"Jesus' Prayer-Part 2"
November 18, 2026
John 17:20-26

I. Introduction

Early in the morning on the day we call Good Friday, Jesus and His disciples were on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. The disciples didn't know it, but soon Jesus would be arrested by a mob led by Judas Iscariot and. contrary to their promises, they would flee for their lives. In the beginning of their walk, Jesus had tried to prepare and comfort them for what was ahead. But as they got close to the Garden, as His death and resurrection were in sight, Jesus turned from talking to the disciples and talked to God the Father; the true Lord's Prayer.

In Jesus' prayer, He first prayed for Himself, **"Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you."** Looking back over the years and looking ahead to His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus told His Father that His work on earth had been finished; **"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do"** (John 17:4). Then in verses 6-19 He prayed for His disciples, the ones He had chosen and had taught over the past three years. He prayed that the Father would keep them safe, that He would unify them, that He would give them joy, and that He would sanctify them, i.e., set them apart for God and the work ahead.

And then looking ahead to the future, Jesus finished His prayer by praying for all future believers--for you and me and the whole church throughout the ages. The ones who would carry out the mission given by Jesus just before He ascended to heaven. Jesus made two requests for all believers. First, He emphasized a request that He had made earlier—that all believers be united in the truth and, second, that believers would be united with Him in eternal glory. Let's look at today's Scripture, beginning with Jesus' 1st request—that all believers be united in the truth.

II. Jesus' 1st Request: That all believers be united in the truth

A. The object of His request: All Believers Earlier, when Jesus prayed for His disciples, He said in John 17:9, **"I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours."** Now

He prayed **"for those who will believe in me through their message."** These are the objects of Jesus' new request: all believers. Even here, we are reminded again that salvation comes through faith alone—through believing in Jesus Christ; as Ephesians 3:9 says, **"not by works, so that no one can boast."**

The Apostles and those associated with them, like Mark and Luke, were the human authors of the New Testament; therefore, all who would be saved in the future would come to Christ **"through their message."** Romans 10:17 says, **"Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."** In His omniscience, Jesus knew that the Apostles' ministry would be successful. The Gospel would prevail; there would be believers. Despite the apostles' weaknesses, the world's hatred, and Satan's opposition, many would come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. Think about it: you are God's answer to Jesus' prayer as He prayed for believers.

B. The request: Unity of all Christians Jesus then made His request for all Christians through the centuries as He prayed, **"That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you."** Jesus prayed for the unity of all believers. Christians may belong to different fellowships or denominations, but they are united in the belief that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone, in Christ alone, and to their commitment to the absolute authority of Scripture. Romans 12:5 says, **"So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."** All believers are united in the truth.

All true believers have God's glory inside their hearts, no matter what they may look like on the outside. Christian harmony is not based on the externals of the flesh but the internals and externals due to the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the inner person. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new has come!"** We must look beyond the elements of our first birth—race, color, abilities, etc.—and build our fellowship on the essentials of our new birth. In Ephesians 4 Paul gave seven features of the unity of the Holy Spirit. Turn to Eph. 4:4-6.

These are the reasons why believers should love one another and live in unity. There is one body, the body of Christ which is made up of all believers since the day of Pentecost. There is one Spirit, who lives in every believer. There is one hope, the promised eternal inheritance guaranteed to every believer by the Holy

Spirit—turn to Ephesians 1:13-14. There is one Lord, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. There is one faith, 2 Timothy 3:15 says, **"The holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."** There is one baptism, i.e., water baptism, the believer's public confession of faith in Jesus Christ. Finally, there is one God and Father of all—the one true God.

We trust the same Savior and share the same glory. We will one day enjoy the same heaven! We belong to the same Father and seek to do the same work—witnessing to a lost world that Jesus Christ alone saves from sin. We believe the same truth, even though we may differ on minor doctrinal matters. We follow the same example that Jesus set for His people, to live a holy life. Believers do have their differences; but we have much more in common, and this should encourage us to love one another and promote true spiritual unity among the family of God.

C. The example of true unity: the Father and the Son Jesus then prayed that believers would follow His example of true unity—the unity of the Father and the Son. He said in verse 22, **"I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one."** There are a variety of ways that the unity of the Father and the Son is seen and which the church can imitate:

1. The Father and the Son are united in motive. Jesus began this prayer by praying back in John 17:1, **"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you."** Throughout the Gospels we see both the Father and the Son being glorified, e.g., in John 11:4 when Jesus and the disciples are told that Lazarus was sick, Jesus said, **"This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."** The Father and the Son are equally united in motive: to bring glory to God.

