you know what I mean by that? It can't flop over here or flop over here, it has to be held in tension. I always think about those exercise things we used to see in the back of the comic books. Use this and you won't be that, 70 pound weakling on the beach any longer, you'll be kicking sand in other people's faces, just use this, blah, blah, blah, whatever. But it's a good picture of holding something in tension, you hold it.

So what truth do you need to hold in tension? Well, over on this side, there is a devil and he's out to get you. Over on this side, Jesus prayed for you, that you'd be kept and strengthened and the Bible says, you and I have been given everything we need for life and godliness. Everything we need and we go to Ephesians and we learn about the full armor of God. He gave us that which we put on for warfare and we're equipped, we're equipped through Him, through His Holy Spirit. Cool stuff, but that's what we hold in tension, right?

When you're talking to somebody who's just all about the devil and they're all about all the devil and they're talking about oh the devil..., you know that person flopped way over on the one side. And you need to help him come back and say, oh, wait a second, there's some balance here you need to bring to your life and to your understanding of this whole issue related to the devil.

Because let me tell you something, beloved saints, Satan wants you to flop to one side or the other. If he gets you to flop on his side, he can get you to fear him so that you can't even sleep at night for fear of what he's going to do next in your life. But you get over on the other side, you flop on the other side where it's like, you're going around with all kinds of arrogance saying to the devil, you want trouble, you got me. Yeah, that's right, yeah, he's got you there too. So you

got to be careful, hold it in tension, hold truth in tension, because the Bible gives you that balance, right? He says, *“keep them from the evil one.”* I believe that prayer has been answered and continues to be answered, I believe it.

He says in verse 16, *“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”*¹⁷ *Sanctify them* (and that word means to set them apart for God's use, He says, *Sanctify them*) *in the truth*; (and then He says here, this is great) *your word is truth.*” So there's the answer to the question, what is the truth? Well, the Word is truth, the Word conveys the truth. But if you want to know the truth personally, all you got to do is get to know Jesus because He said, I am the truth so the truth is actually a person. And His Word, He is the Word of God, the Word is truth.

He says, and for your sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth. Now I want you to notice there in verse 17, it says, *“Sanctify them.”* So you might underline or circle the word, sanctify. And then in verse 19, He says, *“And for their sake I consecrate...”* And you might circle or underline that word. And then again He uses the word, sanctified at the end of verse 19.

So you have, sanctify and consecrate and those are the two different English words here that the ESV translators used to translate the same Greek word. There's no difference of words here, the Greek word is *hagiazō* and it literally means, to be holy. If you look it up in, in some sort of a Greek dictionary, it'll say, to be holy or even holiness.

But listen, holiness comes about through separation, okay? Separation from what? That which is unholy, that which is corrupt. What Jesus is praying, is that the Father would keep you and me from the corruption of the world and so He says, I pray that you would sanctify them, that they may be sanctified in truth.

And then in verse 19, He says, *“...for their sake I consecrate myself.”* And what He's saying is, I'm going to set myself apart from them physically, that I might go Father and be with you and send to them the Holy Spirit, that they might be empowered to be sanctified and to live that separate life.

Christians, do you understand that Jesus, His desire for you is to be separate? To be separate from the world because you're not of the world. You have been birthed out of the world and now He prays for you to be separate from the world, not like the world, but separate.

Verse 20 says, *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.”* Who's He talking about here? He's talking about us.

Have we not believed through their word, through their testimony? Yes, we have. Now He's, so pay attention, guys, He's praying for you, *“²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*

This is the Lord..., it goes down through verse 23. This is the Lord's prayer for unity, oneness for all believers. Can I tell you something? And I hear people quoting this and then launching into a tirade about how, we got all these churches today and all these different denominations and all these different expressions of this and that and boy, have we blown this part of Jesus's prayer. And they're just all negative about it.

I believe there is unity and oneness among believers, call me stupid, but I believe it. I believe and I have assumed you've experienced it. Have you ever run into a perfect stranger, struck up a conversation and realized that you were both believers and instantly felt like you've known this person all your life? And you're just sitting there talking to him like, they're a brother, a sister that you grew up with. What is that? That's the unity of the Spirit, that's the oneness that we share through Christ Jesus and it is beautiful, it is amazing.

I believe Jesus's prayer was answered and I don't think it matters which fellowship you happen to attend. There is a oneness in the Spirit that is a reality and the world sees it, especially when rotten stuff happens. I hate rotten things just like you do, but let me tell you something, rotten things have this interesting tendency to bring us together in ways that reveal our oneness rather than our divisions.

Suddenly it's just like, hey you love Jesus Christ, He's your Savior? Boom! We are family, you are my brother, you are my sister, we are in the same. I don't care what church you go to, I don't care if you're one of those churches that sits in, sings quiet hymns or jumps off the rafters, we are brothers and sisters in Jesus and nothing's going to change that.

He says in verse 24, *“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am,”* I love this, Jesus prayed that we would ultimately be with Him in heaven. He says, I want them *“to see my glory,”* isn't that neat? I want them *“to see my glory,”* that same glory that I had with you before the foundation of the world.

So are we going to be with Him? Is this prayer going to be answered too? Check out 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4 on the screen. Paul writes,

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (ESV)

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, (look at this) and so we will always be with the Lord.

I like that. I have to go back once in a while and see if that word, always, is still there. Yeah, it is still there. We're always going to be with the Lord. This is talking about the rapture, this is the catching away of the church. We get the word, rapture, from the words, "*caught up*" in that passage. Caught up, to be caught up, to be enraptured. We'll be caught up to be with the Lord and there we will be with Him always. So was Jesus's prayer, is it going to be answered? Oh, you betcha.

And again, that we might see His glory. Jesus says, I want them to see my glory. Look what Jesus said in Matthew, chapter 25. He says,

Matthew 25:31 (ESV)

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne."

Yes, we will see His glory. ²⁵ *O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.* ²⁶ *I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.* So this last portion of the Lord's prayer states that the revealing of the Father is an ongoing work. He says I've made you known, and I will continue to do that, I'm going to keep doing that.

That work happens through the agency of the Holy Spirit and why? He says, "*that love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.*" He says, I want, I'm just, I'm going to keep revealing you, Father, I'm just going to keep revealing you to these children because you know what? It's going to deepen their love, it's going to deepen their love for you, it's going to deepen

their love for one another, it's going to deepen their love for me. There's just going to be a depth of love that comes through the revelation of the Father. It's a beautiful thing, it's a wonderful, wonderful thing.

So there you have, The High Priestly Prayer. It's called, The High Priestly Prayer of our Lord Jesus. So, I'm going to have you stand with me and Bill Norris, one of our elders is going to come and close us in prayer.

Oh, what a joy it is to have witnessed that prayer that Jesus prayed to the Father on our behalf. Think of that and He is not done with us and it's a joy. Let's go to prayer.

Our heavenly Father, we thank you so much for your Word, your Word that has been preserved for us. We thank you for the promises, we thank you for the witness that it is to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. And we ask Lord, as we go from here, that you would remind us, through your Spirit, through Jesus living in us, remind us of how you love us, your character, Lord.

Oh, you are so wonderful, we thank you, Lord, and we ask that you continue to be with us just as Jesus said, that He would continue to do this work in us. So thank you, Lord, thank you, thank you. In Jesus name, amen.