

JESUS' INTERCESSORY PRAYER

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : John 17:1-26

LESSON 238 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18).

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

John 17:1-26 (KJV)

¹ These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

² As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

⁴ I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

⁵ And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

⁶ I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

⁷ Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

⁸ For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

⁹ I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

¹⁰ And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

¹¹ And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world,

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

[NOTES:](#)

Need for Prayer

Jesus closed His last talk with His disciples with a prayer. Have you noticed how often Jesus prayed? He was the Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity; and He had power to give eternal life, to heal

the sick, to raise the dead, and to forgive sins. All these things He could do because He was one with God. But though He was God, He was also man; and He drew His strength and power from Heaven through prayer. He realized His need for prayer more than we realize our need.

Jesus spent many nights on the mountainside alone in prayer — all night long. Often He arose early in the morning and went out by Himself to pray. That last night when He prayed so earnestly in Gethsemane was not the first time He had been there. The Scripture tells us that Judas knew where to find Him, for "Jesus oft times resorted thither with His disciples" (John 18:2).

If Jesus, the Son of God, felt His need for communion with God, and prayed for divine help, how much more do we need it! Jesus wants us to make known our needs through prayer, even though He already knows what we need. And through prayer we express our gratitude to God for what He has already done for us. There should be a constant prayer of praise and thanksgiving rising from our hearts to the One who has bought us with His own precious Blood.

The Son Glorified

Jesus opened His prayer with these words: "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." Jesus had come to earth on a great mission. He had an important work to do. During His life He performed many miracles, and He called people to follow Him. But the hour of His greatest deed, dying on the cross for our sins, was now come. This was the work that God had given Him to do; and He now says that it is finished. He had yet to die, but His purpose was fixed; and He was so sure of going through with it that He could speak of it as already done.

When Jesus lived in Heaven before He came to this world, He was adored by the angels and worshiped because He was the Son of God. He was one with God in the creation of the world, "and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). Yet He laid aside that glory to come to earth as man, to teach men how to live, to feel our sufferings, and finally to give His life a ransom for us.

Now the hour was coming when He would again be glorified — even more so than before, because He had made the great sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the world. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of

and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

¹³ And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

¹⁴ I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁵ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

¹⁸ As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

²⁰ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

²¹ That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

²² And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

²³ I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

²⁴ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may

Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:8-11).

Jesus went back to Heaven after He arose from the dead, and sat down on His Throne of mighty power, at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us. The time will come when all people and things in the world will be under His power. Everybody will have to obey Him. That will be the time when righteousness will cover the earth, and God's people will rule with Him in a reign of peace.

A Prayer for His Own

In this prayer Jesus was praying for His own people. He knew that there were dark days ahead for them. They did not understand that He was going to have to die while He was still so young — only 33 years old. They loved Him, and would be greatly disappointed when He would be out of their sight. More than that, they would suffer persecution because of their faith in Him. But Jesus knew they would finally be true. He was praying to the Father that He might give them grace to be faithful, no matter how much they would suffer; and He knew that God always answered His prayers.

Many of the disciples were going to suffer martyrdom. Peter would be crucified; James would be beheaded; John would be banished to the Isle of Patmos; Paul would suffer beatings and shipwreck, and finally be beheaded. Some would have to live and worship in caves, hiding from the Roman rulers. But we have the assurance of the Apostle Paul: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Timothy 2:12). These people had their hearts set on the glory that Jesus had told them about, and what they suffered here did not matter at all to them. Peter said that he had witnessed the suffering of Jesus (for which He was glorified), and that he himself would also be a "partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (I Peter 5:1). He did not say that he had also suffered. That was unimportant. All that mattered to him was that he was going to be glorified with Jesus.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the same thing when he tells, in Hebrews 11, of the heroes of faith. Abraham had wandered through the land, living in tents, not worrying because he did not have a house to live in. All he thought about was that heavenly city he was going to enjoy when he left this earth. "Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented" (Hebrews 11:36, 37). But did they care? They believed that there were mansions in Heaven waiting for them, where they would live forever and ever. Our life here is very short compared with eternity; and the most important thing in the world is that we be ready to enjoy the glories that Jesus has prepared for us.

With Jesus

When Jesus was praying, He said: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." Jesus actually wants us to be with Him! We may feel neglected here, sometimes, and think that nobody wants us; but Jesus does. He wants us up there where the angels are worshiping Him, where He is sitting on the throne with God the Father, and where the

behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

²⁵ O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

²⁶ And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How did Jesus close His last speech to His disciples before His death?
- 2 Name some of the times when Jesus prayed.
- 3 For whom did Jesus pray at this time?
- 4 For what did Jesus pray?
- 5 Why did Jesus come to earth?
- 6 What does Jesus promise to His faithful followers?
- 7 Give three reasons why Christians need to be sanctified.
- 8 What image must Christians bear?
- 9 Where does Jesus want His children to be?

whole heavenly host bow down before Him. He wants us to be there with Him through all eternity.

Jesus has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the wise. He said that not many great men in the world would want to be His followers, but that the poor would hear Him gladly. When Isaiah was sending out the Gospel call, he said: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat" (Isaiah 55:1). The fact that we are poor and unnoticed by the world does not mean that we are overlooked by Jesus. He is calling everyone to come to Him and enjoy His boundless blessings — peace of heart here, and eternal bliss hereafter.

Kept in this World

When Jesus spoke of the glory that would be in Heaven, no doubt His disciples would have liked to go with Him right away. We sometimes grow homesick for Heaven when we see the trouble in the world, and we long for the glory that awaits us. But Jesus prayed to the Father: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." They had work to do. Jesus was sending them out to be His missionaries to let all the world know that Jesus would save them from their sins. But there were some things they needed in order to make them good witnesses. One was sanctification.

Sanctified Through the Truth

These people for whom Jesus was praying believed that Jesus was the Son of God, so eternal life had begun in their hearts. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Not just know about them, but know them as revealed by the Spirit. Now they needed to be sanctified. Therefore Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." They needed to be purified in heart, and that comes at sanctification.

Jesus prayed for us who are saved, too. He said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." We who believe what they preached — the things that are written in the New Testament — can be sanctified, too, if we consecrate our whole life to Jesus and believe His promise for us.

Sanctification would strengthen His followers. There was another reason why they should be sanctified. It would make them one with Jesus. Sanctification brings unity of faith. Jesus wants His people to believe all His Word; and when they do they are one with believers, and one with Him.

There was yet another reason why the disciples needed sanctification. Jesus wanted the world to know that they were His followers. He wanted His people to be so much like Him that the world would know that they were Christians. We are made holy at sanctification, and that image of God that Adam and Eve lost when they sinned in the Garden is restored. We become like God in righteousness and holiness. May we remember that we must be in the image of God, and live so that the world can see Jesus in our lives.

When our lives are lived for Jesus, and our conduct is pure, we prove that God sent His Son to die for us. We could never live a consistent, holy life if we did not have the nature of sin removed from our heart through the Blood of Jesus. It is important that our lives prove that we are Christians. We want to be lights to guide others to the Kingdom of God, and not a stumbling block to bar the way.

