

Summer Discipleship: 5-4-3-2-1

#1 Praying for 5 people. Jesus' prayer - John 17:1-26

Todd 7/16/17



Last week Tim spoke on the Lord's Prayer. An example Jesus gave us of how to pray. Here we have a prayer of Jesus that takes all of chapter 17 in John. Here's what's going on in Jesus' life during this time.

He washed their feet and told them many things to encourage them because he knew he was about to be crucified.

Right after this prayer, in chapter 18, they went out to the garden and Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested. He began this prayer by saying, "Father, the hour has come." He knew what was about to happen. This was a critical moment in the life and ministry of Jesus.



There are 222 prayers recorded in the Bible. Not just places where it says, so and so prayed. But we actually have the words of these prayers recorded in scripture. In the New Testament, there are 46 recorded prayers. Prayer is important.

Today I want to look at this prayer of Jesus and answer some questions about prayer. Some of these questions are:

When did Jesus pray?

Why did Jesus pray?

What was important to Jesus in prayer?

When did Jesus pray?

Why did Jesus pray?

What did he pray about? What was important to him?

We know that Jesus prayed often.

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So we know that prayer was important to Jesus. He prayed often. It was an essential part of his ministry. He regularly spent time alone with his Father in prayer.

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Throughout the gospels, Jesus constantly taught and encouraged his disciples to pray. One person said that prayer was the breath that Jesus breathed, the driving force of his life, the secret of his amazing ministry.

The gospels record 17 specific occasions when Jesus prayed.

He didn't always get up early in the morning to pray, he prayed at different times. He didn't always go off to lonely places to pray, but sometimes prayed with his disciples and with others. It was important to him, however, to spend a lot of time alone with his Father.



So the answer to the question, When did Jesus pray? Is this: He prayed all the time, in many different places, both alone and with others.

I've often wondered, why did Jesus pray? I mean, if Jesus is God, why did he need to pray? - - He prayed because of his relationship with God the Father.

And in this specific prayer here in John 17, we see Jesus' relationship with the Father and the confidence Jesus has in his Father's perfect plan. This relationship between Jesus and the Father is the power that brought salvation to all mankind. Jesus laid aside his own glory and took on a fleshly human body. He became obedient to the will of his Father. Jesus prayer here in John 17

shows us that he depended on his Father and he was obedient to him.

In Jn 5:30, Jesus says, by myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me, the Father.

In **John 5:30**, Jesus says, by myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me, the Father.

Jesus was always in submission to the Father. Now we've heard the phrase: What would Jesus do? Maybe a better question is, What DID Jesus do?

We might not always know what Jesus would do in a given situation, because our vision is clouded by our own humanness. But we can always know what Jesus did do, by reading the Bible.

And we know that Jesus prayed A LOT. He prayed in the morning, late at night, and sometimes all night long. He often went off to solitary places where he could be alone with his Father to pray.

We know that he prayed about every aspect of life, everything that was going on. Nothing is too small or insignificant to bring to God in prayer.



He prayed based on his knowledge of God's truth. He knew the scriptures and asked things of God that he knew were in line with the character of God.

He didn't ask God to provide a lot of money, or a new car, or a better job, or a place to live. In other words, he didn't ask God for things that would make his life easier or better by worldly standards.

His prayers were consistently in tune with God's word, his character, his kingdom goals. And these things are not a mystery to us. We have God's word. We can read and get to know God and what He's like. We know what he desires for us. The kind of people he wants us to be, and the things that do not please him.

So when we pray according to what we know to be true about God, his desires, his character, and his will for our spiritual growth and our service to him in his kingdom, we can pray with confidence that he will answer our prayers. [Because of who he is, not because of what we want.](#)

So let's take a look at our prayer life. Do we always ask God for things we want for our own reasons, or do we genuinely desire and ask God for him to do things that are in accordance with his plan, his glory, and for the good of his kingdom?

Do we ask God to let us win the lottery? Do we ask for new cars and new houses and that he make us popular and well liked by people?

