

THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE

(A Study of the Gospel of John)

Jesus Prayed for Us

TEXT: John 17

INTRODUCTION: If you knew with absolute certainty that you were going to die in less than 24 hours, what would you do with the time that was left?

- Go see and hug those closest to you and tell them that you love them?
- Call those you cannot get to in person to try the best you can at long distance to communicate the same?
- Make things right with somebody at odds with you? Would you forgive them? Would you ask them to forgive you?
- Would you get some things right with God you know are wrong? Would you repent of known sin in your life and ask Him to forgive you?
- Would you get saved by trusting Christ, because in the depth of your heart you know you are not?

Dear friend, may I lovingly say to you, if any of these things would be on your list of what you really want to do if you knew you were about to die, do them today.

Now I tell you this not because I know you are going to die in the next 24 hours.

I tell you this because I do not know that you will not.

- You may.
- I may.
- Any and all of us could die in even less time than that.
- The things we would want to be sure we get done before we die, need to stay done.

When John chapter 17 begins, Jesus is less than 24 hours from His death, and He knows it. There is no question nor uncertainty. It is Thursday night. By 3 p.m. Friday, Jesus will be dead.

So, what did Jesus do when He knew He was less than 24 hours from death?

He prayed. He prayed!

He prayed

- **For Himself**
- **For the remaining eleven disciples**
- **For us** - that's right, Jesus prayed for those of us in this very room who have trusted Him and who follow Him.

It would be possible to make a sermon series out of this one prayer of Jesus

- A full chapter of the New Testament
- 26 verses

But I am not going to do that. This morning I want you to see the big picture of Jesus' prayer for us right before He went to the cross and paid the penalty for our sin.

I. JESUS PRAYED FOR HIMSELF.

John 17:1, 4–5 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ... 4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

- Even in praying for Himself, Jesus did not have a selfish bone in His body.
- He prayed for the Father to glorify Him, but the reason was so that He could glorify the Father.

II. JESUS PRAYED FOR THE DISCIPLES.

John 17:6, 13–18 "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. ... 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.

Look at what Jesus wants for His disciples. Are you His disciple? Are you a follower of Christ? Jesus wants these things for you!

- v. 13 **that they may have My joy**
- v. 15 **that they be kept from the evil one**
- v. 17 **that they be sanctified (set apart) in His truth**

Notice here that Jesus identifies the source of that truth: Your Word. Before you buy into the lie of the evil one which is being constantly repeated by people in the world today that the Bible is a collection of myths, legends, sayings, and the religious musings of ignorant men in ages gone by, you better remember that is not what Jesus said.

- Jesus is the Son of God.
- Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior.
- Jesus is the One Who paid the price for our sin upon the cross.
- Jesus is the One Who Rose from the dead.
- Jesus is the one who ascended back into heaven in the presence of hundreds of witnesses.
- Jesus is the one and the only one who offers to you and me and to every person on the globe salvation from sin and eternal life.
- And this Jesus says that The Word of God is truth!
- I suspect He knows what He is talking about!
 - v. 18 **that they be sent into the world**

John 17:18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

One of the places that Jesus has sent us here at SABC into the world is at our Center of Hope. And while we have dozens of people from our church who serve the Lord at the Center of Hope, it has come to my attention that we are in serious need of others right now.

We need help at our Benevolence Center with the **Food Distribution**. Here is what we need:

POSITION	DAY	NUMBER NEEDED
HALL	MONDAY	1
TABLE	MONDAY	2
TABLE	TUESDAY	1
TABLE	THURSDAY	2
HALL	FRIDAY	1
TABLE	FRIDAY	2
DESK	THURSDAY	1

Now, there are some of you in this place right now that Jesus wants to send to meet this need in His world. Maybe you can only help one morning a week. That's fine. George Cornett is going to be at the Welcome Center desk after worship. You can get more information about these needs or just sign up with him to be one of those Jesus has sent.

We also need more help at **A Sheltering Tree** where we minister to young women who are pregnant or who have young children.

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY

2

Rebecca Whitaker will be at that same Welcome Desk with George if you want more information about helping one of these days.

Folks, what I want all of us to see is that when we go anywhere to minister in the name of Jesus, whether it is across the street or around the world,

- We are not just on our own little do-good trip.
- We are not just sent out as representatives of SABC (though we are that)
- We are emissaries, or as Paul puts it, ambassadors, sent out by the King of Kings Himself doing His business in the world!

Finally,

III. JESUS PRAYED FOR US.

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

Folks, this is us! You, me. Jesus prayed specifically for all of us who would believe in Him.

And what did Jesus pray for for us?

John 17:21–23 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.

Jesus prayed for our unity.

Jesus prayed that we believers may be one as the Father and Son are one.

What did Jesus mean as He prayed for the unity of believers?

- **Jesus did not mean organizational unity.**
The earliest churches were local, independent congregations. The church at Jerusalem and the church at Thessalonica had no organizational connection between them.
- **Jesus did not mean uniformity.**

Certainly there are important common characteristics among all “true churches.” But this does not mean that they are carbon copies of each other. Scripture leaves room for diversity in methodology and style in fulfilling the great commission.

That God does not desire for all of us to be exactly like the other is demonstrated in the way the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to believers. No believer gets all 19 of the gifts. The gifts each of us get are not of our choosing but His, and He chooses the ones the body of the church needs for us to have. So the gifts the Spirit selects for me and the gifts the Spirit selects for you are different and they make us different.

Jesus did not desire for you and I to be clones.

- **Jesus meant spiritual unity.**

All real believers do share a spiritual unity.

- We are united because we are all saved the same way – by grace through faith.
- We are united because we are going to the same place – heaven.
- We are united because we have a common purpose – to share the gospel with unbelievers.

Jesus not only tells us that it is His desire, His prayer, that we have this kind of unity among us as believers, but **Jesus tells us how to have unity between believers.**

If we have two members in a church who are somewhat at odds with each other, the key to bringing them together in unity is not making one more like the other. Jesus said,

John 17:21–22 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:

As each person moves closer to Christ, as each person becomes more like Jesus, they will move closer to each other.

- This works in creating or increasing unity in a church.
- It also works in a marriage.
- This works in family relationships where the family members are believers.
- This works among Christians that work together.
- This works anywhere between Christians.

CONCLUSION: And it all works together. Because

When we are being sanctified (becoming more like Christ through God’s Word)

Then we are becoming more unified with Christ and with each other.

This increases our joy,

And makes us more effective when sent out into the world.

INVITATION: And do you realize that there is not a single person here for whom this prayer of Jesus for you, cannot be realized. What Jesus wants for you, what He prayed for you, can be the reality in your life.

It begins by being saved, by trusting Jesus as the Lord and Savior of your life.

It develops by being in the Word of God. (Read, LCG, discipleship Sunday night, Wed. night)

Be in the Word not just to gain knowledge but to obey what God says – sanctification.

You will grow to be more like Jesus.

As you do this, and others in your relationships do this, you will not only grow closer to Christ, you will grow closer to each other.

This will multiply the joy in your life.

This will multiply the way you can bless and minister to others as Jesus sends you out.

So, where are you today?

- Need to be saved?
- Need to get more in the Word?
- Need to surrender to obey what you have already read in the Word?

It is the time to decide. What will you decide today?