

The Lord Prays for You

John 17

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When I think of prayer, I often think of the wonderful spiritual blessing of being able to approach the throne of God, though Jesus Christ. What is even more amazing, is that Jesus before He died on the cross, rose from the dead, or return to His home in heaven, he prayed for me! And you too! When we think of Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17, we often think of Jesus praying for His apostles, and Jesus desire for unity. However, this text offers us so much more. Jesus prayed these words to God: "I do not pray for these [apostles] alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;" That's us folks! That is, if we truly belong to Him.

Let's notice briefly some of the things Jesus prayed for just prior to His crucifixion.

ETERNAL LIFE BY KNOWING GOD AND JESUS

First of all Jesus' prayer is that all might have eternal life, which is only available to those who truly know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom the Father sent into the world to be the sacrifice for our sins. (v.3). There are a lot of people who say they "know the Lord," but true knowledge of the Lord involves so much more than a casual acknowledgment of the fact that Jesus was the Son of God. John records: "He who says, 'I know Him,'" and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. (I Jn 2:4-5) Do you really know Him?

THEY HAVE KEPT YOUR WORD!

Jesus also rejoiced that his apostles had kept the word of God. "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them " (V.8). Again, Jesus' prayer extends to us; When we keep the word of God, we also bring great joy to the Lord. Jesus said, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (John 14:21)

THEY BELONG TO US

"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them." (v.9-10). Not only does Jesus honor his disciples by praying for them, He goes further by saying that His disciples belong to God! All people need a sense of "belonging," a place that they feel at home. Notice, Jesus said I am not praying for the world; Why? Because they do not belong to Him. There is no greater place to belong, than to the Lord. You can make your place of being, and belonging, with the Lord. When you do, then Jesus asks that the Father in heaven to keep you through His holy Name.

KEEP THEM FROM THE EVIL ONE

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. I believe one of the greatest blessings of being a Christian, is that God is watching out for us. 1 Cor 10:13 says that He makes a way of escape for us. We do our worldly neighbors a disservice when we quote this passage to them in order to comfort them or in trying to help them deal with some problem. Jesus' prayer was for those who believe in Him, through the Apostles word. We live in a world filled with sin, and the only way to guard against it, is with God's help. The Lord knows those who are His! (2 Tim 2:19)

THEY MAY HAVE MY JOY

Jesus not only want us to be happy, He wants us to have His Joy! "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2) What awaited Jesus at the end of His journey was heaven. To once again sit down at the right hand of the Father, knowing that He had made atonement for our sins. What joy He must have felt as He sat down, mission accomplished! Jesus offers us His joy. True Christianity offers a joyful and happy life beyond comparison.

SET APART BY THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD

What makes a true Christian different from the world? The Truth! One religious group may do all manor of things to show they are different from other religious groups. Again, the distinguishing characteristic, is the truth, found only in God's word. Oh that all

would come back to God's truth!

UNIFY THEM

Give them the Oneness we have Father, Jesus prays. Jesus desires that those who believe in Him through the apostles word would have unity. Jesus does not want the disharmony and the fusing and fighting that goes on among brethren today. He wants us to have unity, based on the above principles. Today we often hear the cry of the ecumenical movement, "let us have unity, even though we disagree." Friends, we can have unity in the truth.

THE LOVE WITH WHICH YOU LOVED ME MAY BE IN THEM AND I IN THEM"

The most perfect example of love that can ever be seen is the love which exists between the Father and Jesus Christ. Jesus tells us that same love can exist in us. You wonder sometimes if some think it impossible to have love and standing for the truth in coexistence. It is not only possible, it is what the Savior commands. "Speaking the truth in love... (Eph 4:15)

Yes friends, Jesus has prayed for you, how have you responded?

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