We're going to look at this prayer of Jesus and learn some things about how to pray. We're going to see what was important to Jesus, and it should hopefully shed some light on our own prayer lives and some changes we may need to make.

Now if Jesus, the Son of God, God in the flesh, who lived here among us and was without sin. If this was how he prayed, who are we to do any less? What does our prayer life look like?

I have to be honest, preparing for this message made me feel ashamed of my own prayer life.

So let's take a look at this prayer of Jesus in chapter 17 . . .

[Jesus Prays to Be Glorified](#)

1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

John 17

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[Jesus Prays for His Disciples](#)

6 “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.

7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. 13 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

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13 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

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11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

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14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

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[Jesus Prays for All Believers](#)

20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—

23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

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.

25 “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.

26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

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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.

25 “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have

Jesus didn't pray in a cold, distant way, he prayed from his heart. He carried on a constant conversation with his Father who loves him.



This prayer shows a genuine love for God and a desire for His glory. It shows that Jesus loved his disciples, those who were close to him, and for all believers everywhere.

Now I said before that right after this, Jesus was arrested and his crucifixion began. He knew this was about to happen. And he prayed. He prayed before critical

moments and events in his life.

When he was in the garden right after this, he prayed fervently that God's will be done, even if he had to be crucified. He was not praying that God would somehow skip the crucifixion part, but that God's will would be done.

Earlier in his ministry, before Jesus called his first disciples, he spent the night praying about it. It was an important event in his life.

What do we do when we know a difficult or important thing is about to happen in our lives? Is our first priority to get down and pray about it to God?

Here's what I've done in the past. I sit down and make plans. I think through it plan out how it will go. I consider all the things that could go wrong and come up with things to do to make it go easier, so the outcome will be successful. I try to do it in my own strength. I have to admit, bringing it to God is not always my first priority.



[The first part of this prayer in chapter 17, Jesus is praying for himself.](#) He knows the time is close for him to be crucified. And he prays that God would glorify him so that he may glorify God. He had completed the work that God had given him to do on earth.

He prays for himself. Not only that he would have the strength to face the cross, but for the power to glorify the Father by his death. That's what he means when he says, glorify me, that I may glorify you Father. He's talking about his crucifixion. This is how he will give glory to God, by completing his plan for the salvation of all mankind for all time.

So we see that even Jesus' personal prayers, for himself, are for the glory of God.

When we pray for ourselves, do we always seek the glory of God? Do we pray that God would give us the strength and wisdom to know his will and serve him for the good of his kingdom? Or do we pray for other things for ourselves. ***For things that are for our own glory and for the good of our own kingdom?***



Next, he prays for his disciples. For those who were closest to him. These men who lived daily with Jesus during his ministry.

Here's what he asks God for on their behalf: vs. 11 – that God would protect them with the power of his name.

He knew the disciples were in for some hard times. They would carry on his ministry in the world and they would face a lot of opposition. They would be arrested, imprisoned, beaten and killed for Jesus' sake.

In the same verse, he prays that they would be one, just as Jesus and the Father are one. A big theme throughout this prayer is unity. This is not a prayer for the disciples to be organized. He isn't asking God to set up a union for them as they go about their work for the kingdom.

This is about a relationship. Just as the Son and the Father had unity, shared the same goals, had the same passions, loved each other and others, so the disciples should have that same unity in their relationship to one another. That they be one in spirit and purpose.