Similarly, Christians are also to be united in a common commitment to bring glory to God. 1 Cor. 10:31 says, **"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."** As we grow in the Lord, God's glory begins to grow and to show itself in what we say and do and the way we say and do it. People do not see us and glorify us; they see the Lord and glorify Him; in Matthew 5:16 Jesus

said, **"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."** Christians need to be united in motive to bring glory to God.

2. The Father and Son are united in mission. Back in the beginning of His prayer, Jesus said, **"For you granted ~~him~~ (me--Jesus) authority over all people that ~~he~~ (I--Jesus) might give eternal life to all those you have given ~~him~~ (me—Jesus)."** Writing to Timothy, Paul wrote in 1 Tim. 1:15, **"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."** 2 Peter 3:9 says, "**The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."** The Father and the Son have the same mission: to bring sinners to God.

Similarly, believers have the same mission; in Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus said**, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** Turn to Acts 1:6-9. The mission given to all believers is to share to Gospel with those who don't know Jesus Christ: to bring sinners to God.

3. The Father and Son are united in love. Jesus said, **"Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them as you have loved me."** After washing the Disciples feet, in John 13:34, Jesus commanded all disciples: "**A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."** Christians are to agape love, sacrificially love, one another. Christians need to be united in love.

D. Finally, there are **the results of true unity.** In verse 23 Jesus said, "**May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me."** The church's unity in motive, mission, and love demonstrates that Christ is the Savior who transforms lives—that Jesus is who He said He is. That Jesus was and is the Son of God.

In John 13:35 Jesus said, **"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."** When unbelievers see believers' love for each other, it offers proof to them that the Father has loved those who believed in His Son. They will recognize that God loves the world. Romans 5:5 says, **"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."** When

the loving unity of the church is seen and felt, unbelievers will want to be part of that relationship. However, if there is quarreling, sinful divisions, and fighting in the church, it drives unbelievers away. It must be the goal of everyone who calls themselves a Christian to do their part in maintaining the unity of believers. Turn to Ephesians 4:1-3.

III. Jesus' 2nd Request: To be reunited with all believers in heaven

Jesus' second request is found in verse 24, **"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."** This is the 2nd request: that believers be reunited in heaven with Christ. This is just the fulfillment of what Jesus told His disciples in John 14:3**, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."** But Jesus isn't just preparing a place for believers, but He is eager for us to join Him there to see his glory and to witness the tremendous love the Father has for Him and for us.

When a sinner is forgiven, God adopts him as His child. John wrote 1 John 3:1, **"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"** Romans 8:15 adds that we **"received the Spirit of sonship."** In God's gracious plan, believers will not only see Christ's glory but share it; Philippians 3:20-21 says**, "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."** We will be changed and united with Christ when we leave the earth.

But the change begins here on earth, the moment one believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in him--1 Corinthians 2:12 says: **"We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us."** Romans 5:5 says, **"God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."** This is just the beginning. Our love for God and each other, our Christian walk and understanding will grow as we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us and use us (Ephesians 5:17-21).

IV. Conclusion

Jesus closed His prayer by addressing God as **"Righteous Father,"** reminding us that it is God's righteousness, i.e., His hatred of sin, which is the reason for His judgment of the world. The problem is not the world's access to the knowledge of God, but that the world refuses to acknowledge that God had sent Jesus. But all those who accept the Son, those who love Him and the Father, will experience the amazing love known only between Father and Son. We are loved by God with the same love He holds for his Son! And our lives are transformed by the life of Jesus who now lives in our own through the Holy Spirit. The last of Jesus' words that John recorded before Jesus' arrest in the Garden are in verse 26: **"that I myself may be in them."** Jesus' last stated desire is to love his followers and be with them, to fill them with the glory and joy He has known, so that their knowledge and love of God will continue to grow.

Looking back at Jesus' prayer, we see the spiritual priorities that were in the Savior's heart: the glory of God; the sanctity of God's people; the unity of the church; the ministry of sharing the gospel with a lost world. The lost world cannot see God, but they can see Christians; and what they see in us is what they will believe about God. If they see love and unity, they will believe that God is love. If they see hatred and division, they will reject the message of the gospel.

Addressing believers, Jesus said in Revelation 22:12, **"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done."** One day, each of us will have to give an account of his or her ministry. It is a solemn thought that we shall stand before the Bema Seat of Christ and give our "final report." Will you be able to echo Jesus' words in John 17:4, **"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."?**