September 17, 2017

Series: It’s All Yours!

Growth Track Step 3 today …

Example of Generosity …

Prayer

**The Most Important Prayer**

John 17

**Intro:** One of the most important aspects of the Christian life is prayer.

We all know about it

* some are more faithful to pray than others
* Most don’t pray as much as we should
* Many simply pray at meals or when they need help

Prayer is a discipline - it must be practiced - it takes concentrated effort to be faithful in prayer.

If prayer seems to be difficult for you, we have taught in the past about how the Lord’s Pattern for Prayer - Our Father which art in heaven … teaches us how to take prayer from being a drudgery to being a delight.

That’s a whole other teaching -

There are a lot of pattern prayers -

* The Lord’s Prayer
* The Prayer of Saint Francis - Lord, make me an instrument of your peace …
* The Psalms

Many others have written prayers that we can adopt and make our own.

There is another Lord’s Prayer. I think this Lord’s Prayer deserves the title even more than the one that begins, “Our Father…”

Last week we began this series - “It’s All Yours” - and we saw how Jesus told His followers they could experience joy in the midst of difficulty by having -

* Confidence for the future
* Answers to Prayer
* Plain truth & love
* Peace in trouble

Most of what was taught in John chapters 13, 14, 15, & 16 was what Jesus said at the Last Supper, and while they were walking to the Garden of Gethsemane … where (tell what happened…) Jesus praying alone … disciples falling asleep … sweating great drops of blood …

I believe this is part of what He prayed that night in that Garden -

Here’s another way you can have it all -

**You can have everything God wants you to have - because Jesus Christ Himself prayed for you.**

Yes He did - true - Jesus Christ Himself knew you - thought of you - and prayed for you - when He was in agony, just before He died - you were on His mind -

Here’s what He prayed for - 5 prayers Jesus made to His Father God for you:

**> Honor**

John 17:1-8 - After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you. For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth. I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. Now, Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began.

“I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything I have is a gift from you, for I have passed on to them the message you gave me. They accepted it and know that I came from you, and they believe you sent me.”

To honor God the Father -

He prayed that He Himself would honor God - by going through with the plan -

* The plan from before the foundation of the world …
* Jesus knew He would come before Creation …
* That’s how much He loves us!

He prayed for us to honor God just as much as He wanted to honor God!

How specifically can we honor God? By receiving the sacrifice that Jesus made -

* If He prayed that He would honor God by going through with it … how difficult it was … let this cup pass … if there is any other way …

How do we honor God if we refuse that? Jesus made the sacrifice for us!

We honor Him by receiving it!

If someone has worked very hard so that they could give you something - it would be a dishonor for you not to receive it! Food in another country …

Soldiers have given their lives so that we could enjoy freedom - we dishonor them if we do not live in and preserve the freedom they purchased for us!

We honor God by receiving the gift He offers - eternal life through Jesus Christ.

* Jesus did the work.
* He revealed God to us.
* He gave us the message from God.
* We honor God by believing and receiving that message - believing in Jesus Christ as God the Son.

**> Protection**

John 17:9-12 - “My prayer is not for the world, but for those you have given me, because they belong to you. All who are mine belong to you, and you have given them to me, so they bring me glory. Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are. During my time here, I protected them by the power of the name you gave me. I guarded them so that not one was lost, except the one headed for destruction, as the Scriptures foretold.”

Notice specifically at this point He says He is not praying for the world. He is not praying at this point for those who are not His followers - He is praying specifically for those who believe in Him.

And because we belong to Him, we belong to God.

He knows He is leaving the world, going back to heaven, and His followers are having to stay behind!

Heaven is a better place than this world - so He knew He needed to pray for us!

He knows what persecution is going to come to those who believe in and follow Him - so He knows we need protection -

- because we belong to God

- because we honor Jesus

- so that we will be united even as Jesus & the Father are united

He says that the protection is by the power of His name - that’s His authority. Jesus carried the authority of God. He says we carry the authority of God.