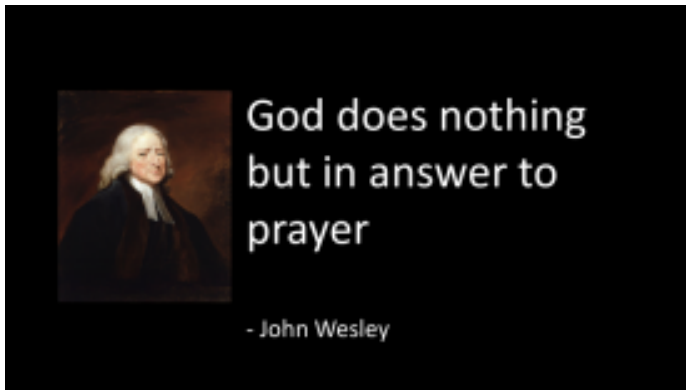
And this is also Jesus' prayer for all believers. Not just that we get along and be nice to each other. That doesn't always happen. But that we have unity, that we share the same purpose and spirit. That we work together for the glory of God and for the growth of his kingdom. Our model for the kind of unity we should have as believers is the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Just as they are one in mind and will, so we should be one.

Jesus also prayed that the disciples would be protected from the evil one. They lived in the world and that's where their work for the kingdom was to be done, but they were not of the world. He sanctified them, set them apart from the world.

Here's what that means for us, all believers. We live in the world. We see terrible wickedness going on all around us. But as Christians, we are not of the world. God has set us apart from the wickedness around us.

We are to pray for ourselves and for others that God would protect us from the evil one. The evil in the world. This was Jesus' prayer also when he taught the disciples to pray in the Lord's prayer. Deliver them from evil.

There is a spiritual battle raging all around us for our souls. Satan hates it when we give our lives to Jesus. He prowls around looking for those he can destroy. He places temptations in our path in areas where he knows we are weak.

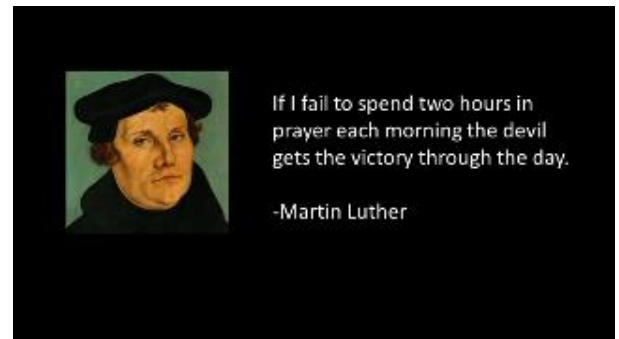


How do we fight against this for ourselves, for those close to us, and for all believers? **Pray!**

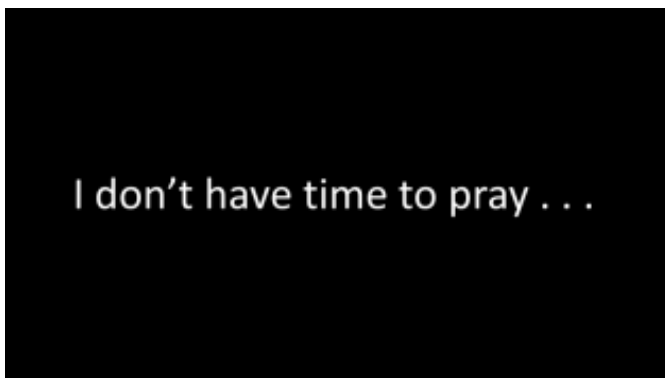
Ask God to protect us against the plans of the evil one. To give us his strength to fight against the temptations all around us every day. In Ephesians 6, prayer is described as a sword. It is our weapon against sin in our lives.

John Wesley, a great man of God, spent two hours each day in prayer and is famous for saying, “God does nothing but in answer to prayer.”

Martin Luther said, “If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get on without spend three hours daily in prayer.”



Some people may say, well I don't have time to



pray. I'm so busy. We need to make prayer a priority. It is more important than anything else we do in this world.

Prayer puts God in full force to do his work. When God's people pray, God acts!

Some have said, well, I don't want to bother God with every little detail of my life. Henry Ward Beecher said – “Prayer covers the whole of a person's life. There is no thought, feeling, or desire, however small, which we may not lay before God and be certain that he hears us. His nature is such that our constantly coming to him does not tire him. The whole burden of the whole life of every man may be rolled on to God and not weary him, though it often wearies the man.”

People say, I don't know how to pray.

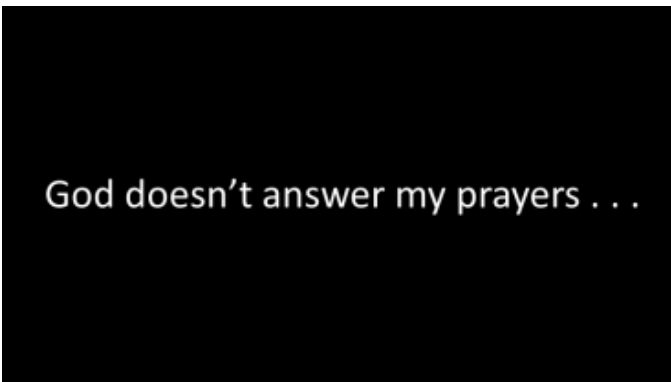
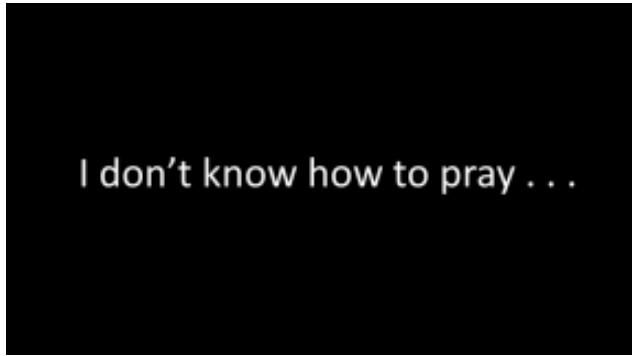
Prayer is not about speaking the correct words. We are talking to our Father who loves us, who died to save us, who created us and who works everything together for our good.

E.M. Bounds wrote a book called "The Weapon of Prayer," and in it he wrote: "God has of his own motion placed Himself under the law of prayer, and has obligated Himself to answer the prayers of men.

He has ordained prayer as a means whereby he will do things through men as they pray, which he would not otherwise do.

If prayer puts God to work on earth, then, by the same token, prayerlessness rules God out of the world's affairs, and prevents him from working.

The driving power, the conquering force in God's cause -- is God himself."



Some say, but God doesn't answer my prayers.

Sometimes God answers our prayers quickly. Other times, we have to enter into the storm before the answer comes.

When the disciples were in the boat one night and the terrible storm came up. They struggled and were terrified, trying to survive in the storm. They believed they would truly die right there.

And then, at just the right time, Jesus came to them, walking on the water. He calmed the storm.

Sometimes we need to experience some storms in this life so we can learn some important lessons about faith. If our prayers are not answered the way we want them to be answered, there is a reason. And the reason is with us. Maybe we're asking for things for our own glory instead of God's. Maybe we need to wait and learn some things first.



Jesus prayed also here in chapter 17 for all believers. You and me. Jesus prayed for us.

He prayed that we would all be one, just as Jesus and the Father are one. That we would have the same purpose, to do the work of God together. To look to Him together and seek him, to seek to please him, to glorify him in all we do and say. To encourage one another, lift one another up, serve each other and love each other.

We are to pray for one another. Health problems, relationship issues, temptations, sins, physical needs, spiritual needs.

We can't pray too much, but we can, and do, pray too little. Jesus prayed all the time, on all occasions. When things were going well, when something important was about to happen. He prayed for himself, for those close to him, and for all believers. Nothing is too small to bring to God in prayer.

There is no special formula for prayer.

Billy Graham said, "Prayer is spiritual communication between us and God, a two-way relationship in which we should not only talk to God but also listen to Him. Prayer to God is like a child's conversation with a father. It is natural for a child to ask his father for the things he needs."



Remember that you can pray anytime, anywhere. Washing dishes, digging ditches, working in the office, the shop, driving a truck, even in prison. You can pray and know without a doubt that God hears you.

Prayer is the greatest privilege we have this side of heaven. Jesus died to make this communion with the Father possible. Let's not take it for granted.