The opposition doesn’t come from people - Eph. 6 …

So, our protection is not in weapons of this world -

2nd Corinthians 10:3-5 - We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do.We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.

Why do we need this authority over spiritual enemies that gives us protection?

He doesn’t want any of us to be lost.

This prayer is birthed out of His love for us.

Judas was lost because He stepped outside the plan. We need to know the plan. The plan will bring us trouble & difficulty - but Jesus has already prayed for our protection - In that prayer He says we are protection because we carry the authority of God Himself.

Spiritual enemies will try to destroy you, discourage you, lie to you, get you to believe something other than what the Bible says - believe something other than what Jesus says about you - can lead to defeat, depression, a desire to give up on God and faith completely -

Jesus has prayed for you! Jesus has given you authority!

James 4:7 - … Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**> Truth**

John 17:13-19 - “Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy. I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. They do not belong to this world any more than I do. Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth.”

He gave us His truth. Every word that He spoke was truth.

Do you want to know what truth is? Get to know what Jesus said!

* Truth leads to joy

That’s what we talked about last week - that’s what Jesus said in the previous passage - He taught them how to live in joy - then He prayed that they would get it.

* Truth leads to holiness

He repeats again here His prayer for protection - Jesus prayed that we would be protected from the attacks of Satan and demonic powers.

There is no need for fear! Jesus prayed for us!

Receiving the truth and protection that Jesus prays for leads to holiness - “make them holy”

Grk - to separate from profane things and dedicate to God; to free from the guilt of sin; to purify internally be renewing of the soul.

Oh man, I need my soul renewed from time to time! This is what Jesus prayed for - for me!

This is why this is the most important prayer! He prayed that I would receive His truth so that my soul to be renewed - to be separated from profane things, to be cleansed -

This is what He prayed for - for you!

* Taking the truth to others

He sends us into the world - outside of the church - to take this truth to others.

We are not just to be a community that meets together and sits and talks to one another - In this prayer Jesus prayed about our going out from among ourselves as believers and sharing this message with others.

Start by being friends - but at some point, ask the Lord to help you speak the truth with love.

* Jesus loves you
* Jesus prayed for you
* Jesus wants you to have joy
* Jesus wants your life to honor God
* Jesus wants you to be protected from the evil in this world
* Jesus wants you to be protected from fear

This is Good News!

**> Unity**

John 17:20-23 - “I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

“I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.”

This is where we know He was praying for us - “all who will ever believe in me through their message.”

I have believed in Christ because of the message His followers shared - so He prayed for me - If you are a believer, He prayed for you! All you need for all of this prayer to be for you, is to accept Jesus as Lord and become His follower as well!

This is powerful - Think of the unity that must exist between God the Father and God the Son. What separation can there be?

* In ideas
* In intent
* In purpose
* In love

No disunity whatsoever! No division!

This is what He prayed for - for us!

1st John 1:1-4 - We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.

John experienced it - John said we could experience it. This is not partial unity - it is perfect unity - it is what Jesus prayed for - we can have it!

* This unity leads to honor
* This unity leads to others knowing the truth
* This unity leads to love

**> Love**

John 17:24-26 - “Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began!

“O righteous Father, the world doesn’t know you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them.”

His love in us to others.

His love in us - How did Jesus love us? He died for us.

John 13 - At the Last Supper … Jesus trying to get His followers to know what was going to happen … Greater love …

How are we to love others? We are to give up ourselves for them - otherwise we don’t have the love of Christ in us.

Do we really love one another? Do we really love others - the way Jesus prayed for us to love others?

**Concl:** What is the will of God? How do we pray for things and be sure that we are praying according to the will of God? … anything we ask … in His name ..

Action Step -

Pray for what Jesus prayed for -

* That we would honor God by believing in Him
* That we would be protected from spiritual attacks
* That we would receive the truth that leads to holiness and joy and share it with others
* That we would be in unity even as Jesus and the Father God are in unity
* That we would love as He loved.

This is a prayer list! This is what we should pray for!

This is a good week to start - this is your prayer list for this week.

Have you received? Have you believed?